

Americans eating more butter than ever

By Leslie Patton, Bloomberg

Hipsters are dropping it into cocktails and coffee. A major food distributor is packing it into a trendy new pastry. Bob Evans Farms Inc. is slipping it into waffles and McDonald's Corp. onto its signature muffins.

What's this new craze? It's none other than your grandparents' standby, butter.

Yes, butter, it turns out, is having a moment. Americans are forecast to eat a whopping 8 percent more of the stuff than last year, reaching 940,000 metric tons, almost the weight of three Empire State Buildings. That's the most since at least 1967, Department of Agriculture data shows.

Read the whole story

Incline's Lapanja 3rd in U.S. Championship's slalom

By USSA

CARRABASSETT VALLEY, Maine — Resi Stiegler (Jackson, Wyo. — U.S. Ski Team) and AJ Ginnis (Vouliagmeni, Greece — U.S. Ski Team) were victorious under a sunny, bluebird spring day in Sunday's slalom at the U.S. Alpine Championships in Sugarloaf.

On the women's side, Stiegler found herself atop the podium at U.S. Alpine Championships for the first time since 2007, when she won the giant slalom and slalom national titles. Canadian Roni Remme, who skis for the University of Utah, was second, while Lila Lapanja (Incline Village – U.S. Ski Team) was third.

Nina O'Brien (Edwards, Colo. – U.S. Ski Team), who was the junior champion in Saturday's super G, was the top junior finisher once again, landing in seventh.

It's been a career full of ups and downs for the veteran Stiegler, who was stoked to find her way back to the top of the podium. "I won the year I got injured, and I haven't won since," Stiegler said. "I've been second to Canadians for quite a few years, so I thought, 'I've gotta get this one!'"

It was Ginnis' first national title, and he had stiff competition. Four-time national champion and tech team leader David Choudonsky (Crested Butte, Colo. – U.S. Ski Team) – who is one of the best slalom skiers in the world – landed in second by just 15 hundredths of a second while World Cup mainstay Michael Ankeny (Deephaven, Minn. – U.S. Ski Team) rounded out the podium in third. All three U.S. Ski Team athletes have attended or are currently attending Dartmouth. Erik Arvidsson (Woodside – U.S. Ski Team) was the top junior, finishing seventh.

Road Beat: Toyota Prius Prime is plugged in



The Prius Prime could be a revolutionary hybrid.
Photo/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Prius Hybrid has been around the United States since 1999. As complex a vehicle as it is, it is one of the most reliable and fail-safe vehicles ever sold in the United States.

Even the batteries are almost bullet-proof, with failures even after 10 years being an extremely rare occurrence. Part of that is due to the strict control of the battery software. In 2006, Toyota had tested the batteries for 150,000 cycles with no significant loss of efficiency. Amazing.

New for 2017 is a plug-in version of the Prius, called the Prius Prime. Instead of about a 1 kWh Nickel-Metal Hydride battery, the new Prime gets an 8.8 kWh Lithium-ion battery that can give the Prime a real-world EV range of about 22 miles according to some reports. While the combined power output from the 1.8L Atkinson cycle inline four and the Prius' two electric motors is limited to 121 hp, Toyota has not

released the standard hp available from the battery that powers the electric motors. Subtracting the 95 hp of the gas engine from the total combined output, it leaves just 26 hp as an EV vehicle. But from its performance as a pure EV and its EV top speed of 84 mph, I suspect this number to be higher, but with a co-efficient of drag of 0.25, 84 mph on 26 hp is possible.

Because the EV portion of the car is fairly low hp, it is possible to get engine assistance even though the battery is in a high state of charge as in pure EV mode, performance is a bit lethargic. But with the gas engine available it performs like a conventional Prius hybrid, but pure EV mode is more readily available and for long periods of time.

In my prior Prius tests I longed for more battery. With this plug-in, that wish has been answered and with judicious modulation of the throttle in normal mode, you can EV the plug-in Prius to your hearts content knowing that you are still driving a Prius Hybrid that has an EPA rating of 133 MPGe (equivalent) in pure electric. MPGe/hybrid MPG is rated at 55/53/54 city/highway/combined. And with its relatively large 11.3-gallon fuel tank, 600 miles might be easy.

During my short 10-mile excursion starting a zero mpg, the Prius was up to 42 mpg on the trip computer and climbing and that including some use of the gas engine during some full throttle runs. I estimate a 0-60 mph time of about 10 seconds, both engines working. And there is little if any guilt when you stomp the throttle.

In my test drive around Roseville and without a full charge I was still able to EV quite handily accelerating to 45-50 mph on pure electric. But this Prius is so smooth and quiet, about the only way you know if the engine is helping or running is to look at the systems operational depiction on the IP. Otherwise you just don't know. The starting and stopping of the engine is also imperceptible, it's that smooth of an

integration.

Ride quality is obviously extremely quiet and it is almost cushy. It's certainly not a car for the track, but you could create a new kind of racing, one that requires both speed and fuel economy, sort of an endurance race. Now that could be interesting. We could call it "hypermiling with speed."

Even with its 265-pound battery, Prius Prime tips the scale at a modest 3,375 pounds. Prime is only 183 inches long, but it is classified as a mid-size car by the EPA. Prius Prime has a spacey look to it, futuristic, if you like. It will be polarizing.

Starting at a shade below \$29,000 for a Prime Plus to about \$34,000 for a loaded Prime Advanced, the Prime is well priced considering that a loaded Prius hybrid stickers for about as much. But then again, a "conventional" Prius does have EPA mileage numbers in the 50 mpg range which the Road Beat easily averaged (54 mpg overall) in our recent test.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Nevada sports betting fund shines, then stumbles

By Todd Prince, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Chris Connelly, founder of one of the first sports betting mutual fund in the U.S., was killing it during 2016.

His Contrarian Investments LLC was up 31 percent on Dec. 18 compared with a 10 percent return for the Dow Jones over the same period. His bets on the National Football League and the National Basketball Association rocked.

Then he had his Atlanta Falcons Super Bowl moment.

With less than two weeks to the new year, Connelly lost 10 of his next 13 bets, wiping away all the gains and more. He finished the year down 23 percent compared with a 13 percent gain for the Dow Jones.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- South Tahoe High School's spring concert is March 29 at 7pm in the student union conference rooms. It features the school's jazz band, wind band, and orchestra.
- El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel on April 6 at 6pm is hosting a second meeting about weekend get-away traffic clogging neighborhoods. It will be at the CCC building in Meyers.
- Lake Valley Fire Protection District's second annual Community Easter Egg Hunt will be April 16 at 10am at Tahoe Paradise Park.
- The Douglas County Public Library in Minden is having a Children's Book Walk in honor of National Library Week. It is a self-paced activity and will be available during regular library hours from April 10-15. Each page of a featured story will be displayed throughout the children's section of the library. Children will follow the story and explore different

objects from each page.

- There will be a free legal clinic for people with green cards on April 8 from 1-5pm at Lake Tahoe Community College's board room. To make an appointment, call 530.542.0740.

LTUSD board agenda – raises, accreditation

Lake Tahoe Unified School District's board of education on Tuesday is expected to give all employees a 2 percent raise.

The raise is for the current school year and would be retroactive to Jan. 1.

Also part of the contract agreement is for the district to increase what it pays for health insurance from \$10,232 per year to \$11,000 per year effective Oct. 1, 2017.

The board is also being asked to approve a one-time early retirement incentive program for teachers for the 2017-18 school year. A minimum of six full-time certificated teachers must participate for the program to go through.

Also on the March 28 agenda will be an update of the state budget and how it impacts LTUSD. The board will also be discussing **South Tahoe High School's accreditation**.

The meeting starts at Lake Tahoe Community College at 6pm with that institution's board. All those agenda items affect both entities. The LTUSD meeting then resumes at 7:30pm at the district office.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nev. jobless rate has largest annual decline in U.S.

By Wade Tyler Millward, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada's unemployment rate saw the largest decline nationwide for year-over-year February unemployment.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the state posted a 1.2 percentage point decrease in February 2016.

Nevada went from a 6.1 percent unemployment rate in February 2016 to a 4.9 percent rate in February 2017. The state hasn't seen an unemployment rate under 5 percent since November 2007.

[Read the whole story](#)

A veteran snowmaker on the future of skiing

By Megan Michelson, Powder

Robin Smith, 70, got his start as a ski instructor at an upstate New York ski hill called Swain Ski Center in the 1970s. He went on to own and run that resort for over 20 years and installed the area's original snowmaking system.

When Intrawest bought Mountain Creek, an urban ski area in New Jersey, in the late 1990s, they called up Smith to run the

place and help solve their snowmaking woes.

Smith, now in business development for the Italian snowmaking company TechnoAlpin, has since become one of the ski industry's most veteran snowmaking consultants and pioneers. He currently lives in Englewood, Colo.

"Robin knows how to look at your snowmaking system and quantify it," says Dennis Harper, snowmaking manager at Idaho's Sun Valley ski resort. "He'll tell you how much snow you need to make and how much it's going to cost to make your resort run."

Read the whole story

Windjammers recruiting members for season

Windjammers Yacht Club is having its annual chowder feed/membership drive on April 7 at 6pm.

This is a group for people interested in boating on Lake Tahoe and a place to meet like-minded individuals.

WYC is a nonprofit promoting sailing, cruising and boating safety at the lake.

The \$15 includes clam chowder, oyster stew, salad, bread and dessert. A cash bar with wine and beer will be available. RSVP to consulting.concepts1@gmail.com.

The Windjammers Yacht Club Clubhouse is located above the harbor master's office in the Tahoe Keys Marina in South Lake Tahoe.

Controlled burns scheduled throughout basin

The California Tahoe Conservancy, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, California State Parks and the U.S. Forest Service may continue prescribed fire operations beginning March.

If conditions are favorable, operations may take place near Tahoe City, Glenbrook, Round Hill, Kingsbury Grade, and South Lake Tahoe. Operations may continue over the next several weeks, as conditions allow.

To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions.