

Letter: LTCC group helps at Bread & Broth

To the community,

The LTCC ADVANCE Adult Education Program is a recently implemented program at the college whose focus is to train local adults with workforce skills aimed to lead to higher wages and greater employment options. ADVANCE is a collaborative network of local businesses, government offices and the K-12 LTUSD which offers the free instruction to local residents. In addition to helping adults improve their earning skills, the ADVANCE program wanted to help locals have access to a hot, nutritious meal by sponsoring a Bread & Broth Monday meal.

On April 30 the dinner served at St. Theresa Grace Hall was funded by a donation from the ADVANCE program.

"We are serving today to help our community members. We're honored to serve our brothers and sisters in the Tahoe basin and we are grateful to Bread & Broth for providing a much needed service," was the collaborative quote of the ADVANCE sponsor crew.

As the ADVANCE crew was volunteering with the dinner's setup, it was very interesting to hear from the team's crew members Taylor Bartlett, Melanie Chu, Nancy Harrison, Lisa Shafer and Lori Thorne all about the program. This group of hard working ladies was not only enthusiastic about the ADVANCE program but also about feeding those in need. B&B would like to thank LTCC for its ADVANCE Adult Education Program and wanting to help our community members at many levels from training to easing hunger.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

LT Humane Society seeking logo submissions

Lake Tahoe Humane Society is putting on a logo contest.

The artwork is to represent animal welfare in the basin. It should be accompanied by a description of 100 words or less about the concept of the piece.

Requirements:

- One or two colors, preferably one.
- A symbol (something that is representative of animals, animal welfare)
- Bold in presence.
- The symbol/logo should stand on its own and not have the name of the organization incorporated with it.
- The symbol/logo should be original artwork. The winning concept will be converted to a digital file and originator must release all rights to the Lake Tahoe Humane Society.
- Concepts can be computer generated or hand drawn.
- Entries must be submitted by 5pm, May 31 to info@laketahoehumanesociety.org or at our office at 884 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe.

Utility worker found dead in

vehicle in EDC

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The death of a security service employee whose vehicle was found submerged in water near a Sacramento Municipal Utility District powerhouse in El Dorado County is under investigation.

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office was contacted by security service personnel about 11:15pm Tuesday regarding a distress call from one of their employees near the SMUD powerhouse on Peavine Ridge Road, east of Pollock Pines. The employee reported his vehicle was in the river at an unspecified location, according to a sheriff's office news release.

[Read the whole story](#)

EDC takes slow, methodical approach to VHRs



El Dorado County supervisors and staff hear from Tahoe residents on May 2 about vacation rentals. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

When it comes to vacation home rentals, baby steps by El Dorado County officials are not enough for many who for years have been annoyed by visitors making a raucous in their neighborhoods. At the same time, several others don't want to follow in the steps of South Lake Tahoe where \$2,000 fines for parking and horrific national media attention have followed its latest ordinance.

The Board of Supervisors on the evening of May 2 spent a couple hours talking VHRs to a crowd at South Tahoe Middle School.

While the electeds had wanted people to talk specifically to the proposed ordinance changes, the 23 people who spoke were all over the board. It was much of the same that has been said meeting after meeting.

CAO Don Ashton admitted the first step is to go after the "low hanging fruit," with more substantive changes to take more time.

On Wednesday the board voted 4-0 for staff to make basic changes to the existing ordinance, with the expectation it will be ready for a first reading on May 22. (Supervisor John Hidahl was absent.) If everything goes forward, the changes could be in effect in July.

Proposed ordinance changes from the 2004 document include:

- Increasing penalties to \$500, \$1,000, and \$1,500 within an 18-month period.
- Revoking permits based on nuisance behavior.
- Clarifying language throughout the document, including reducing subjectivity by eliminating phrases like “best efforts.”
- Requiring exterior signage that includes local contact information.
- Capping the number of occupants between 10pm and 8am; in other words, only occupants of the dwelling may be there between those hours, no guests of the renters’.
- The ordinance would be for the entire county, not just the Tahoe basin.
- Inspections would be required before a permit is issued, with health and safety being the overriding concerns.
- Have code enforcement handle VHRs.
- Bear-proof trash receptacles will be required.

“We as the ad hoc committee will still be looking at everything,” Supervisor Sue Novasel said. She and Supervisor Mike Ranalli are the duo on that committee. They will be at the magnet school in Meyers on May 9 starting at 5:30pm to hash out more VHR details.

Another change that was agreed to this week at the urging of

Supervisor Brian Veerkamp was to make the response time to complaints be 30 minutes instead of an hour.

Exact fees, such as for inspections, have not been determined. The price will be whatever it costs Lake Valley Fire to do the job. No profit will be made.

Supervisor Shiva Frentzen wanted to know how the city's VHR ordinance that took effect in late December has impacted the county. Novasel said it does not appear there has been a huge jump in permits being sought.

However, tax collector Cherie Raffety, whose department is responsible for VHRs, said as of mid-April there was a 13 percent increase in VHR permits compared to 2017.

There is no time line to implement further changes, or address the No. 1 issue of residents – noise.

More than once audience members brought up the desire for a VHR moratorium. On the flip side, VHR proponents said it's critical to base decisions on facts, citing how during the winter only eight noise complaints were filed South Lake Tahoe. Plus, there is the economic component, with jobs being what was talked about the most at the meeting.

In the county's proposed budget for 2018-19 is \$350,000 for code enforcement, an area El Dorado has skimmed on in the past. Short-term rentals would get a chunk of that cash, as well as other county programs.

Opinion: Los Angeles for

president

By Joe Mathews

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti is flirting with a presidential bid. Here is the announcement speech he should give.

America, I am running to restore a sense of decency, kindness, propriety, community, morality, and—of course—a fear of God.



Joe Mathews

I can lead this righteous crusade for one reason:

I come from Los Angeles.

I hear you laughing. I know you think my candidacy is a joke. I'm a mayor, not a governor (though my city has more people than 22 states). And I know people love to hate L.A.—a modern Sodom, fake, superficial, cynical.

Now, L.A. can be all of those things. (On the cynicism charge, we plead guilty to greenlighting 10 “The Fast and the Furious” films.)

But L.A. also represents something that America needs most desperately right now. All of today's American crises—around Trump, democracy, climate, economy, immigration—are really one larger crisis of faith.

And Los Angeles is the American capital of faith.

You are dubious and ask: Aren't we just a bunch of godless liberals? Liberal, sure. But godless? Hell, no.

For a century, Southern California has been our country's Jerusalem, a cradle of religions. We birthed Pentecostalism during the Azusa Street Revival, and established the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. The 1940 Works Progress Administration's guide to L.A. reported: "The multiplicity and diversity of faiths that flourish in the aptly named City of Angels probably cannot be duplicated in any other city on earth."

After World War II, Southern California was the site of Billy Graham's first great evangelistic crusade, and pioneered the American megachurch, with the Crystal Cathedral and Calvary Chapel, and more recently Rick Warren's Saddleback Church. Today, we're home to innovative big churches like Oasis and Mosaic, and major houses of worships of every significant world religion.

Why all this fervor? Because, even though Angelenos might look like life's winners, with our pretty faces and whitened teeth, our region is actually the world's biggest collection of losers. We are people, or descendants of people, who lost at politics, commerce, love, family, or religion someplace else. My own diverse ancestry—I'm Jewish, Italian, and Mexican—is really just different flavors of loss.

We would never have made it through terrible times without faith. Heck, the traffic is so bad that we can't make it to work without murmuring "Hail Marys" or "Allāhu akbar!"

There are three strong L.A. faiths—a welcoming spirit, a can-do spirit, and a fear of God—that have grown weak in the U.S. Here's a religious text for each.

"The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen

among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.” Leviticus 19:33

Through riots, serial killers, and Proposition 13, L.A. has retained its first faith—a welcoming spirit. We love to see people come here from elsewhere. And we have learned to appreciate immigrants, because they make our neighborhoods safer, buy our homes when we retire or die, invent new things, and join our families. When I see shrinking Midwestern towns, my first instinct as an Angeleno is to say, “You folks could sure use more immigration.”

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13

I don’t often quote St. Paul, but that’s one famous expression of the can-do spirit. And our city does. We have constructed a new transit system, reduced crime, revived South L.A., rebuilt schools, transformed downtown, and won the Olympics. If L.A. can do all this, there’s no earthly or divine reason that the U.S. can’t tackle its big problems.

“His judgment cometh, and that right soon.”

OK, that’s from “The Shawshank Redemption,” not the Torah. But it’s true: We Angelenos fear God’s destructive power.

We know that we are one great fire, one mudslide, one earthquake away from the end. And we take apocalyptic threats seriously. So should our country. Stop denying climate change—and start fighting it.

I know we elect people, not spirits, as presidents. I have as many faults as the ground beneath L.A. Angelenos will tell you that I’m way too cautious, and afraid of conflict. They may have a point. But when you look at President Trump, caution and risk aversion don’t sound so bad, do they?

Still, I’m not cautious about expressing my city’s faith in

the future. As Aimee Semple McPherson once preached in Echo Park: "With God, I can do all things! But with God and you, and the people who you can interest, by the grace of God, we're gonna cover the world!"

My fellow Americans, let's get back to that spirit! Let's get this country back to God! And let's get this country back to Los Angeles!

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Driver in SLT shopping center collision sought

South Lake Tahoe police officers are trying to find a driver involved in a hit and run accident at the Raley's center at the Y.

On April 30 at approximately 3:30pm a white Cadillac SUV was struck by a silver Dodge Charger. The Charger left the scene and the driver was not identified, according to officers.

Officers are trying to identify the driver in the silver Dodge Charger.

Anyone with information is asked to call 530.542.6110; leave your name and phone number.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care will celebrate its 40th anniversary on May 20 from 2-5pm at Revive in South Lake Tahoe.
- North America's largest electric mountain bike race series is coming to Northstar Sept. 15-16.
- The Parkinson's Disease Support Group meets the second Wednesday of month from 3-4pm. For questions, location and registration, contact Emily Barkley at 530.543.5712 or ebarkley@bartonhealth.org.
- There will be a forum May 9 for people to meet four of the Douglas County Commission candidates. It will begin at 6pm at the visitors center in Stateline.
- A READing Paws therapy dog can play a positive role in improving a child's literacy by being the perfect reading buddy. A Mutt and Greet will be at the Minden Library on May 19 from 2:30-4:30pm. Children will have an opportunity to read to a therapy dog. Children are also invited to wear a costume of their favorite dog in literature, cartoons, comic strips, or movies.

Nitrogen from rock could fuel more plant growth

By Benjamin Z. Houlton, The Conversation

Nitrogen is one of the most important resources for people, ecosystems and the planet. It's found in all sorts of

essential molecules, including DNA, protein and cell walls. Life – and humanity – cannot exist without adequate access to this precious nutrient.

For many years, researchers believed that essentially all of the nitrogen in the world's natural plants and soils originated from the atmosphere, where it makes up about 78 percent of the air we breathe. But in a recent study, my colleagues Scott Morford, Randy Dahlgren and I discovered that up to a quarter of the planet's terrestrial nitrogen originates from weathering of bedrock.

As a global environmental scientist who has been studying nitrogen, climate and ecosystems for over a decade, I found this result surprising. And it has big implications for people and the planet. If there is more nitrogen available in Earth's system than scientists have thought, it could fuel extra photosynthesis by plants, increasing the rate at which they pull carbon pollution out of the atmosphere.

But this isn't a solution to climate change, contrary to what some prominent pundits have contended. Rock weathering is no magic answer: It simply does not supply nitrogen fast enough to radically slow warming over the next 100 years.

Calculating Earth's nitrogen budget

Geologists have long known that there's a lot of nitrogen in rocks, but our study was the first to show that this nitrogen is released quickly enough to influence plant and soil nutrient cycling on a global scale. Nitrogen inputs are critical to maintaining ecosystems because they lose a bit of nitrogen every year. Rain washes it out of soil, and bacteria convert it to gaseous forms that escape to the atmosphere. Without ongoing access to new nitrogen sources, plants eventually would stop growing and pulling carbon dioxide out of the air.

Our study used several different techniques to show that rocks

are an important component of the planet's nitrogen cycle. In cases where weathering rates are high and sedimentary rocks contain a decent quantity of nitrogen, they actually provide more nitrogen than the atmosphere. We pulled together decades of data on where nitrogen exists – in the atmosphere, rocks, the ocean and Earth's mantle (the rock between its crust and its core), and used this information to build a picture of the planet's nitrogen budget.

This work revealed a critical role played by rock weathering. Many processes gradually break rocks down over time, including freezing and thawing, chemical reactions, and impacts of living organisms such as lichens and tree roots. Weathering releases nitrogen, replenishing nitrogen that continental erosion carries to the ocean over millions of years.

This initial finding was supported by a suite of classic geochemical models, evidence built from our global rock nitrogen inventory, and a new global computer model that we created for this study.

Until now researchers had assumed that the atmosphere was the main source of nitrogen for Earth's ecosystems. But they also had trouble explaining how so much nitrogen accumulated in ecosystems if it came solely from the atmosphere.

We identified bedrock as the source of this "missing nitrogen" by showing that rock weathering could help to meet nitrogen demand from plants and animals. In mountainous regions and areas with moist climates, where rocks are exposed and tend to weather quickly, we estimate that rock weathering doubles the amount of nitrogen that enters natural ecosystems.

Nourishing the carbon cycle

What does this mean for the carbon cycle and global climate change? Several computer simulations have shown that nitrogen affects carbon storage in a way that could substantially alter the amount of global warming that occurs in this century. Our

past work showed that ecosystems living on nitrogen-rich bedrock contained twice as much carbon in their soils and trees as those on nitrogen-poor bedrock. The nitrogen in the rock was feeding the ecosystem, allowing plants to accumulate more biomass than sites without much rock nitrogen weathering.

But rock nitrogen has always been a part of the planet, even if we weren't terribly mindful of it. Our study makes explicit a process that is already affecting the planet's carbon cycle. And it helps explain how plants and soils have absorbed roughly 30 percent of carbon emissions from human activities, even though nutrient constraints on plant growth are widespread.

Globally, ecosystems still derive more nitrogen from the air than from rocks. Nonetheless, our findings may help make global climate models more precise and resolve some puzzling observations at higher latitudes, which tend to hold more nitrogen in rocks. For example, boreal forest zones in northern Canada and Eurasia are storing carbon at a level higher than many scientists would have predicted, and are greening in response to climate change. We expect these regions may have high levels of nitrogen from rock weathering.

Rock nitrogen won't save us from climate change

Some pundits have argued that our work shows scientists don't have a firm grasp of such issues as global climate change. This view is wrong.

Our study highlights a role for rocks in supplying nitrogen to terrestrial ecosystems. It challenges a paradigm that was established as far back as the late 1800s, but this doesn't make us doubt the scientific process. Instead, we recognize that questions must always drive our thinking – for example, “I wonder whether rock nitrogen matters to the planet?”

Others have misinterpreted our work as evidence that the risk of extreme climate change has been overblown. For example,

conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh opined, “It’s a scientific report that carbon dioxide, CO₂, that which causes the greenhouse effect, is much, much, much less impactful than anybody knew.”

Wrong again. Our study said no such thing, and it does not imply that curbing global climate change is less urgent. Rock nitrogen can help fertilize the carbon cycle, but there is not enough of it to stop the rapid pace of global climate change. That will require aggressively cutting greenhouse gas emissions and creating technologies that can remove carbon from the atmosphere at a large scale over the next few decades.

Climate models consistently show that nature will not save us. We have to save ourselves – although rocks may provide us with a bit more cushion than we previously knew.

Benjamin Z. Houlton is a professor of global environmental studies, chancellor’s fellow and director, John Muir Institute of the Environment, UC Davis.

NHP going after distracted drivers

Law enforcement agencies throughout Nevada will be joining forces and focusing on distracted drivers through May 14.

The Nevada Highway Patrol will be working to urge motorists to keep drivers’ eyes on the road and put away cell phones or other items that cause distractions.

According to the NHP, 5 seconds is the average time eyes are

off the road while texting. When traveling at 55 mph, that is enough time to cover the length of a football field.

The following are safety precautions to minimize distractions while driving:

- Put your cell phone down and focus on the road;
 - When using electronic devices for directions, set the destination prior to driving;
 - Speak up when you're a passenger and your driver uses an electronic device while driving. Offer to call or text for the driver, so his or her full attention stays on the driving task;
 - Always wear your seat belt. Seat belts are the best defense against other unsafe drivers.
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Sierra meadow restoration: Where to start?

By Julie Fair, American Rivers

Over the last decade, momentum for restoring Sierra Nevada meadows has been building. The State of California and the U.S. Forest Service have both increasingly recognized the benefits of meadow restoration for California watersheds and are now committed to meadow restoration. Healthy meadows provide a suite of benefits including improved groundwater storage, enhanced water quality, reduced peak flood flows, and critical habitat.

However, with an estimated 50 percent of the 191,000 acres of meadow in the Sierra (Sierra Meadows Strategy, 2016) degraded by human impacts, it is difficult to know where to start. To

address this, in 2010, American Rivers partnered with UC Davis and the U.S. Forest Service to develop the Meadow Condition Scorecard, a rapid assessment method to quickly assess overall meadow condition and help identify meadows in need of restoration.

Read the whole story