Study: Doctors overprescribing drugs

By Lisa Girion and Scott Glover, Los Angeles Times

Doctors are fueling the nation's prescription drug epidemic and represent the primary source of narcotic painkillers for chronic abusers, according to a government study.

The finding challenges a widely held belief that has long guided policymakers: That the epidemic is caused largely by abusers getting their drugs without prescriptions, typically from friends and family.

Tom Frieden, doctor and director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which conducted the study, said the research showed the need for greater focus on doctors who are "problem prescribers."

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• More than 1,000 changes to the Title 24 building codes took effect Jan. 1. South Lake Tahoe building official Dave Walker is giving a presentation on March 12 from 5-7pm at Lake Tahoe Airport about some of the most significant changes.

• *Outside* magazine in its April issue, which will be on newsstands March 18, selected Lake Tahoe as the Best Lake in its travel awards.

• The 2014 Nature Valley U.S. Alpine Championships are March 19-23 are Squaw Valley.

• State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, is hosting a town hall meeting regarding the Kings Beach Recreation Area on March 20 for 6-8pm at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

• Radio Shack is closing more than 1,000 stores. An employee of the South Lake Tahoe story said this one is staying open.

Money available to mitigate Indian gaming damage

The El Dorado County Indian Gaming Local Benefit Committee has $49,847.04 from the state controller to distribute in the form of grants for programs and activities designed to mitigate the impact of gaming upon the community.

Eligible agencies, including cities and special districts, may apply.

Applications will be accepted until April 4.

For additional information and application materials, contact Jessica Brandt at (530) 621/5132 or jessica.brandt@edcgov.us.

TOCCATA to perform 'The

Passion’

Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus continues its Winter MusicFest with the 9th annual presentation of J.S. Bach’s masterpiece “The Passion according to St. Matthew”.

The first concert of the four concert series will take place April 12 at 7pm at Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church in Carson City (3680 Highway 395).

The program will feature selections from part two of the “Passion” and will be performed in English. Soloists include Daniel Paulson as the Evangelist, Stuart Duke as Jesus, John Rabben as Pontius Pilate and Chris Nelson as Peter. Anna Helwing and Joy Strotz are the soprano soloists, with Katharine DeBoer and Liudmilla Mullin, mezzo soprano soloists. Scott Deupree performs as the High Priest, with MaryAnn Helman, Linda Mitchell and Susan Horst as the false witnesses. David Brock will play harpsichord continuo, along with Nicholas Haines, cello, and Quinton Bunk, bass.

Maestro James Rawie will conduct all performances.

The TOCCATA Youth Chorus from South Lake will also perform on April 16 and 18.

“The St. Matthew Passion” will be repeated on Palm Sunday, April 13, at 4pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reno at 501 California Ave. and on April 16 at 7pm at St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe, 1041 Lyons Ave.

The final concert will be on Good Friday, April 18, at 7pm at St. Patrick’s Episcopal Church in Incline Village, 341 Village Blvd.

Tickets are available at the door or online. General admission to all concerts is $25 adults, $20 seniors, $5 students aged 19 to 23 with valid ID.

Chateau land under 1 ownership for first time



The Chateau project in South Lake Tahoe is beginning to look like the original designs.

By Kathryn Reed

For the first time in the project's history, South Lake Tahoe's "hole in the ground" is now under the control of one owner.

Tahoe Stateline Ventures, a subsidiary of Owens Realty Mortgage, has closed escrow on the nine parcels that encompass 3.4 acres at the site that it did not own. The company paid City National Bank $6 million in cash.

TSV is in the process of developing the retail along Highway 50. The construction fence is expected to come down by June, if not sooner. Stores will open in late summer or early fall, though tenants have yet to be named.

"It's very exciting news that Mr. (Bill) Owens is continuing to invest significant resources into the community and is

committed to this project and to see it to fruition one way or another," South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. "This is the perfect outcome – one owner who can now design the right project or attract the right capital investors."

It was in June 2007 that construction started at the 11-plus acre site on what was to be the largest redevelopment project in the city's history. At the time it was going to cost $410 million to build two hotels, a convention center, nightclub, retail and open spaces. The opening was to be two years later.

Instead, Lake Tahoe Development Company, run by Randy Lane of Zephyr Cove, went bankrupt. The more than 20 parcels were never consolidated into one map. Locals lost their life savings. And the city was left with an eyesore.

Last year construction started on the first phase. There will be 19,000-square-feet of retail, which does not include the restaurant-night club. (By comparison, Heavenly Village has about 120,000-square-feet of retail.) The restaurant will be the new McP's, which was the original plan. The circular entrance is now visible over the fence at the corner of the highway and Stateline Avenue.

What comes next remains to be seen.

Attorney Lew Feldman, who represents TSV, was not available for comment.

"This acquisition provides ORM the flexibility to make minor project reconfigurations resulting in greater development opportunities, which should enhance the marketability of the project," Owens said in a statement. What that really means is not known.

Letter: City playing games with parking question

To the community,

Is the City Council just silly? It appears so on the subject of parking meters. First, the council created a ballot resolution for the June election that if it passes, would for the most part kill the city's parking meter program. The vote was 5-0. So the resolution will be on the ballot.



Bill Crawford

The on Feb. 27, the council voted to place on the ballot an argument that urges voters to vote no on the city's ballot resolution. In other words, the City Council wants to keep its parking meters.

The end game is a tricky one. By acting as it did, the council passed the buck to the voters. And that is OK with me. Regardless of the fate of the city's ballot measure, whether it's voted up or down, the political calculation is the council will claim it supports the democratic process. Pretty slick game. A can't lose game the council must think. But what has been the cost in time and money?

And if the city's resolution passes, something the council

doesn’t want, will the council see it as a vote of no confidence, rethink how to govern and stop playing silly games?

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Bill would mandate ethnic studies in Calif.

By Roque Planas, Huffington Post

A bill introduced last month by Assemblyman Luis Alejo, D-Salinas, would require the California’s Department of Education to develop a model for implementing a standardized, statewide ethnic studies curriculum for high schools.

Although controversies over Mexican-American studies have roiled conservatives in Southwestern states, Alejo’s bill could put California on the path to adopting one of the most ambitious ethnic studies program for public schools in the country.

Latinos are the largest ethnic group in California schools by far, making up 53 percent of the student body, according to the California Department of Education. They are followed by non-Hispanic whites, at 26 percent, and Asians, at 9 percent.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The Bicycle Advisory Committee of the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority will meet March 7 from 9-11am in the room adjacent to the City Council Chambers at Lake Tahoe Airport.

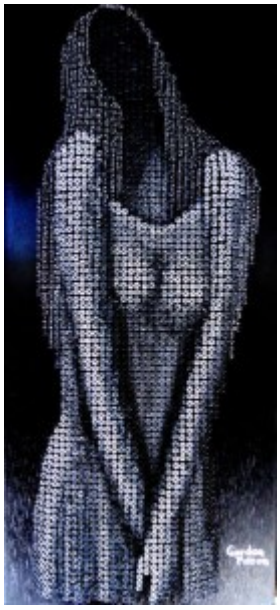
• Alpine County is turning 150. The Board of Supervisors will have a proclamation celebration March 18 at 9am at Turtle Rock Park in Markleeville.

• Switchback PR + Marketing Inc. has hired longtime Tahoe-Truckee marketing specialist Anna Koenig as an account manager.

• CrossFit Avalanche and CrossFit Blizzard had a daylong workout fundraiser in honor of former Truckee resident and fallen Naval officer Brian Collins. Money raised will be donated to the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe. Collins' name will join others on the HSTT's animal shelter lobby Heroes wall, signifying his love of animals and a generous contribution donated in his name.

• Q&D Construction Inc. and Placer County Department of Public Works are having an open house March 12 from 4-7pm at the North Tahoe Events Center to hear about the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project's construction schedule.

Pelton’s 3-D artwork on display in Tahoe City



Gordon Pelton, a portrait artist, has been experimenting with ways to produce portraits in three dimensions. When a portrait artist paints on canvas, whether it be in oil, acrylic or watercolor, the result is a two dimensional representation of what is actually a three dimensional subject.

Recently, Pelton has developed a technique for adding the third dimension to his portraits.

Pelston’s three dimensional portraits (Mark Twain, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson and a clown) are on exhibit at the James Harold Galleries in Tahoe City.

Douglas County manager resigns

By Kathryn Reed

Douglas County Manager Steve Mokrohisky has tendered his resignation, with his last day slated for April 11.

Like his predecessor, Mokrohisky is headed to Oregon. He will

be the top guy in Lane County, whose county seat is Eugene. It's much larger than Douglas County, with 350,000 residents and 2,100 employees and the county includes the University of Oregon. Douglas County has less than 50,000 residents.



Steve Mokrohisky's last day as Douglas County manager is April 11. Photo/Provided

It's also a county in need of some help. The budget has been hit because of lack of timber revenue and the last administrator was fired for inappropriate operations.

These are the types of challenges Mokrohisky embraces.

"They are enticing to me," Mokrohisky said of the obstacles ahead of him. "I got into public service 15 years ago because I wanted to make communities better than they were."

He told *Lake Tahoe News*, "Douglas County is in a good position. I felt it was an OK time to step away and the organization and community will continue to function well."

Mokrohisky was hired in February 2009 as assistant county manager. He has been county manager since July 2011.

He is proud of the work he's done in the last five years. He points to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan being adopted, Douglas County's area plan at the lake, trails in the ground, a vision for the South Shore, the community center in the valley, transformation of the Minden airport and

a balanced budget as some of the accomplishments during his tenure.

“It’s important for people to be reminded that transformative periods for communities or organizations are not the result of one person at the top,” Mokrohisky said.

County Commissioner Nancy McDermid said, “It’s a blow for us to lose him. He is at his peak.”

McDermid said Douglas was competitive with salary, but understands Mokrohisky wanting a bigger stage to work on.

Mokrohisky said he struggled with the decision to leave – for professional and personal reasons. He’s married with two young daughters. He and wife believe now would be a better time to move than later. Mokrohisky also knows city and county managers don’t often have longevity in a community.

“The people are what I will miss most. I’ve been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support in this community. I’ve made lifelong friends. We did not come here five years ago thinking that we would grow roots,” he said.

The scenery is the second thing he will miss. He was at Heavenly Mountain Resort on Sunday skiing with friends.

With the announcement of his departure just days’ old, the county has not decided what the transition will be.

McDermid said the commissioners will with work with Mokrohisky and county staff to figure out how best to go forward.