Opinion: Why Ensign didn’t face what Weiner did

By Jon Ralston, Las Vegas Sun

So when a creepy congressman who has a sexting disorder becomes a distraction and liability, fretting Democrats line up to defenestrate him. But when an even creepier senator has an affair with a staffer, reveals himself to be a world-class hypocrite and importunes supplicants to hire the cuckold, Republicans say nothing.

Because proportionality is so often lost in politics, especially in the 24/7 Web world where every gesture and expression is analyzed in microscopic detail, the differences between Anthony Weiner, who seems headed for resignation, and John Ensign, who has fled the capital ahead of an expulsion, are lost.

It is nothing short of remarkable to see members of both parties, actually, calling for Weiner’s head – Republicans feeling obvious schadenfreude and Democrats fearing electoral carnage. Contrast this with the reaction, especially by GOP leaders to Ensign, who lasted almost two years after he confessed to an affair with a staffer who was the wife of one of his top aides and who was his wife’s best friend.

On the creepiness scale, Weiner is Pee-wee Herman to Ensign’s Bob Packwood. And as much as both men have dishonored Capitol Hill – no mean feat – their treatment by their colleagues, especially their partisan allies, is noteworthy for its moral bankruptcy. Democrats are not so outraged by Weiner’s behavior as they are about his changing the media horde’s focus from their attempts to terrify seniors over Medicare and Social Security “reforms.” His sin was not texting provocative pictures of himself, but interfering in the narrative the

Democrats have been constructing to try to win back both houses of Congress.

Read the whole story

Park advocates question wisdom of closing Mono Lake

By Lance Williams, California Watch

Mono Lake is the second-largest lake in California – a gorgeous, otherworldly expanse of aquamarine saltwater in the high desert east of Yosemite National Park.



Mono Lake is one of 70 California parks threatened to be closed. Photo/Michael Maloney

Its very existence is a modern environmental success story. As late as 1984, the lake was condemned to become a 65-square-mile salt flat, as the city of Los Angeles had dammed its

tributary streams and diverted the water into the LA aqueduct.

It was saved, in dramatic fashion, by an unlikely coalition of trout fishermen, environmentalists and water-rights lawyers. Today, it’s recovering from 50 years of abuse.

But now, as part of a round of budget cuts, Gov. Jerry Brown has ordered the closure of the Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve, the state park established as part of the effort to save the lake.

It’s one of 70 state parks being shuttered in hopes of saving $22 million.

Mono Lake’s boosters say closing the park won‘t save the state a dime. But they say it will derail volunteer programs that have allowed the park to operate for years at minimal cost to the state.

“It doesn’t make any sense,” said Geoff McQuilkin, executive director of the Mono Lake Committee, the organization founded in the 1970s to save Mono Lake.

Read the whole story

Rotarians provide leadership training for students

More than 100 students, including six from Whittell High School, participated in a five-day Rotary Youth Leadership Awards leadership camp to focus on developing interpersonal skills, leadership, team-building, and ethics in a fun and supportive environment.

The Whittell students were sponsored by the Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club to participate in one of two camps organized by Rotary Districts 5180 and 5190 for students from Northern Nevada and northeastern California.

The students, who will graduate in 2012, participated in group activities, spent an entire day on a ropes challenge course, and heard motivational speakers.



Whittell students get leadership training through Rotarians. Photo/Provided

Rotarians and non-Rotarians serve as camp counselors and facilitators and work closely with the camp's professional staff from Sierra Nevada Journeys.

July Fourth events last 4 days in Incline

Incline Village takes things to the next level with their traditional Red, White & Tahoe Blue festivities scheduled for

July 1-4, which includes patriotic chalk drawing contest, opening ceremonies with a tribute to veterans, doggie dress-up contest, beer tasting and brats, brunch with Shakespeare, firecracker trail trek and free fireworks July 4 at 9:30pm off Incline Beach.

For more information, go online.

Opinion: Any change to Measure S should only be for bike trails

To the community,

There is an important meeting about bike paths coming up June 30 at 9am at the South Lake Tahoe library. If you support bike paths, you should attend and make yourself heard.

Remember Measure S? Money from it was designated to go to bike paths, ball fields, the ice rink and Tahoe Paradise Park. Well, the money for everything except bike paths has been spent or is allocated, but the bike paths haven’t been built and there is a pile of money there that the ball field people see and they want to get their hands on it.

Now we have the proposed Measure R, written by ball field proponents. Its purpose is to divert money from bike paths to ball fields. The voters voted for bike paths and ball fields in measure S. The ball fields already got their money. We still don’t have our bike paths. We need bike paths. Our economy needs bike paths. We don’t want the bike trail money diverted to ball fields. We need to complete our bike path

network.

If the JPA (who manages the money) wanted to do what the voters want instead of what the special interests want, they would have written measure R to allow the unspent bike funds to be spent on bike paths other than the ones specified in the original Measure S. It’s simple. The problem is that they don’t want to do that because they want to divert the money instead to their pet ball field projects.

Measure R should be re-written to re-allocate bike path money for other bike projects that weren’t covered by the original Measure S. Keep bike path money for bike paths like we voted for or thought we voted for in the first place. Please attend the meeting and voice your opinion.

Hank Raymond, Meyers

Lingering snow puts chill on Tahoe’s early summer tourism

By Jim Carlton and David Ferry, Wall Street Journal

TAHOE CITY – One of the heaviest winter snow seasons in years is putting a chill on the Sierra Nevada’s summer tourism, with lingering drifts forcing camping trips, rafting excursions and horseback rides to be canceled or postponed.

Although the snow has mostly melted in this Lake Tahoe resort town, snow at higher elevations is keeping many area campgrounds off-limits, and the two local rafting companies remained closed this week because water managers won’t release sufficient lake water into the Truckee River until more snow

melts downstream.



Cyclists are hitting snow not far from the trailheads in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Photo/LTN

“This is devastating for us,” said Aaron Rudnick, owner of Truckee River Raft Co., where about a dozen seasonal employees were on staff Tuesday, compared with as many as 87 during the busy season.

At the Sunnyside Restaurant and Lodge, which relies on its lakeside deck to draw diners, manager Raif Anderson said business was down 10% to 15% for May but warm weather in the past week meant June’s numbers would likely be on par with last year’s.

Two miles up the road, the Tahoe City Golf Course is still reeling from a series of spring snowstorms. The course, which normally kicks into full swing by early May, didn’t open until May 28 and even was forced to close for several snow days in June.

“Mother Nature has a little noose around our neck, and she’s calling the shots,” co-owner Debbie Bechdolt said, adding that business was down almost 50% last month and about 25 percent so far in June.

From the Rockies to here in the Sierra, summer recreational activities are being put on hold after the mountains were buried under as much as double their normal snowpack. The mountains in California and Nevada also experienced an unusually cool spring that has slowed the normal melting.

The economic impact has rippled throughout the Sierra. At Lake Tahoe, where tourism is a $2 billion-a-year industry, “we have had a little bit of a slow start to our summer season,” said Carol Chaplin, executive director of the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority. Among the big setbacks: A late-season snowstorm forced organizers of the Amgen Tour of California to cancel the first stage of the bicycle race, which had been set for May 15 at the alpine lake.

Read the whole story

Lecture in Truckee about whitewater rivers of the world

Squaw Valley Institute is sponsoring the Great Whitewater Rivers of the World lecture June 29 at 7pm at the Cedar House Sport Hotel in Truckee.

Laurence Alvarez Roos, a worldwide river runner and explorer, will talk about his experiences on rivers from Africa to the United States to South America.

Tickets are $10 and limited. Call (530) 581.4138.

A no host social hour begins at 6:30pm.

Click on flyer for more information.

Tour focuses on gardens of LTCC employees

The 2011 Garden Tour put on by the Lake Tahoe Historical Society is July 31 from 10am-4pm.

The theme will be “Learning More About Gardening.” Music and refreshments will be at the Ledbetter Terrace at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.

Four of the gardens on the tour belong to current or former employees of LTCC.

Tickets are $20 and may be purchased after July 1 at the museum (3058 Lake Tahoe Blvd.) or at Aspen Hollow, Nels Garden Center, Sun Basin and Tahoe Outdoor Living.

Youth basketball camp in Stateline

Ball handling and basketball shooting camps will be at Kahle Community Center in Stateline June 27-July 1 from 9am-4pm.

This is for boys and girls in grades K-10.

Cost ranges between $125 and $265.

For more information, call Gil Llewellyn at (310) 903.6473

or email coachgil@advantagebasketball.com.

Washoe Tribe festival at Tallac Site

The Washoe Tribe’s 21st annual Wa She Shu It Deh Native American Arts Festival is July 23-24 at the Tallac Historic Site on the South Shore

The festival features a basket weaving competition, native dancers, music, and arts and crafts.

Admission is free.

For more information, call 800.792.2746.