Study: Soy won’t fight bone loss after menopause

By Daniela Hernandez, Los Angeles Times

Soy tablets do little to stave off bone loss among menopausal women, according to new research. Women taking soy supplements also reported more hot flashes and constipation.

After the landmark Women’s Health Initiative showed that hormone replacement therapy carried health risks, many women gravitated toward soy products as a safer alternative because soy is rich in isoflavones, so-called “dietary estrogens.” Western women were also encouraged by studies that showed that their Asian counterparts, who eat a soy-rich diet, have lower rates of bone fractures, breast cancer andcardiovascular disease.

In this new study, researchers conducted a clinical trial in South Florida between July 2004 and March 2009 to assess whether taking soy supplements delayed bone loss associated with menopause. Nobody – not the subjects, not the scientists – knew who was getting the soy and who was getting a placebo. Women in the trial, 248 in number, were between the ages of 45 and 60, had gone through menopause in the last five years and had hip or lower back bone mineral density T-scores less than -2.0.

Read the whole story

LTCC’s Spanish Institute dominated by out-of-towners

Everything Spanish was the rule of the day this month at Lake Tahoe Community College with 527 students attending the college’s 18th Intensive Spanish Summer Institute.

Approximately 470 of those students came from outside the Lake Tahoe Basin. With them came an influx of more than $60,000 for local merchants, hotel owners, restaurants and more, according to college officials.

According to a survey commissioned by Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and conducted by Strategic Marketing Group, the average tourist party spends more than $500 a day on food, lodging, transportation, recreation, gaming, entertainment, and retail shopping.

ISSI Director Sue O’Connor said last year more than 40 percent of ISSI students were returning ones.

Legislature releases incomplete spending documents

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

The state Assembly and Senate released current member-by-member spending records Friday, less than one month after the lower house denied public access to the data.

The action is a concession that taxpayers have a right to see up-to-date breakdowns of how funds have been spent through

July, rather than year-old statistics that typically are released each November.

But the data released Friday provide a cloudy picture of expenditures. Key documents remain undisclosed, and those released make it difficult to see how spending is bolstered for those serving in leadership positions.

Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez, for example, is listed as having member expenditures of $225,939, relatively low for the Assembly. But other portions of the multipage records list speaker's office expenditures of $373,206 and spending for the Democratic Caucus, which Pérez leads, at $6.7 million.

Friday's fiscal disclosures come less than a month after The Bee and Los Angeles Times filed suit against the Assembly after it balked at releasing current office records, citing an exemption in legislative public-records law for correspondence, notes, memoranda and preliminary drafts.

Read the whole story

Mysterious safe found at old Bill's Casino to be cracked by Oprah's people

By Debra Black, TheStar.com

Producers from the Oprah Winfrey Network will be providing a top notch locksmith to help crack open a safe that may have belonged to a Stateline casino owner who was killed by a car bomb in 1968.

The television network, producers and the locksmith are flying in Tuesday to see if they can open the safe which was found during the demolition of a building that once housed two casinos in the region – Barney's Casino and Bill's Lake Tahoe Casino.

Mike Laub, an attorney, owns both properties and plans to turn the site into a mall including a pharmacy, a jewelry store, a Pilates studio, a clothing store, another casino and a restaurant and bar.

But all work on the $10 million project has stopped since the 4-foot-tall, locked black safe was found late Thursday afternoon.

The safe was hidden underneath a staircase and was completely sealed off, giving the discovery an air of mystery and intrigue.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Edgewood is the only Lake Tahoe restaurant on OpenTable Diners' list of Most Scenic Restaurants in the United States.

• Great Tahoe Flume Race-Sierra Cup No. 6 is Sept. 10. All proceeds from this event support the bike patrol, which has grown significantly this year to one of IMBA's largest National Mountain Bike Patrol chapters. Online registration is

open until Sept. 7 or when the 200-rider limit is reached.

• Here is the Measure R resolution – the rewrite of the Measure S recreation decree – that will be before voters on Nov. 8. The ballot question is near the top of Page 3, and full text of Measure R is section 3 of the resolution, Pages 3 to 6.

• Robert "Booie" Alward has been hired to be Sierra-at-Tahoe's ski school director.

• Squaw Valley has donated $25,000 to the Tahoe Fund.

• Here is the El Dorado County-Tahoe roadwork schedule from Caltrans, as well as the Sierra roadwork schedule.

Students show appreciative audience what STHS theater is all about

By Kathryn Reed

Nearly 300 people were treated to a sneak preview to what the theater at South Tahoe High School is all about.

Almost everyone on stage commented on the lights – how many more there are and the brightness making it impossible to see the crowd – some of whom had to stand.



The TADA building is at the entrance of STHS. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Acoustics are more powerful – as evidenced by students Joe Letosky, Dillon Daggs, Chloe Davis, Ashley Wallick, Rachael Altman and Shelby Osborn sing “Electricity” from the Broadway play “Billy Elliot”. Their voices penetrated the warm air Friday night.



Sophomore Rose Campion has won awards for her music talents.

Rose Campion on piano (without the aid of sheet music) dazzled the audience as her hands flew across the ivory keys.

Courtney Reece performed a solo from “The Sound Music” – last year’s play.

It was Anna Ripoli and Jack Percival doing a scene from a

play.

The first full production will be “42nd Street” in December.

Friday night was an opportunity for the public to tour the $9 million Theater Arts & Design Academy as well as experience the theater and see how technology works in the screening room, recording studio, TV studio and other venues.



A few hundred people attend TADA's grand opening Aug. 26.

Principal Ivone Larson called South Tahoe High a triple-A school because of its focus on academics, arts and athletics.

Money for the makeover at the school comes from voter-approved Measure G funds ($64.5 million) and more than $30 million in matching dollars from state grants. While those dollars are dispersed throughout the district, the bulk are being spent at the high school.

A few people from the state Department of Education were in the audience Aug. 26 to witness what is going on at South Tahoe High.

Trail work for cyclists in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park

Volunteers are needed to help with a MTB designed and built trail on Sept. 2 in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.

The Marlette Hobart link trail will be three miles of flowy singletrack from the Tahoe Rim Trail to the bottom of Sunflower Hill. It’s more than halfway done.

The completed upper section will be used by the Great Tahoe Flume Race on Sept. 10.

Meet at the Lakeview gate at 8am to carpool up to the work site. The Lakeview gate is at the end of Hobart Road off of Old 395 in Washoe Valley/Carson City.

Wear long pants, long sleeves, gloves, and bring water and a lunch.

Work will end about 3:30pm.

RSVP to patroldirector@tahoebikepatrol.org.

Opinion: Innovations in green lodging keep industry progressive

By David Hansen

I had the privilege of hosting, as well as speaking at the West Coast Green Lodging Conference this week at the Embassy

Suites Lake Tahoe. This was the second annual conference here on the South Shore and I must say it was very inspirational to hear leaders in the industry speak about their accomplishments as well as hearing from the EPA, local advocates of sustainability and other great speakers.

The conference kicked off Aug. 21 with a reception and a welcoming by Bill Cottrill, director of sales and marketing for Embassy Suites. On Monday morning we begin the conference with a welcoming speech from Dominic Acolino who is the general manager of the Embassy Suites and turned it over to our keynote speaker Douglas Rath, director of energy and environment for Marriott International. Doug talked about energy reduction, the consumers demand for a green product and the fact that Marriott currently has 67 LEED certified hotels in the U.S. and their goal is to have 300 LEED certified properties by 2015. I found Doug to be very informative and I was quite amazed at what Marriott International is doing for our planet.



David Hansen

We then heard Wendi Shafir, LEED AP from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, who is in charge of the EPA's Western Region Green Hotels and EPA Programs. Wendi spoke about why hotels need to go green and all of the many programs out there the EPA has to assist lodging properties with their sustainability programs. Wendi is very passionate about what she does and I would encourage every Lodging property to go to the EPA Energy Star website and sign up for Portfolio Manager which is a tool to benchmark your properties sustainability

efforts and learn what other properties are doing.

I was next and had two tough acts follow. I spoke about the success the Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe has had with our sustainability program and where we need to go next in our efforts. I also spoke briefly about the importance of greening the lodging industry and partnering with other properties and people in the community. I gave a tour of our property's green efforts that was filmed by Donna Walden from UNR's Business Environmental Program. This film will be used in several areas including programs at UNR to show what one property can do and why it is important.

Next up, we had the privilege of hearing about two major hotels in San Francisco that have obtained LEED certification. Harry Hobbs, director of engineering for the InterContinental Hotel of San Francisco spoke about what it takes to be gold – LEED gold. Harry taught us about the process of getting LEED certified and the extensive efforts that were made in order to achieve gold. The InterContinental in San Francisco is 100 percent carbon neutral, which is an amazing feat.

The hotel partnered with the Department of Energy, Pacific Gas & Electric, as well as IHG to achieve its success. But having met Harry I can assure you that he was the driving force that made it all happen.

We then heard from Michael Pace, general manager for W Hotel San Francisco that has obtained LEED silver certification. Michael talked about a "passion driven" approach to sustainability and how to create a hotel with a green conscience, not a green hotel. Michael is an amazing speaker and has added some fun, and what he calls "sexy" things to do with you sustainability program. The W is a lifestyle hotel that has amazing design features and embraces lifestyle, arts, music and entertainment. Michael taught us to not just be eco-friendly, but be "eco-fabulous".

The W in San Francisco hosts what he calls an “ecoliscious” cocktail hour each evening and 10 percent of the proceeds go to Save the Bay in San Francisco. I was very inspired by Michael and received some great ideas about making green fun. Michael also spoke about the importance of keeping the brand identity of the hotel, but still pushing the boundaries of brand standards in order to be more environmentally friendly.

Our final speaker on Monday was Roxanna Lopez, operations manager- U.S. Region for Green Key Global. Green Key is the largest third party green certification program in the world for the lodging industry. We learned about how a hotel can get started in going green. According to Roxanna, each property’s success can be more easily obtained if it is a collaborative effort amongst the staff. This is why it is so important for properties to have a “Green Team” made up of management and employees. She also spoke of the importance of recognizing team members who are “caught in the act” of doing sustainable things in their daily work.

The first day was so amazing I couldn’t wait for Day 2 of the conference as we had more great speakers lined up. We started Tuesday with Jack Eichhorn, director of global meeting services for Oracle Corporation. Oracle is a huge corporation that annually hosts 8,000 meetings worldwide. Jack spoke about how Oracle is influencing and partnering with meeting venues worldwide to have green meetings. Oracle has created green guidelines for all of its events. They have a Global Green Team that focuses on 4 R’s – Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. They are also creating sustainable purchasing criteria for use in guest rooms, meeting space and catering.

I found his speech to be very exciting in the fact that this huge corporation is on board with sustainability and is building it into their events. Way to go Oracle.

Our next speaker has an incredible story to tell. Dean Parker, executive facilities director for the Peppermill Spa Resort &

Casino in Reno, showed us how the Peppermill became the largest and maybe the only resort in the world operating its entire 2.2 million square foot facilities' heating systems, mechanical hydronic HVAC systems, domestic hot water, swimming pools and hot tubs solely off of geothermal energy. This is so cool to have a super large casino in our backyard showing the world how things should be done.

Dean worked on this project for a year and a half and the shared with us the many challenges and risks the Peppermill took to make this project work. At one point during the project Dean had to go to the owners to let them know they had drilled down 4,000 feet and had a dry well. The ownership decided to "roll the dice" and put a few more million dollars into the project that eventually brought up 174-degree water from the Earth at a depth of 4,421 feet. The Peppermill has also removed most of the natural grass on the campus and installed turf, saving thousands of gallons of water. They plan to remove the additional natural grass in the near future.

I instantly had visions of doing geothermal here in the Tahoe casino corridor and am looking forward to touring the Peppermill soon.

Next we had a local legend Craig Witt, owner of Full Circle Compost, speak alongside Jeff Tillman of South Tahoe Refuse. Craig and Jeff spoke about the partnership between the community, STR and Full Circle Compost. Jeff gave us a video tour of the recycling programs South Tahoe Refuse has. If you ever get a chance to tour the STR facilities, I would highly encourage it as it is amazing what they are doing to help the environment. Craig spoke about commercial composting and how it works. Craig put on quite the comedy show for us as well by explaining it all to us with his hilarious sense of humor. This was a great part of the conference as we all laughed and relaxed and enjoyed hearing about the world of composting. Craig had some great quotes, none which had the appropriate

language to be shared with all of you in this article.

Deanna Meredith was our next speaker. Deanna is a program specialist and eco-concierge for the LodgingSavers Program. She spoke about PG&E's LodgingSavers program which is designed to provide no cost full scale integrated and comprehensive energy audits with the industry's highest caliber mechanical engineers and LEEP AP's to assist properties with improving their Energy Star score with a road map to LEED certification with emphasis on existing buildings steps to achieve their long term sustainability goals. I found Deanna to be a wealth of knowledge and could have talked to her for hours.

Our final speaker is someone who has spent more than 20 years in the Lake Tahoe Basin working on sustainability in many areas. Nicoletta Florio, owner of Green with NV, spoke about sustainable lodging and finish green. Nicoletta was the perfect speaker to wrap up the conference as she not only showed us what the lodging and travel industries can do to be more sustainable, she encompassed into her presentation how humans have affected the forests, the oceans, marine life and pollution and how since we created the problem, it is our responsibility to clean it up.

We wrapped up the conference with a fantastic dinner prepared by our own chef Sal Delgado and closing words by Tiffany Zabaglo, director of catering services for the Embassy Suites and our General Manager Dominic Acolino.

This year's conference was sponsored by General Electric, Leviton Manufacturing, Advanced LED Products, ClearWater Tech Ozone Systems, EnLink geoenergy, and California Meetings and Events.

The conference was very successful and it was great to see the enthusiasm of each attendee, speaker and sponsor. We all learned something that we can take back to our prospective places of business and expand on our sustainability efforts.

We will be making plans soon for the third annual conference.

David Hansen is the director of engineering for the Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe Hotel as well as the chair of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce Green Business Co-op.

Department responsible for S. Tahoe's finances stays intact

By Kathryn Reed

While employees keep dropping off the payroll in South Lake Tahoe, and even more layoff notices are expected next month, the finance department has for the most part remained fully staffed.

In fact, while other departments are asked to do more with fewer employees, this department hires temporary workers. This is at a time when there are fewer paychecks and other money related items needing processing, and the fiscal projections from this department are regularly off the mark or not fully accounted for.

Admittedly, no one has a crystal ball to know what the future holds, but South Lake Tahoe's finance experts in the last handful of years projected increases in revenue from hotel and property taxes – at a time when everyone said the country was in a recession. Those projections were wrong. Those are two of the three main revenue sources for the city.

And the director of the department, Christine Vuletich,was told by City Manager Tony O'Rourke to put the potential $1.8 million loss from redevelopment into the budget – something

she had kept out until recently. It makes the city's deficit headed into 2011-12, which starts Oct. 1, $5.2 million instead of $3.4 million.



Christine Vuletich

Each year the city's general fund is supplemented with redevelopment money, which is really the TOT collected in those areas. The hotel tax is higher in the redevelopment areas than the rest of the city. Tax increment is not enough to pay all of the millions of dollars in redevelopment debt the city has incurred, and therefore TOT is used for debt, too.

Here are the dollar amounts that have been transferred from the Redevelopment Agency (which is governed by the council members) to the general fund:

• Fiscal year 07 – $338,000

• Fiscal year 08 – $457,000

• Fiscal year 09 – $834,000

• Fiscal year 10 – $834,000

• Fiscal year 11– $1.3 million.

Another $500,000 each of those years has gone from RDA to the general fund to pay back the $7.2 million that was "borrowed" to pay for the Heavenly Village and parking garage projects.

Until the state makes a ruling in January about the future of redevelopment agency's the city is not voting on what to do with its agency.

Other TOT issues

This also is the department that is accused of letting transient occupancy tax dollars go uncollected.

Councilman Tom Davis at the Aug. 23 meeting asked Vuletich what is going on with the annually unpaid $500,000 in TOT from private vacation rental owners. Instead of answering the question, Vuletich at first got defensive and argued the amount, not the fact the city is not being paid what it is owed.

The half-million dollar figure is what property management companies have told city officials is not being paid.

Even *Lake Tahoe News* last September was able to uncover nearly $1,000 in TOT not being paid by B Gorman, executive director of Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce.

Vuletich told the council that last week she met with vacation rental owners and the police chief.

"We have a joint effort under way to address that issue and that will be pretty effective," she told the council. Specifics were not divulged.

After the meeting *Lake Tahoe News* asked her if she thought people were deliberately not paying the tax or if they did not know they had to. She wouldn't venture a guess.

Finance department staffing

Vuletich's salary was increased in March when airport and parking came under her leadership. This was at the same time staff was laid off.

She is the lone director remaining from the Dave Jinkens eight-year reign as city manager. O'Rourke defends Vuletich – saying she is competent and does a good job.

While O'Rourke when he was hired a year ago said the first budget produced with him at the helm would be easy to read and ready early, insiders say it won't happen. Clearly, it is not early. The budget will be before the council for a vote 18 days before it takes effect. It will be released at least a few days before the Sept. 13 meeting, so readability can be judged then.

While Vuletich has more in her pocket, her employees keep being spared.

In the 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 budgets the finance department had 14.5 full-time equivalent positions. The amended 2009-10 budget brought this number to 13.73. The current budget is back up to 14 FTE.

When it comes to defending her hires, Vuletich emailed *Lake Tahoe News* saying how other departments also use temps – like the police department for the boat patrol (though she failed to mention their salaries don't come from the general fund), stormwater for an environmental analyst (often paid for by grants), and parks and rec summer employees (whose wages are less than the fees they collect).

The finance department uses a temporary accounting technician to process business licenses. Their fee is expected to be $7,000, according to Vuletich.

"The total temporary labor expense in the Revenue Division is expected to be approximately $30,930 at fiscal year-end and is a combination of the former temporary full-time Technician ($23,930) and the current seasonal temporary Technician costs ($7,000)," Vuletich wrote *LTN*. "Accounting Division: Temporary Budget Analyst hired work on budget preparation and analysis during the budget preparation period. The cost has been

$5,725.50 so far through July 31st and have $23,000 budgeted for the 10-11 fiscal year, but expect to be paying for approximately 5 more weeks for a total of $10,725. All temporary labor expenses in the Finance Department have been eliminated for next fiscal year 2011-12."

STHS grad clinging to dream to make it in the NFL

By Rich Cimini, ESPN

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. – South Lake Tahoe High grad Garrett McIntyre, 26, is still clinging to his NFL dream even though he has been tossed by three teams. In between tryouts, he has worked in construction, pouring cement foundations – and "that really sucked," he said.

Josh Baker is a well-traveled rookie who lost nearly two full years because of injury and suspension. At his low point, he made $10 an hour at an office-supply store, unloading trucks to earn money for courses at a community college.

Michael Campbell also is a rookie, out of Edison, N.J., so serious and so determined – yet hoping that one momentary lapse in concentration doesn't cost him his dream.

They're the long shots, the bottom-of-the-roster guys – undrafted free agents. They've been overlooked and underappreciated, but now they have an invite to the big dance – an NFL training camp. McIntyre, Baker and Campbell are among about two dozen long shots on the New York Jets' roster, each hoping to make the final 53.

The Jets’ roster is sprinkled with players who came up the hard way, including homegrown gems such as defensive tackle Mike DeVito and guard Brandon Moore. Maybe the best “Rudy” story of them all is ex-Jets player Danny Woodhead, who has achieved near iconic status with the New England Patriots.

These are the toughest days. The first mandatory cutdown is next Tuesday (80 players), followed by the final cutdown Sept. 4. Because of the lockout, rookies weren’t able to sign until late July, making it harder to stick. They have one week – two more preseason games – to fulfill their lifelong dream. Or be crushed.

• • •

McIntyre grew up in South Lake Tahoe, a play land for the rich and famous but not exactly a football hotbed. His high school team went 0-9 his senior year, and he didn’t receive any scholarship offers. He walked on at Fresno State and – long story short – he was an All-WAC defensive end by the time he left.

He wasn’t drafted in 2006, beginning a free-agent journey that would take him from the Seattle Seahawks to the Arizona Cardinals to the Tennessee Titans. He didn’t make it to training camp in Seattle, and he lasted only a week in the Arizona and Tennessee camps. After getting cut by the Titans, he received a league suspension for testing positive for a banned substance.

“After you get cut the first time, it’s hard,” he said. “Words can’t really describe how it feels.”

Read the whole story