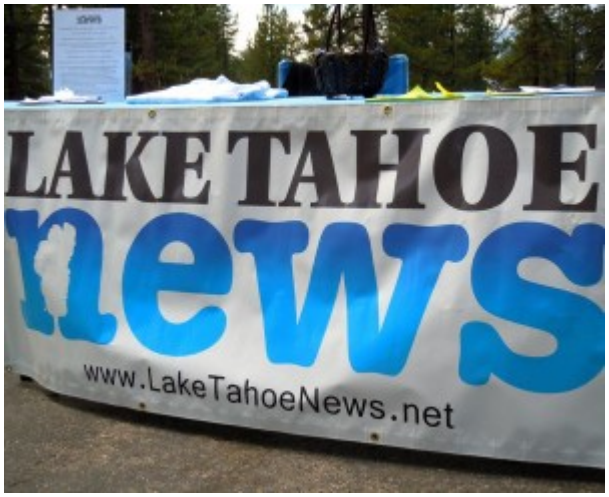
LTN tidbit 20: News content is a group effort



May is 31 tidbits about Lake Tahoe News month.

LTN tidbit No. 20:

People often ask where we come up with story ideas and why we didn't cover something.

You, the reader, provide so many of the ideas. Some stories are generated from meetings, just talking to people, being out in the community, localizing a national story, or going to an event.

And so much content is provided by readers in the form of letting us know about an event.

Lake Tahoe News is grateful to all of you for your ideas and the content you provide.

If we don't know about something, we can't cover it. That's why we rely on you to tell us what is going on so we can tell everyone else.

But we can't be everywhere. If money were of no issue, reporters could be dispatched to so many more events, meetings and other news events, as well as cover a plethora of feature stories. Unfortunately, this is a business and we don't have

the financial resources to be everywhere.

If you have an idea or want to have something published, send an email to info@LakeTahoeNews.net and we'll consider it.

Here is information about becoming a paid subscriber.

Healthy bones topic of lecture in Carson City

William Cottrell will discuss focusing on the makeup of healthy bones versus bones with osteoporosis, causes of osteoporosis and the diagnoses of osteoporosis at a free lecture June 27.

"Fractures after 50 years of age are a warning that your skeleton may be weak," Cottrell said in a statement. "Weaker bones that are prone to break is the general definition of osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a silent medical condition, meaning that you have no warning until a bone breaks."

Medical organizations, including the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, say 50 percent of second fractures can be prevented with appropriate evaluation and treatment.

The doctor will address the nutritional requirements and treatment options for fracture prevention.

The talk is at the Carson City Community Center, 851 E. William St., Carson City from 6-7pm.

Former Lake Valley fire chief becomes winemaker in retirement

By Lance Sparks, Eugene Weekly

The Broadleys' home, a dark, beveled-cedar single-story, sits near the top of the hill above their vineyards. From the front deck, the south Willamette Valley is revealed to the east – lush, green with farms, fields and stands of oaks and firs. On clear days, snow-capped peaks of the Cascades gleam in the sunlight, from Mt. Hood in the north to the Three Sisters in the south.

In front of the house, the Broadley Vineyards are just beginning to flush with new growth; especially enticing is the set of north-facing vines that produce the grapes for Claudia's Choice, Broadleys' premier bottling, their prize-winner.

The Broadleys pioneered this area, displacing Christmas-tree farms and goat ranching (Morgan Broadley has brought back goats) and proving that wine grapes, vinis vinifera, could thrive here and yield world-class wines. Thirty years of successful growing blazed a trail to Monroe, and others have followed.

Now, just downslope from the Broadley homestead and southerly

around the hill along Orchard Tract Road, a handsome wrought-iron gate, painted a shade of celadon, marks the entry to Whybra Vineyards. Nothing here invites visitors, especially not the slinking German shepherd who tracks the car just outside the driver's door. At the end of the steeply sloping crushed-basalt driveway sits a trailer under trees, a few sheds and outbuildings nearby.

Christi Alvarez – in broad-brimmed hat and blue rubber gloves – stays here with her two watchful hounds. She actually lives in Sun River and comes over to carefully tend her 11.5 acres of pinot noir. The vineyard was planted in 1992, but wines wearing the Whybra label didn't appear until 2007. Whybra 2009 Pinot Noir is not widely distributed but can be found at the Longbranch Saloon, just across the highway from the Broadley tasting room in Monroe.

Downslope, around the bend and up another crude driveway, we find the pole building that Brian and Therese Schafer converted to an apartment for themselves and a winery for their newly established TeBri Vineyards. They've just released their 2009 pinot noir, a palpable hit.

Before he retired, Brian had been fire chief in Lake Tahoe but concluded "firefighting at age 60 is not a good idea." How good an idea was it to start a vineyard?

Read the whole story

Obesity campaigns appear to

have the cause wrong

By Gary Taubes, Newsweek

Most of my favorite factoids about obesity are historical ones, and they don't make it into the new, four-part HBO documentary on the subject, The Weight of the Nation. Absent, for instance, is the fact that the very first childhood-obesity clinic in the United States was founded in the late 1930s at Columbia University by a young German physician, Hilde Bruch. As Bruch later told it, her inspiration was simple: she arrived in New York in 1934 and was "startled" by the number of fat kids she saw—"really fat ones, not only in clinics, but on the streets and subways, and in schools."

What makes Bruch's story relevant to the obesity problem today is that this was New York in the worst year of the Great Depression, an era of bread lines and soup kitchens, when 6 in 10 Americans were living in poverty. The conventional wisdom these days—promoted by government, obesity researchers, physicians, and probably your personal trainer as well—is that we get fat because we have too much to eat and not enough reasons to be physically active. But then why were the PC- and Big Mac—-deprived Depression-era kids fat? How can we blame the obesity epidemic on gluttony and sloth if we easily find epidemics of obesity throughout the past century in populations that barely had food to survive and had to work hard to earn it?

These seem like obvious questions to ask, but you won't get the answers from the anti-obesity establishment, which this month has come together to unfold a major anti-fat effort, including The Weight of the Nation, which begins airing May 14 and "a nationwide community-based outreach campaign." The project was created by a coalition among HBO and three key

public-health institutions: the nonprofit Institute of Medicine, and two federal agencies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health. Indeed, it is unprecedented to have the IOM, CDC, and NIH all supporting a single television documentary, says producer John Hoffmann. The idea is to “sound the alarm” and motivate the nation to act.

At its heart is a simple “energy balance” idea: we get fat because we consume too many calories and expend too few. If we could just control our impulses—or at least control our environment, thereby removing temptation—and push ourselves to exercise, we’d be fine. This logic is everywhere you look in the official guidelines, commentary, and advice. “The same amount of energy IN and energy OUT over time = weight stays the same,” the NIH website counsels Americans, while the CDC site tells us, “Overweight and obesity result from an energy imbalance.”

Read the whole story

People expected to make the drive to Tahoe for Memorial Day

Lake Tahoe is the No. 3 Gas Tank Getaway, according to TripAdvisor.

The travel website says Monterey is the No. 1 spot where people will drive to during Memorial Day weekend.

Other locations in the top five are Calistoga, Santa Barbara

and Santa Cruz.

TripAdvisor's survey says 34 percent of U.S. respondents plan to travel Memorial Day weekend, up from 26 percent in 2011. Most will do so by vehicle – 70 percent.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Opinion: Chemicals are disrupting the human body

By Nicholas D. Kristof, New York Times

Scientists are observing with increasing alarm that some very common hormone-mimicking chemicals can have grotesque effects.

A widely used herbicide acts as a female hormone and feminizes male animals in the wild. Thus male frogs can have female organs, and some male fish actually produce eggs. In a Florida lake contaminated by these chemicals, male alligators have tiny penises.

These days there is also growing evidence linking this class of chemicals to problems in humans. These include breast cancer, infertility, low sperm counts, genital deformities, early menstruation and even diabetes and obesity.

Philip Landrigan, a professor of pediatrics at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, says that a congenital defect called hypospadias – a misplacement of the urethra – is now twice as common among newborn boys as it used to be. He suspects endocrine disruptors, so called because they can wreak havoc with the endocrine system that governs hormones.

Read the whole story

Consensus on TRPA Regional Plan elusive at this point

By Kathryn Reed

Sides are clearly being drawn as the clock ticks on the comment period on the environmental impact statement for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Plan update.

TRPA Executive Director Joanne Marchetta is making the rounds pitching her agency's views that are contained in preferred alternative 3.

Meetings are scheduled to gain input and disseminate info.



The future of Lake Tahoe is likely to be determined by TRPA's Regional Plan update. Photo/LTN file

Conservation groups are sending out info saying why they believe the plan is flawed.

While most of those groups – with the League to Save Lake Tahoe being the largest – have been at the table as the process has been going along, they are not happy their entire proposal was not considered as one of the alternatives. Instead, alternative 2 is what TRPA calls the conservationists' alternative.

"We provided a 256-page Conservation Alternative to the TRPA. That alternative was discussed with the staff over a number of months," Laurel Ames, with the Tahoe Area Sierra Club, told *Lake Tahoe News* at the April 26 TRPA meeting. "We were shocked to find our alternative eviscerated and allegedly replicated as current alternative No. 2. The EIS analysis of alternative No. 2 does not reflect our alternative."

At that meeting, representatives of conservation groups lobbied for a 90-day comment period, but the Governing Board chose 60. The reasoning by the groups was the volume of material that needed to be read would be time consuming. The board's reasoning was to meet the goal of voting on the measure in December, the shorter time period was ideal.

Friends of the West Shore on May 17 in an email newsletter said, "The TRPA has provided stakeholders with only a 60-day period to comment on these documents. FOWS wants to inform you that we are reviewing these documents with technical consultants and will keep you abreast of each new development."

However, that group and others have already sent a letter to TRPA outlining concerns. *Lake Tahoe News* was sent a copy of this letter on Mother's Day weekend by neither a member of TRPA nor one of the groups.

So, despite needing time – the groups obviously have enough knowledge to know what they don't like and to voice their concerns.

That letter in part says, "It appears to us that the agency is

reversing many of the crucial regulations mandated by the Tahoe Regional Compact. We urge the TRPA Board to exercise prudence and do everything in its power to uphold, achieve, and maintain the environmental thresholds it is charged to enforce.

“It is our belief and concern that the proposed Regional Plan will neither restore nor protect the lake. Instead, it will open the floodgate one more time to rampant growth and high-density urbanization, thereby making more thresholds impossible to attain.”

The letter is signed by Laurel Ames – Tahoe Area Sierra Club, Darcie Goodman-Collins – League to Save Lake Tahoe, Susan Gearhart – Friends of the West Shore, David Hornbeck – Sierra Club-Toiyabe Chapter, Ann Nichols – North Tahoe Preservation Alliance, Scot Rutledge – Nevada Conservation League, Jerry Wotel – North Tahoe Citizens Action Alliance, Roger Patching – Friends of Lake Tahoe, and Ellie Waller – Tahoe Vista resident.

Marchetta, while speaking to Soroptimist International South Lake Tahoe on May 16, told the members to do their own research because a lot of misinformation is floating about.

She said TRPA’s goal to regulate growth worked so well that it has had the adverse affect of stagnating progress.

“The environment, economy and communities are inextricably linked. We are pursuing that goal through our Regional Plan update. Responsible environmentalism has to look at the whole system,” Marchetta said.

In the Friends of the West Shore newsletter, it states, “Preliminarily, FOWS is concerned that the RPU as currently written does not adequately protect the lake, and contains fundamental weaknesses that could prove to be the plan’s undoing. … There is simply no way the TRPA can comply with its central mandate of achieving and maintaining environmental

thresholds on the one hand and facilitating upland urbanization and unsustainable development on the other.”

Alarm bells are being raised about the prospect of increasing how tall a building can be and the density of development.

Marchetta at the Soroptimist meeting said, “We are proposing modest changes or additional height and density in 1 percent of the land area. We are not proposing to grow the basin; we are proposing to fix it.”

——

Dates to know:

• May 21, 5-8pm: Open house on the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Plan, The Chateau, 955 Fairway Blvd., Incline Village

• May 22, 5-8pm: Open house on the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Plan, TRPA office, 128 Market St., Stateline.

• May 23, 9:30am: TRPA Governing Board meeting public hearings, North Tahoe Events Center, 8318 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach.

• May 24, 9:30am: TRPA Governing Board meeting public hearings, TRPA office, 128 Market St., Stateline.

• June 11, 9:30am: Advisory Planning Commission public hearings, TRPA office, 128 Market St., Stateline.

• June 27, 9:30am: TRPA Governing Board public hearings, North Tahoe Events Center, 8318 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach.

• June 28, 9:30am: TRPA Governing Board public hearings, TRPA office, 128 Market St., Stateline.

———-

Other vital info:

The public comment period runs through June 28 for the environmental impact statements for the draft Regional Plan update and Regional Transportation Plan. Send comments to regionalplancomments@trpa.org or to mobility2035comments@trpa.org for the Regional Transportation Plan.

All of the documents are on the TRPA website.

California lagging behind other states in digging out of deficits

By David Siders, Sacramento Bee

The pile-on was in full effect within hours of Gov. Jerry Brown's announcement this week that California's budget deficit had grown to $15.7 billion, with *The Week* giving its national audience a summary of the Golden State's financial affairs.

"California's financial apocalypse," the magazine offered. "A concise guide."

Fox News played the Red Hot Chili Peppers' "Californication," and host Greg Gutfeld proclaimed Brown captain of "the Titanic that is California, a state so broke it may ask Greece for a loan."

On Friday, the Democratic governor slapped back on national TV.

“This is not Europe,” Brown told Charlie Rose on “CBS This Morning.” “This is still the Wild West, and we’re going to prove to the rest of this country and the world that we know how to do it.”

For Brown – and California – it may be a tough sell.

Though no part of the country was immune from the effects of the recession, California’s latest deficit projection comes as many other states begin to climb out of their own budget sloughs.

Fewer state budget deficits are being projected than in recent years, the National Conference of State Legislatures said in a report this month, with revenue in most states meeting or exceeding expectations.

“This is good news for state lawmakers who have closed more than $500 billion in budget gaps over the previous four fiscal years,” the report said.

As budget officials elsewhere were describing their financial situations as “cautiously optimistic” or “stable,” the Conference of State Legislatures said, California lawmakers “continue to cope with the state’s multibillion (dollar) gap between projected revenues and anticipated expenditures.”

On Friday, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office said California’s deficit may be even larger than Brown’s latest projection, perhaps higher than $17 billion. Though state revenue is growing, the amount is less than officials hoped.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe prime spot to see Sunday's solar eclipse

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Stargazing enthusiasts across Northern California are mobilizing for the biggest event of its kind to visit the region in two decades: a "Ring of Fire" solar eclipse visible across half the state Sunday evening.

The so-called "annular" eclipse means the moon will pass directly in front of the sun without obscuring it completely. As a result, the sun will appear as an orange ring in the sky.

The moon will be at one of its more distant points in its orbit around Earth, making it appear about 94 percent of the sun's diameter. The effect will be visible across virtually all of Northern California in a 200-mile-wide diagonal swath from the Oregon border to Lake Tahoe.

Some of the best viewing locations will include Crescent City, Redding, Susanville and, in Nevada, Pyramid Lake. These areas lie along the central path of the moon's alignment with the sun on Sunday evening, and the eclipse will be truly concentric along this path.

People in many other areas of Northern California and northern Nevada will be able to observe the annular effect, although not perfectly concentric.

The eclipse is expected to begin at about 5:13pm, when the moon starts its transit in front of the sun. The full annular effect will be visible for four and a half minutes starting at about 6:26pm Sunday, though the exact time and duration will

vary slightly depending on location.

Read the whole story

North Shore boat launches opening

Boating season is about to begin on the North Shore.

The North Tahoe Public Utility District has set hours for the North Tahoe Regional Park, Tahoe Vista Recreation Area Boat Launch and Coon Street Boat Launch.

North Tahoe Regional Park

Current hours are 7am-7:30pm. Beginning June 1, park hours will be from 7am-9pm.

Parking fees for the North Tahoe Regional Park are $3 for non-North Tahoe Public Utility District residents and free for residents.

Tahoe Vista Recreation Area

The boat launch opens for the season May 21, seven days a week from 7am-8pm.

Construction on the new parking lot for Tahoe Vista Recreation Area, on the orthwest corner of National Avenue and Highway 28, will take place this summer. Due to construction there will most likely be limited parking around TVRA.

Coon Street Boat Launch

The boat launch is open from 7am-7pm Thursday through Monday,

closed Tuesday and Wednesday. These hours may be adjusted as the summer progresses and usage trends are established

Boat launch and parking fees

Boat launch fees for Tahoe Vista Recreation Area and Coon Street Boat Launch are $5 for North Tahoe Public Utility District residents and $10 for non-residents. Season passes good for both launches are available for $50 for residents and $250 for non-residents. Parking fees for both areas are $5 for North Tahoe Public Utility District residents and $10 for non-residents. Season parking passes that include both parking areas are available for $100 for residents and $250 for non-residents.