Control burn in Angora area today

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews began limited prescribed fire operations in the Angora area today. Scheduled operations were delayed a day due to weather. Crews conducted a test ignition this morning and weather conditions today will determine the size of the project. Operations will not take place over the weekend.

Residents and visitors can expect to see smoke from this prescribed fire project area. Smoke may be visible on Highway 89 near the Camp Richardson-Pope Beach areas.

The Forest Service strives to minimize the impacts of smoke on local communities. Smoke-sensitive residents should consider staying indoors and keeping doors, windows and outside vents closed.

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

Forest Service staff will post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, and update the local fire information line at (530) 543.2600, No. 6.

Holland on podium in World

Cup SBX in Switzerland

By U.S. Snowboarding News Bureau

VEYSONNAZ, Switzerland – Lindsey Jacobellis of Stratton Mountain, Vt., bumped her "most dominant snowboardcross rider in the world" moniker one more notch Thursday with the 24th World Cup SBX victory of her career.

Teammate and fellow X Games gold medalist Nate Holland of Squaw Valley was second in the men's event, while Russian Andrey Boldykov snatched the win.

Jacobellis remained unbeaten after her season-opening victory in the USANA Snowboardcross Cup in Telluride earlier in the season.

The second place finish for Holland was his best since winning in Lech, Austria, in December 2010.

"It was one helluva day racing. It was fun. It's one of the most unique courses on the World Cup tour, just the amount of speed that we have out of the start, which I personally love," Holland said. "After the start the course kind of tightens down, so it's nice to be out in front. I saw some carnage today in turn two. It happened in two of my heats. You pick your line and stick to it. It's kind of no matter what comes."

Debate grows over exporting U.S. natural gas

By Simone Sebastian, Houston Chronicle

Debate is brewing over whether to keep the nation's glut of natural gas at home for cheap energy or export it at five times the price, possibly creating jobs and boosting the domestic economy.

Businesses that purchase natural gas for industrial and residential use have rallied against proposals to liquefy and export the fossil fuel to Asian and European nations willing to pay much higher prices.

Nine companies have sought federal approval to export about 10 billion cubic feet of liquefied natural gas per day, which would boost prices for U.S. customers.

Cheniere Energy's Sabine Pass LNG plant in Louisiana already has won approval to ship out more than 2 billion cubic feet of liquefied natural gas a day.

In total, the proposed export volume equals about 14 percent of the natural gas produced in the United States – 26.8 trillion cubic feet in 2010, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. The U.S. consumed about 23.8 trillion cubic feet.

There's little doubt that exports will cause the price of natural gas to rise. The debate is whether the rise in gross domestic product and gas field employment might offset the negative effects of higher domestic energy prices.

"I don't think anybody knows the answer to that question, which we think argues for slowing down these (export) facilities," said Dave Schryver, executive vice president of

the American Public Gas Association, a trade group for municipal gas utilities.

“Until you have a strong, accurate view of what the impact is going to have on consumers, it’s premature.”

The price of natural gas in the U.S. has plummeted as technology has made it economical to extract natural gas from dense shale rock.

Read the whole story

California top state for how it treats animals, Nevada ranked 30th

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – Nevada ranked 30th among the states in how it protects animals in 2011, scoring only 25 points out of a possible 66, the Humane Society of the United States said in a national report this week.

Ranking first with 46 points was California, followed by New Jersey and Oregon with 40 points. In last place was South Dakota with eight points, with Idaho second to last with nine points.

Nevada improved its score from 2010, but the organization noted that the state’s laws regarding the possession of dangerous wild animals are weak. Nevada ranked 30th in 2010 but had 24 points, one fewer than in the 2011 report card.

The third annual rating evaluates the states on a wide range of animal protection laws, including animal cruelty codes, equine protection standards, wildlife issues, animals in research and farm animal policy.

“Our Humane State Ranking provides a big-picture look at how states are faring on animal-protection policies, and how they rank in the nation,” Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of HSUS, said. “There are some states that are adopting innovative and strong policies to protect animals, while others are lagging badly. Animal protection is a serious matter for tens of millions of Americans, and we hope state lawmakers fulfill their moral responsibility and help us crack down on abuses.”

Nevada’s ranking was unchanged despite several measures approved by the 2011 Legislature to further protections for animals.

They included Senate Bill 223, sponsored by Sen. Shirley Breeden, D-Henderson, and Sen. David Parks, D-Las Vegas, known as “Cooney’s Law” after a dog brutally killed with a box cutter, was the highest profile animal welfare measure considered during the session. The new law makes willful or malicious cruelty to pet animals a felony on the first offense. Under previous law, a felony charge could be issued only after a third act of cruelty.

Also winning approval were:

– SB226, sponsored by Sen. Sheila Leslie, D-Reno, Parks, and Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, D-Las Vegas, requiring the wildlife commission to regulate leg hold traps in congested areas.

– SB299, sponsored by Sen. Mark Manendo, D-Las Vegas, requiring commercial dog breeders to be licensed and to have regular county inspections, bans the stacking of cages and the use of wire floors in puppy mills, and prohibits the breeding of dogs younger than 18 months of age. The bill applies only

to commercial breeders selling dogs as pets, and exempts hobby breeders.

– SB102, proposed by the Senate Natural Resources Committee, imposes civil penalties for illegally killing or possessing a trophy big game mammal, or for illegally killing or possessing certain wildlife species.

Not all measures were successful.

SB364, which proposed to ban horse tripping, a practice of roping a horse's legs used in some non-sanctioned rodeos, failed to win approval in the Senate Natural Resources Committee. Supporters of the bill, including the Humane Society, said the practice is cruel and does occur in some non-advertised rodeos in Nevada.

Opponents said the proposal was an attempt to open the door to banning other types of rodeo events, and ultimately, rodeos themselves.

Measure S bond changes could generate cash

By Kathryn Reed

Refinancing the South Shore recreation bond will put more money into the pot to be spent on facilities. That was the message delivered to the South Lake Tahoe City Council this week and what the board that oversees Measure S/R will hear this morning.

Financial advisor Mark Northcross with Northcross-Hill-Ach in Marin County told the council Jan. 17, "With both bids you can

close without any cash contribution from anybody.”

When Northcross first started talking to interested parties late last year it looked like $400,000 would be needed in order to change the bonds from tax-exempt to taxable. Besides the bond market being better for the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority, the course of action is likely to have 75 percent of the bonds become taxable and 25 percent remain tax-exempt. All will be refinanced to secure a lower interest rate.

The change in tax status is needed per IRS rules regarding for-profit operations. With the city’s ice rink now operated by a private company, there is no incentive for it to make a major investment in the property when the contract can be terminated in 50 days.

The contract between Tahoe Sports Entertainment and South Lake Tahoe was altered in early August after City Attorney Patrick Enright became aware of the IRS rule in mid-July.

Northcross has bids locked in from Alliance Bank and Compass Bank. Both, he said, are worth pursuing, with Alliance being slightly better. This is because there would be an annual estimated savings of $10,700 a year and the out-clause is more favorable.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Tahoe Pipe Club is looking for the best video of a flowing priority outfall pipe from this weekend's storm. The list and map of the priority outfall pipes are online. All entries will receive a Tahoe Pipe Club sticker and the winner will receive a T-shirt. Send videos to pipeclub@live.com.

• Tahoe City's Alpenglow Sports has a new owner – Brendan Madigan. Madigan started working at Alpenglow in 2003 and has been in management since 2007. Donald Fyfe opened the store 32 years ago and has owned it until now.

• Starting this semester UNR is offering an online graduate certificate in renewable energy.

• Shannon McIsaac has been hired by Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce as membership services director.

Lose the word 'diet' and still lose weight

By Mandy Kendall

So, the new year is up and running and you may have noticed that a few extra pounds crept on over the holiday season. And they may even have been added to the extra pounds from last year.

If you're anything like me, just thinking the word "diet" makes your body go into fat storing, starvation mode before you've even started. Diets can make us focus on the foods we

have denied ourselves even more than when we aren't on a diet. Before the diet you could take or leave an Oreo cookie, but now that you're on a diet you could kill for one.



Mandy
Kendall

I remind myself to remember the advice I used to give to my patients during my time as a chiropractor in England. Don't try to lose too much weight too soon and make changes to your diet and lifestyle gradually.

Here are some quick and easy *Qwik-e* tips to help shift those unwanted pounds without too much upheaval:

Change your diet gradually: If willpower is not your strongest trait, and denying yourself something makes you want it even more, then try weaning yourself off those not-so-good-for-you foods (you know which ones I mean!) bit by bit. Reducing the number of times a day/week you eat them, or the amount of them you eat at one time, will help stop the cravings that can come with stopping cold turkey. Also, replacing an unhealthy food or drink with a healthier choice, one at a time, will give you a sense of achievement without overwhelming you with total denial.

Set realistic weight loss goals: Aim for 1 to 2 pounds a week. Rapid weight loss can upset our body's sense of how much food it can afford to burn as fuel, versus how much it needs to store for later. Our bodies are very adept at protecting us from starvation. If we drastically reduce the amount of calories we consume, then in the short term, yes we may lose weight and inches, but most of this can be attributed to water

loss. After a while the body will recalculate how much it can afford to burn as fuel, and then slow things down to be as efficient as possible with what it is fed. It will also start to store as much away as possible, as fat, just in case the food supply is reduced even more.

Eat consciously: In our busy lives it is easy to fit food in around other activities such as watching television, while at our desks working or even on the run. Concentrating on something else and eating too fast doesn't allow our brains the chance to tell us when we are full, or even if what we are eating is what we need. For at least one meal a day try to take some time to sit, chew and savor your food before you swallow. If the food is not that nutritious, chances are it won't taste so good after being chewed repeatedly and really tasted.

You might find by doing this you actually need much less food before your body tells you that it's full.

Eat and drink little and often: This grazing approach to eating has all kinds of benefits. It helps keep your blood sugar levels balanced, preventing those hunger pangs from tempting you to a sugary quick fix. Your digestion will thank you for not having to deal with large amounts of food all at once and any lapses in willpower will only constitute a small percentage of your daily food intake. Also a glass of water five minutes before you are due to eat will not only ensure that you are actually hungry, and not just thirsty, but also help make sure you don't overeat too.

Finally, my favorite *Qwik-e* tip, try not to think of being on a diet. With all the connotations that this word has, and possibly memories of past failures, it is not likely to put you in the most positive frame of mind. Instead try focusing on the fact that you are doing something wonderful for your body. Think of releasing'the weight rather than losing it. Try focusing on being more active rather than changing too much,

too quickly in your eating habits. When you start to feel better about yourself you will be more likely to want to continue and make some more changes.

Until next time!

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, 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.

Opinion: EPA is gambling with U.S. economy

By Marita Noon

Folks who stop at a slot machine in the Las Vegas airport between flights can usually risk the few dollars that will probably disappear, but the serious gambler—whether the stock market, the ponies, or cards—assesses the risk before they cash in their chips. Even then, they make miscalculations. That's why they call it gambling.

Last week, Fred Krupp of the Environmental Defense Fund miscounted his cards when he claimed that new EPA regulations will "protect the IQ of countless of American kids and help clear the air for millions of Americans with asthma." Citing the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards the EPA rolled out on Dec. 21, that he said was 21 years in the making, his widely-published op-ed said that the US "has always had good sense

when taking on hazardous substances in our environment."

The first card Krupp lays down in support of his argument that the US has "good sense" is DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane)—which the Environmental Defense Fund's (EDF) co-founder, Victor Yannacone, was instrumental in banning back in 1972. Using DDT as an example of "good sense," Krupp says it was banned "after learning that the pesticide was killing birds of prey." Even though the EDF sprang up in the late sixties with the single purpose of battling the use of DDT, it is surprising that he is still trying this old trick.

Since DDT was used in WWII to successfully control typhus and malaria, it has gone from winner to loser and back to winner again. In 1948, Dr. Paul Muller, the scientist who discovered the insecticidal properties of DDT, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work. The tables turned when Rachel Carson wrote "Silent Spring" in 1962 and referenced experiments done that claimed DDT thinned birds' eggshells. Ultimately, through the work of EDF, DDT was banned in 1972. Because of that decision, malaria has spread, and millions have died from it. Instead of eliminating the disease's vector, the mosquito, drugs have been developed to treat the disease, and those drugs are now proving ineffective, as malaria has grown resistant to them.

Since then, additional studies have been done and the eggshell findings have been revisited. DDT wasn't the problem it was once believed to be. In 2006, the World Health Organization declared that, DDT "will once again play a major role in its efforts to fight the disease." DDT kills the mosquitoes that spread the disease.

The world gambled on what seemed to be a sure thing—but it turned out to be just hysteria and propaganda. Millions have died from the bad bet.

In recent history, we've collectively bet on "sure things" and lost.

We once believed there was an energy shortage—but modern technology and resource expansion have created a global oil glut, and natural gas is so plentiful that it is currently priced at a two-year low. America is now a net exporter of fuel.

Renewable energy was a sure thing. Presidents Bush and Obama threw taxpayer dollars at it—but it hasn't paid off. Solyndra (and others) have gone bankrupt, taking taxpayer dollars with them. First Solar was the single worst performer in the SPX in 2011. Biofuel production has fallen off while the production of traditional fuels is up.

The planet was said to be warming. It was thought to be a crisis. But before a global agreement could be signed to fix the problem, new studies were done, and data was found to be falsified. The cooking of the books became known as "climate-gate." The earth began to cool on its own—warming and cooling as it has done for billions of years.

Now we may have "mercury-gate." The EPA and the environmental groups pushing for the "21 years in the making" Mercury and Air Toxics Standards have not looked at all the data, and data that they have looked at is used selectively to draw the desired conclusions.

Krupp claims that current levels of mercury (a naturally occurring element) will damage the IQ of "countless American children," leaving the reader with mental pictures of rooms full of special needs children. When, in fact, their study shows the estimated total IQ points lost nationwide to mercury contamination of fish consumed by humans is 510.8 IQ points (see ES-5, Table ES-3 "Estimated IQ benefits from HG reduction"). That's not per person (or child). That's not per state; it is the total national benefit: 511 (let's be

generous) IQ points saved at an estimated annual cost of $9.6 billion. So, nationwide, 500 children might lose one IQ point, or 1,000 might lose a half a point.

Similar to the tactics used to push the climate-change agenda, the EPA has once again selected data to support its predetermined outcome—they've then launched an advertising campaign to sell the expensive plan to the public. In his analysis of the EPA's study, Dr. Willie Soon says: "It ignored well-documented, respected, and readily available research that conflicted with its apparently predetermined outcome and agenda."

To read Krupp's op-ed, you'd believe that implementing the EPA's findings—which will cause some coal-fueled power plants to be mothballed and raise energy costs for consumers and industry—will eliminate all mercury from the environment. According to the Soon study, this is not true. He says: "America's coal-fired electrical generating units are responsible for approximately 0.5% of mercury found in the air Americans breathe. Even eliminating every milligram of this mercury will not affect or reduce the other 99.5 percent in America's atmosphere." Major sources include forest fires and volcanoes.

Once again, Americans are being forced to make a bad bet. The EPA would like us to spend $9.6 billion (that is billion with a "B") for a proposed saving in healthcare costs of $6 million (that is million with an "M") and it doesn't add up – especially when considering the conflicting data. Even an amateur gambler wouldn't make that bet. The odds are against you.

When the first card Krupp played was pulled from his sleeve, there is no reason to trust anything else he says. With an annual salary of nearly half a million dollars, Fred Krupp can afford to gamble, but the US cannot. The EPA is on a binge, gambling with the heart of the US economy and making our

citizens the losers.

Marita Noon is executive director of Energy Makes America Great.

RAOK: Spreading kindness overseas

Jen Gurecki's kindness is not random, but deliberate. And *Lake Tahoe News* is more than OK with that.



Gurecki was featured in a story Jan. 19 about her efforts to help women in Kenya. An anonymous writer nominated her to be a Random Acts of Kindness winner. Gurecki will be receiving an hour massage at A Massage at Tahoe.

RAOK is *Lake Tahoe News'* monthlong promotion to spread kindness in the Lake Tahoe Basin and beyond. Participating is easy. If you have seen an act of kindness, been the recipient of one, or been the giver, write about it at the end of this story. Then you will be in the running for a reward from one of the many kind businesses in Lake Tahoe.

There are a few rules associated with Random Acts of Kindness. If you want to read them, check out this story.

Whittell High’s 4-day week schedule under scrutiny

By Kathryn Reed

ZEPHYR COVE – Would students or parents want to be at Whittell High School if it were to return to five days a week?

That was an overriding question by some of the more than 40 people who attended a 90-minute workshop Thursday night regarding whether the 7-12 school should stay with its four-day week schedule.

Superintendent Lisa Noonan is engaging the three main stakeholders – students, parents, school staff – to gather their thoughts on the now 3-year-old schedule so she can take that information to the April board meeting.



DCSD Superintendent Lisa Noonan, left, and curriculum specialist Kerry Pope gather input Jan. 19 about Whittell High's four-day week.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

The board will also be weighing academic achievement between four vs. five days of instruction.

It was noted that even in analyzing test scores, graduation rates and other academic criteria, the whys of the numbers could be harder to discern. Budget cuts, changes in administrators, closing of one of three schools, curriculum alterations – these are all factors in student achievement as well as how many days a week they have classes.

At the Jan. 19 session the parents, teachers, students and staff who were assembled at Whittell were broken up into three groups. Each had a chance to weigh in on what questions they would like asked on a survey that will be given to the three stakeholder groups, the impact of the schedule on families, and how student achievement has benefited or been hurt.

“The only thing we have to sell people on is the four-day week. Everyone else has a ton of stuff,” parent Kelly Gardner said in comparing Whittell to other high schools in the area.

This schedule is unique beyond the general region. Of the more than 14,000 school districts in the country, 120 have a four-day week.

“A lot of students have said they would leave without a four-day week,” sophomore Maggie Dean said.

Dean and everyone at her table were for keeping the schedule.

She said there is a greater guilt factor in missing a day of school because of the amount of instruction put into a single day.

Gardner said it has benefited her kids, in particular by missing less school when they are doing extracurricular

activities.

Looking at attendance is one thing parents brought up to compare to the former five-day schedule.

While the sports schedule was an overriding reason to go to the four-day schedule when the board voted to do so in spring 2009, since then the league has altered game days and may do so again.

Students said there is less wasted time with only four days; that teachers keep things more focused. More learning is going on because labs are able to be longer and other classes benefit from a sustained learning period.

They also said having Fridays off allowed for them to do homework that day; to actually spend more time on school work outside of class.

“There is less burn out and more family time,” parent Brenda Munn said of the current schedule.

Students seconded the sentiment, saying that Friday was like having a real day off – a mental day.

The district is taking written comments until Feb. 3. They may be mailed to DCSD Superintendent’s Office, 1638 Mono Ave., Minden, NV 89423.

A survey will be put together in the coming weeks and disseminated electronically at school to students and staff, and emailed to parents. An independent third party will collate the data for it to be presented to the board. Some open-ended questions will allow people to go into greater detail about their thoughts.

The board could make a decision at the April 10 3:30pm meeting at Zephyr Cove library.