Jockeying begins for California tax initiatives

By Kevin Yamamura, Sacramento Bee

The high-pressure game of signature gathering outside stores has turned into a mad dash to election offices across California as tax proponents submit their petitions for the November ballot.

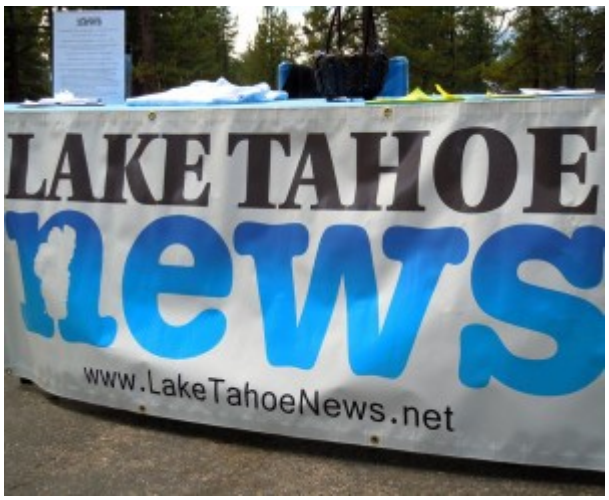
Gov. Jerry Brown is pinning his budget hopes on his multibillion-dollar tax hike on sales and high-income earners. But he faces a dogged challenge from wealthy civil rights attorney Molly Munger and the California State PTA, who said Monday that they submitted 848,000 signatures for a separate tax initiative, likely more than enough to qualify for November.

Munger's initiative would raise an estimated $10 billion annually for 12 years by hiking the state income tax on all but the poorest earners along a sliding scale. Money would flow to the state's K-12 schools and early childhood programs. For the first four fiscal years, the initiative would also provide $3 billion to help the state's general fund budget.

Munger, the daughter of billionaire Charles Munger, has been the sole financier of the campaign so far with $7.2 million in contributions to date.

Read the whole story

LTN tidbit 11: Being a paid subscriber comes with benefits



May is 31 tidbits about Lake Tahoe News month.

LTN tidbit No. 11:

Lake Tahoe News is looking for paid subscribers. This is so we can become an adjudicated publication. That means we will be able to publish the various legal notices online.

Here is information about becoming a paid subscriber and some of the details about adjudication. And unlike a subscription to a print publication where it's normal to have one per household, everyone in the household is encouraged to subscribe to *LTN*.

Get rid of stress right where you are

By Mandy Kendall

I think we've all had those drowsy, I-could-fall-asleep-standing-up times. They can hit you for all kinds of reasons; low blood sugar, lack of sleep or even boredom. Then there are the "I'm so stressed I could scream" times as well. So what can you really do about them?

Some of us might reach for caffeine or something sweet to perk us up, or other substances to chill us out, but in the long run is that what's best for us?



Mandy Kendall

Most of the time artificial stimulants or depressants just mask the issues and come with myriad side effects, often making the initial issue seem pretty insignificant.

So here are a few *Qwik-e* tips (quick and easy and in most instances they take about a minute, or less) to help boost your energy levels and mood without relying on anything artificial.

Just breathe – During times of stress, high concentration or low energy, our breathing tends to get pretty shallow, which in itself doesn't help us to feel energized. So a few slow deep breaths will help increase blood flow (and wake us up)

and reduce adrenaline levels (to calm us down). Try gently pushing your shoulders down and pushing your belly out when you breathe in. You may feel a bit of tightness in your diaphragm (just below your rib cage) that can be a sign that it's not being used very much and needs a good stretch anyway. Five breaths (counting to 4 while inhaling and to 4 while exhaling) will do wonders for your body and help wake you up, or calm you down if that's what you need.

Stretch – This can be a wonderful energizer. It increases blood flow, helping to carry all that wonderful oxygen you've just breathed in around your body. I'm not necessarily talking about the kind of stretching you see people do after exercise either. I'm talking about the reach for the sky, stretch out your fingers and toes, kind of stretch. You can do this seated or standing. Just go gently and don't stretch past that 'ooh that feels good' part of the stretch. This kind of stretch is not designed to give you more flexibility, just wake up a sleepy body.

Smile – Even if we don't necessarily feel like it, smiling has a number of great health benefits. Even a fake smile can trick the brain into releasing endorphins (our happy hormones) making us feel happier, reducing stress and lowering blood pressure that in turn boosts our immune system. Smiling is also contagious, so your smile will help other people too. Not bad for something that's free and good for you.

Talk – So, you've been smiling, and people are smiling back and everyone is feeling happier, how about you take the next step and talk to them? In today's high-tech world of emails and texts we sometimes lose sight of the fact that we are social creatures who thrive best in a community. So much of our communication is through personal interaction and speaking face to face with someone conveys so much more than an email. Even calling someone achieves much more than a text. I know texts save time but try, maybe just once a day, calling someone rather than texting them. If you're really short on

time you can always start the conversation by saying, “I’ve only got a minute but I really wanted to hear your voice/call you/say hi and see how you’re doing”. If you manage to make each other laugh at the same time, it really could make a difference for both of you.

Be grateful – During stressful times it sometimes helps to put things into perspective by thinking about things we are grateful for. Just taking a few moments to count our blessings diverts our brains from forming a negative pathway in our thought processes and helps form new positive pathways instead.

You could also enlist the help of people you work with, or spend time with, to join you in some of these techniques to help counteract times of low energy or stress. Group interaction can be a great motivator and it’s much more fun too!

Finally, if you feel like a bit of multitasking how about doing a few at the same time? Have a big stretch, put a smile on your face, breathe deeply and say thank you. You never know, once people realize you’re not going nuts, it might just catch on.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and wellbeing topic, please feel free to drop me an email at healthconnective@gmail.com, visit us on Facebook, or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Lake Tahoe Water Trail has a new website.

• “Tahoe Blues” will be available June 7. Have you ordered your copy?

• AT&T won’t be building a cell phone town at Incline High School after residents voiced their concerns.

• According to GFK Mediamark Research and Intelligence, 79.1 million Americans participated in a barbecue in 2010.

• Tony Rodio, president of the Tropicana Resort in Atlantic City, has been named CEO of the casino’s parent company, which owns MontBleu at Stateline.

Opinion: Barton board in good hands

To the community,

First, I want to thank the members of the Barton Association for their years of support for the hospital and their active participation in the board election. This year, two of our outstanding members, John Cefalu and Dr. Paul Rork, were re-

elected for a new three-year-term.

Mr. Cefalu has been a member of the board for 19 years and has distinguished himself as the board’s secretary/treasurer for many years, highlighted by his expertise in the financial management of the hospital system.



Guy Lease

Dr. Rork has brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the board as a medical practitioner, with a long and valued career of serving our community.

I am pleased to welcome Rhonda McFarlane to the board. With her many years as a chief financial officer with local public entities and her training as a certified public accountant, she will bring a fresh perspective to the financial leadership the board provides to Barton hospital administration.

Ms. McFarlane replaces outgoing board member Hal Cole who has been particularly vital to the board on issues relating to the city of South Lake Tahoe, TRPA, capital projects, budget and boardsmanship.I have greatly appreciated his service and sage counsel during my years on the board. We wish him well as he seeks other avenues of service to the community. We will miss him.

Guy Lease, Barton Health board of directors chairman

Barton Health, Board of Directors as of May 24:

Guy Lease, chairman

Chuck Scharer, vice chair

John Cefalu, secretary/treasurer

Greg Bergner

Roy “R.J.” Clason Jr.

Paul J. Fry II

Kirk Ledbetter

Rhonda McFarlane

Terry Orr

Paul Rork

Dena Schwarte

Farmers market season about to begin in Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

A true sign winter really is history is when seasonal farmers markets open.

Placerville’s market opened last Saturday; Tahoe City’s opens later this month; and the two South Lake Tahoe markets start in June.

While fresh produce is the thrust of the markets, it is a growing business venture, too. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there are 7,175 farmers markets in the country. There were half that many less than 10 years ago.



Lots of greens are expected when the South Lake Tahoe Tuesday farmers market opens June 5. Photos/LTN file

The USDA estimates farmers markets are a $1 billion a year business. However, that represents just 2 percent of retail farm sales in the U.S.

Jim Coalwell, who runs the Tuesday certified market in South Lake Tahoe, partly attributes the success of markets to people wanting to know where their food comes from.

He said the markets have weathered the recession well. One thing that hurts the Tahoe market is the dwindling population.

Coalwell, with wife Lois, run five markets – most in El Dorado County.

The market at the American Legion parking lot off Highway 50 will open June 5. Like past years, it will run from 8am-1pm each Tuesday until the weather says it’s time to fold up the tables for the season.

The other South Shore market returns to Ski Run Boulevard on June 22. New this year is that it will be on Fridays from 3-8pm. The boulevard is closed between Birch and Larch streets.

This will be the third year for the Ski Run market, but its second full year.

Alex Mellon, who runs this market, told *Lake Tahoe News* it will be like a brand new market.

“It will be more like street festival atmosphere,” Mellon said. “It is a certified farmers market, so you have to have more farmers than crafts.”

Still, he is working on bringing in a number of artist-type booths. He’s also in discussions with Blue Angel Café for the restaurant to provide a beer garden.

“It will be a unique dynamic,” Mellon said of what is planned. Food, crafts and music are expected to be part of the mix.

While the Tuesday market is more traditional, Coalwell said what would be most noticeable on day one is the number of vendors.



Asparagus was a big seller in June last year.

“Everything looks really good. We should see cherries the

first day and peaches, and a lot of greens," Coalwell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

A blueberry grower from Orland should be at the first few markets before more regional blueberries ripen.

Early season peaches will be from the Modesto area before the foothill trees start producing.

Coalwell said on May 5 at the Placerville market he tasted the cherries from a Stockton grower – and then went on to rave about them. Those growers will be in Tahoe in a matter of weeks.

With a good winter, consumers should expect to see more fruit available compared to a year ago.

Coalwell said the late rains were a good omen for this year's harvest. The lack of hard frosts also is good for farmers.

A couple new vendors will be someone selling tablecloths and a local chef who is expected to cook with some of the products available at the market.

Other regional farmers markets:

Tuesdays:

• Truckee: Truckee River Regional Park

10500 Brockway Road off Highway 267

June-October, 8am–1pm

• Kings Beach: Kings Beach SRA

Highway 28 at Bear Street

June 8-Sept. 7, 9am-1pm

• Minden

Esmeralda Avenue

June 1-September, 4-8pm

Wednesdays:

• Carson City: Pony Express Pavilion in Mills Park

Highway 50 East and Saliman Road

June 8-Aug. 31, 3-7pm

• Gardnerville: Lampe Park Farmer’s Market

Waterloo Drive, one block west of Highway 395

June 2-Sept. 15, 8am-1pm

Thursdays:

• Truckee: Donner Pass near the train station

June-August, 4-6pm

• Tahoe City: Commons Beach

Commons Beach Road and North Lake Boulevard

May 27-Sept. 30, 8am-1pm

Saturdays:

• Carson City: Saturday Morning Farmer’s Market

Third and Curry streets

June 11, 8:30am-1:30pm.

1 person dies in head-on collision on North Shore

By News 10-KXTV

A head-on collision has killed one driver and caused major injuries to at least one other person in a second vehicle on Highway 28 in North Lake Tahoe.

The crash was near Ridgewood Drive and occurred at approximately 11:45am May 10, said California Highway Patrol Officer Tim Andrade.

Involved were a blue Toyota Tundra SUV and a gray Toyota Tacoma pickup, Andrade said.

Names of the motorists have not been released.

California lawmakers lecture Boy Scouts on discriminatory practices

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

Stressing to millions of boys the value of honesty, loyalty, honor and good deeds is not enough to win a commendation from the California Assembly – if you exclude gays and atheists.

Boy Scouts of America, one of the last major youth

organizations to deny membership because of sexual or religious views, was applauded Tuesday for its good works but ripped by a legislative committee as hurtful to many families.

The Assembly dust-up comes in the wake of national headlines stemming from the ouster last month of an Ohio Cub Scout leader, Jennifer Tyrrell, 32, because she is lesbian.

Tuesday's controversy also marks the latest jab by a Democratic-controlled Legislature against a private organization that won a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2000 ensuring its free-speech right to exclude gays and lesbians from membership.

"The continued discriminatory policy of the Scouts is deeply offensive to me," said Assemblyman Mike Feuer, a Los Angeles Democrat who chairs the Judiciary Committee that met Tuesday.

The slap at the Boy Scouts came on the same day that the Senate's Judiciary Committee passed a bill banning minors from participating in controversial therapy programs to change their sexual orientations, and requiring adults to sign consent forms indicating they understand potential dangers.

Friction over the Boy Scouts was sparked by a proposed commendation, Assembly Concurrent Resolution 94, to applaud the group for its commitment to train youths in responsible citizenship, character development, leadership and public service.

Read the whole story

California one of the most unfriendly states for small businesses

By Tiffany Hsu, Los Angeles Times

How do we appropriately express just how unpopular California has become with businesses? It’s like Brussels sprouts to a kid, John Travolta among masseurs, the Clippers in Memphis … you get the idea.

The latest Golden State basher? A survey of more than 6,000 small businesses from Thumbtack.com and the nonprofit Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, which gave California (along with Hawaii, Vermont and Rhode Island) an F grade for friendliness.

Idaho, Texas, Oklahoma and Utah scored A-pluses. Three of the top five ranked cities are in Texas: Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin. Four of the five cities in California — Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco and Sacramento — have D grades or lower.

Among the 50 states, California’s growth rate and current economic health was ranked 41st; the level of optimism about the future was 35th.

Read the whole story

Nevada to consolidate

workforce development boards

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY —- A state agency announced this week it plans to consolidate three boards that oversee workforce development into one, resulting in $5 million more in federal funds directed annually to helping train job seekers to find employment.

The plan, “Moving Nevada Forward: A Plan For Excellence in Workforce Development,” was released by the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR).

Currently, funding is provided from the federal Department of Labor to the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board and funneled to two local boards, one in Southern Nevada and the other in Northern Nevada. These boards in turn contract with public and private organizations to offer workforce training programs to youth and adult and dislocated workers.

But a recent audit of this system by the state Division of Internal Audits revealed that too many federal dollars are lost to administrative and duplicate costs.

“I have charged everyone in my administration with looking closely at the functions of their offices, boards and commissions to eliminate duplications and streamline services with the goal of leveraging resources already available and trimming unnecessary overhead,” Gov. Brian Sandoval said. “This new plan calls for greater collaboration between workforce development and the newly restructured Governor’s Office Economic Development, which earlier this year released its plan under the ‘Moving Nevada Forward’ label as well. A key area of focus for my administration is building the type of trained workforce that will support economic diversification.”

Organizations currently contracted as service providers to citizens for workforce needs will continue in the same capacity, but will be managed by DETR staff instead of the northern and southern board offices. Federal funding designated for each of the local workforce investment areas will remain unchanged; no geographic area of the state gains or loses under the reorganization and existing providers can remain in place if they are delivering the appropriate level of service to the end-user.

“This new plan will result in a significant amount of funds being spent directly for much-needed services, as we are essentially removing an administrative layer of expense,” DETR Director Frank R. Woodbeck said. “Administrative functions would be moved to DETR and community service providers will continue to deliver direct services to job seekers.”

The restructuring is expected to be complete by December 2012.

The audit of the state’s two local workforce investment boards found the Southern Nevada agency spent nearly twice as much on administration and monitoring of its programs than its northern counterpart.

If the southern board cut its local expenses to mirror those of the northern Nevada board, another $1.9 million would have been available to job seekers in fiscal year 2011, the review found. The audit showed the Southern Nevada board, called Workforce Connections, spent 21 percent on administration and monitoring compared to only 11.3 percent in the north.

Ardell Galbreth, interim executive director of Workforce Connections, said that major changes have been implemented to reduce administrative and other costs. He took the position on April 5.

Galbreth said last week the 2012 budget has been revised to ensure that no more than 20 percent of the funding will go to program and administrative costs. The staff of 72 at the board

is also being reduced to 34 by the end of the year if not before, he said.