Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• North Lake Tahoe Water Shuttle starts up June 21. Here is more info.

• Tahoe Cross Country has hired Wilson Dippo as the junior development and competition team head coach.

• Dollar Tree, which will be opening in Zephyr Cove, is looking for employees.

• Bri Biller is running the Pearl Izumi shop in South Lake Tahoe.

• The annual summer carnival at Horizon is moving to MontBleu in Stateline from June 4-8.

Compromise federal water bill unveiled

By Henry C. Jackson, AP

WASHINGTON — House and Senate negotiators on Thursday unveiled a compromise bill that authorizes billions of dollars for water projects over the next decade, from flood protections in California to deepening Georgia’s rapidly growing Port of Savannah.

Lawmakers released details of the Water Resources Reform and Development act a week after they announced a tentative agreement on legislation that blends House and Senate versions of the bill. The legislation will authorize 34 projects in virtually every region of the country. Lawmakers say it provides important investment in the nation's water infrastructure.

"This legislation is about jobs and our country's economic prosperity, and I look forward to bringing to back to the House for a final vote," said Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, who filed the bill Thursday.

The proposed investments include projects related to both expansion and flood protection.

The bill sanctions more than $748 million in federal funds for dredging and widening of the Sabine-Neches Waterway, an area billed as "America's Energy Gateway" because the roughly 80-mile waterway services oil and natural gas refineries in Texas and Louisiana. The legislation also authorizes as much as $800 million for a flood diversion project that would protect the Red River Valley region of North Dakota and parts of Minnesota, which have suffered major floods in four of the past five years.

The Senate passed its version of the bill roughly a year ago, with the House following suit in October. Since then, lawmakers have been working to thrash out differences between the two bills. The Senate's version would authorize about $12.5 billion over the next decade, while the House's version would cost about $8.2 billion. The compromise is expected to land somewhere in between the two, but a Congressional Budget Office estimate was not yet available.

Lawmakers have expressed a pent up demand for a water projects bill. Congress last authorized a bill in 2007 and many

lawmakers have said they feared the U.S. was falling behind in its water infrastructure.

Congress would have to pass separate legislation to pay for all of the projects included in the bill.

The House is expected to vote on the bill as early as Tuesday, with the Senate following suit. Both versions of the bill easily passed previously. With the estimated cost of the bill expected to rise, though, there is some concern that more conservative Republicans might vote against it. Outside groups, including Heritage Action, have said the bill does not do enough to rein in spending.

But businesses groups – and many lawmakers – have called both versions of the bill a potential jobs engine, citing the investment in infrastructure. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has also lobbied lawmakers in both houses to pass the bill, saying it will ensure that American businesses stay competitive.

“Legislation to improve the nation’s marine transportation system is long overdue and will grow jobs, boost international trade … and strengthen America’s competitive edge,” said Janet Kavinoky, the executive director transportation and infrastructure with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

One effort to try to keep conservative lawmakers on board is preserved in the compromise. Addressing past concerns that water projects bills were loaded with favors for lawmakers’ districts and states, the compromise legislation eliminates roughly $18 billion in dormant projects that were authorized prior to 2007.

The bill also sets specific time and cost limits for studies on potential projects, eliminates duplicative reviews and includes language that speeds up the environmental review process for projects.

The compromise legislation will also increase spending from

the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, which will be used to fund improvements to ports and creates a five-year pilot program to provide loans and loan guarantees for various water projects.

Tahoe residents graduating from UNR

A number of Tahoe area residents will graduate today from UNR.

In all, the university will confer 2,251 degrees and certificates. There will be three ceremonies, one for advanced-degree recipients this afternoon, and two for bachelor-degree recipients the mornings of May 16 and May 17. All three ceremonies will be on the university's Quadrangle, located on the southern part of campus.

Here are Tahoe grads:

Ryan Gutknecht, Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering, Glenbrook

Tara Madden, Doctor of Philosophy, Incline Village

Virginia Bowman, Master of Music, Incline Village

Clare Pace: Master of Public Health, Incline Village

Stephen Krueger, Bachelor of Science, Business Administration Management, Incline Village

Kyle Richter, Bachelor of Arts, International Affairs and Political Science, Incline Village

Lauren Wilson, Bachelor of Arts, Criminal Justice, Incline Village

Joseph Lamb, Bachelor of Science, Biology, Incline Village

Jonathan Mandio, Bachelor of Science, Geography, Incline Village

Joana Wu, Master of Science, Elementary Education, Kings Beach

Jennifer Gibbons, Bachelor of Science, Speech Pathology, Kings Beach

Trevor Miller, Bachelor of Science, Environmental Engineering, South Lake Tahoe

Carolyn Triano, Doctor of Philosophy, Literacy Studies, South Lake Tahoe

Robin Mccully, Master of Education, Literacy Studies, South Lake Tahoe

Chelsea Garbarini, Master of Education, Special Education, South Lake Tahoe

Jessica Perasso, Bachelor of Science, Nutrition, South Lake Tahoe

Devin Gonzales Blom, Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, South Lake Tahoe

Jordan Zager, Bachelor of Science, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Zephyr Cove

Michaela Murphy, Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, Zephyr Cove

Jordan Zager, Bachelor of Science, Biology, Zephyr Cove

Lauren Andrew, Bachelor of Science, Community Health Sciences, Zephyr Cove

Sarah Ehrler: Bachelor of Science, Biology, Stateline

Caitlin Robinson: Bachelor of Science, Nursing, Stateline.

LTCC students to show off artwork

Lake Tahoe Community College's Art Department's annual Student Art Exhibition, showcasing up-and-coming South Lake Tahoe artists who have enrolled in art classes during the last academic year, is May 18-June 14.

The opening reception is May 18 from 2-5pm with music, refreshments, and the awards ceremony at 3:30pm in the main building on campus.

Megan Berner is the juror for the exhibition. Berner is a UNR Art Department photography faculty member, as well as a photography, video, and installation artist.

The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Plastic bag ban working in South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

If the number of people who showed up at a meeting this week about South Lake Tahoe's plastic bag ban is an indication of it how it is working, it's working well.

Four members of the public attended the May 14 meeting to talk about what is working and what isn't. Mayor Hal Cole and

Councilmember JoAnn Conner were also in attendance. City Attorney Tom Watson ran the meeting.

On this same day a state Assembly panel moved forward a proposal to ban plastic bags throughout California.

The ban for South Lake Tahoe grocery stores started in mid-January, while others will not be able to hand out the one-time use bags starting Oct. 15.

Connie Hinton, who owns a thrift store in town, worries about what will happen when she is no longer allowed to package people's goods in plastic bags. She said it would have an economic impact.

Today she is given bags from customers – plastic and paper – that she reuses for other customers. She would still be able to use the paper.

Hinton said there is a bit of inequity in that the Attic, another thrift store, will be able to use plastic bags in the future because it is a nonprofit.

Nonprofits are exempt from the bag ban. However, it is still impacting them. Bread & Broth used to have a plethora of grocery store plastic bags to fill with goods for people to take with them at the end of the meal. Now the group is relying on other businesses to donate bags, such as Heavenly Sports and Michael's.

Priscilla Rohrich's problem with the ban is that she said it isn't helping the environment because people are buying boxes of plastic bags to line their garbage cans instead using a bag that once held groceries. She has a problem with corporations benefiting from South Lake Tahoe's decision.

Karen Fink, who was instrumental in bringing the bag ban to the council, said she finds no need to buy bags. Her family has found ways to use bags from cereal boxes, bread and other

items in lieu of the grocery store plastic bags.

Councilmember Conner made the false comment that some stores have stopped charging for paper.

When Fink asked her which stores, Conner snidely said, “You are going to have to figure that out yourself.”

So, *Lake Tahoe News* did. What was discovered is Conner was lying. Raley’s charges 5 cents for paper, Safeway 10 cents for paper, and Grocery Outlet 5 cents for paper and 10 cents for reusable plastic bags.

The four major grocery stores in the city limits (there are two Raley’s) all say the ban wasn’t welcome at first, but now customers have gotten used to it.

Victor Guerrero at the Raley’s near Stateline told *Lake Tahoe News* people even sued the chain because of the policy. The store prevailed.

“It’s working. People are slowly remembering their bags,” Guerrero said of people using reusable bags.

A Safeway clerk said a good number of people bring their own bags, while others pay for paper.

Conner also said there has been more shoplifting with people filling reusable bags or walking out with carts full of goods. None of the above mentioned stores mentioned this as a problem to *Lake Tahoe News*.

The council is expected to discuss the plastic bag ban at the June 17 meeting.

Opinion: Calif. cities not faring as well as state

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

The state budget is largely financed by personal income taxes, and thanks to an improving economy and a temporary tax increase approved by voters two years ago, it is enjoying surpluses after years of deficits.

Indeed, the big conflict in the Capitol this year is over competing priorities for billions of extra bucks.



Dan Walters

Gov. Jerry Brown wants to devote most of the extra money on debt repayment and reserves, but his fellow Democrats in the Legislature want more spending, ranging from universal pre-kindergarten to health and welfare services.

Cities, however, are not sharing in the income tax cornucopia because their budgets are based on sales and property taxes, and neither is generating the big gains that an up-cycle brings to the income tax system.

Residential and commercial construction, a source of property tax gains, remains somewhat sluggish. Ditto for retail sales as consumers, still reeling from the effects of recession, remain skittish.

As officials in cities large and small begin work on their

2014-15 budgets, therefore, they are seeing very tight times ahead, not only because of modest revenue growth, but because they face rapidly escalating costs for retiree pensions and health care.

Read the whole story

Letter: TAP appreciates community support

To the community,

Bueno Kettlesen of Bert’s Café recently hosted a spaghetti night fundraiser for Tahoe Arts Project. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by many.

All of us at Tahoe Arts Project would like to thank Kettlesen and the cooks at Bert’s for helping to make this fundraiser a success. The spaghetti was delicious.

A big thank you to all of you who had dinner with us that evening and to the volunteers and TAP board members who served our guests.

Tahoe Arts Project is a nonprofit organization that brings professional performing arts into the schools and community of South Lake Tahoe. Event proceeds will benefit over 4,500 K-12 students who see our programs.

If you would like to know how you can support Tahoe Arts Project, please call 530.542.3632.

Thank you.

Peggy Thompson, executive director, Tahoe Arts Project

USFS thinning trees by STHS, Sand Pit

The U.S. Forest Service this week started thinning trees for fuels reduction and forest health near South Tahoe High School and the Sand Pit OHV area in South Lake Tahoe.

The Forest Service has closed the areas in units 19 and 117 from 7am-6pm daily through Oct. 14 for public safety due to heavy equipment operations and falling trees.

Project work will not occur on Memorial Day Weekend. Thinning at the Sand Pit is expected to be completed by the end of May or early June, at which time the Sand Pit will reopen.

Hazards may be present even when operations have finished for the day and the closure is not in effect. Individuals disregarding the closure may be cited, with subsequent fines or jail time.

Paper, plastic loyalty cards becoming obsolete

By John Ewoldt, Minneapolis Star Tribune

The days of the “buy-10-get-one-free” loyalty punch card are

as numbered as the paper punch itself.

Mom-and-pop restaurants, convenience stores and pet groomers are joining national programs that equip them with an iPad at the register where a customer either swipes a loyalty card or waves a smartphone to record the purchase and any reward. National programs such as Belly, SpotOn, Perkville and FiveStars use cloud and mobile technology to enable retailers to offer programs that reward the customer faster and with more creativity than a punch card.

“Within five to 10 years, we’ll move away from punch cards and key fobs and even apps and go to smartphones,” said Rik Reppe, director of PricewaterhouseCoopers’ customer experience practice in Minneapolis.

Many consumers collect reward cards like playing cards, thumbing through more than a dozen in their wallet or purse. The average consumer has 18 cards, but only uses eight actively, according to the market research firm Colloquy in Cincinnati.

Read the whole story

Early fitness may improve middle-age brain

By Gretchen Reynolds, New York Times

The more physically active you are at age 25, the better your thinking tends to be when you reach middle age, according to a large-scale study. Encouragingly, the findings also suggest that if you negligently neglected to exercise when young, you

can start now and still improve the health of your brain.

Those of us past age 40 are generally familiar with those first glimmerings of forgetfulness and muddled thinking. We can’t easily recall people’s names, certain words, or where we left the car keys. “It’s what we scientists call having a C.R.S. problem,” said David R. Jacobs, a professor of public health at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and a co-author of the new study. “You can’t remember stuff.”

But these slight, midlife declines in thinking skills strike some people later or less severely than others, and scientists have not known why. Genetics almost certainly play a role, most researchers agree. Yet the contribution of lifestyle, and in particular of exercise habits, has been unclear.

Read the whole story