Is work-life balance merely a myth?

By John Wenzel, Denver Post

Tired of hearing about that elusive work-life balance?

You’re not alone. The concept, which promotes the idea that we can find an equilibrium between our home and work lives, has seen a backlash in recent years, with some calling it a myth that leads to unrealistic expectations and stress.

But while writers and business experts debate what to call it, the fact is that most of us still need a strategy for tackling these competing demands – especially as we grow ever-more connected to our smartphones and electronic devices.

“There’s power in discussing it,” said Teresa A. Taylor, a Denver-based business speaker and author of “The Balance Myth: Rethinking Work-Life Success.” “You realize you’re not alone and that there can be ways through it if you share your experiences.”

Different terminology rings true with different people, but a good idea can be helpful regardless of how it’s delivered.

Read the whole story

Scientists study bears to

learn about obesity

By Jonathan D. Rockoff, Wall Street Journal

PULLMAN, Wash. – On a recent visit to a laboratory where he researches obesity, Kevin Corbit walked over to one of the patients he is studying to say hello. Then he clasped a claw.

Corbit, a scientist at drug maker Amgen Inc., is conducting his research on grizzly bears. He believes insights gleaned from the animals, who can take in as much as 58,000 calories in a day and weigh 1,000 pounds, could reshape understanding of obesity and identify new treatments for a condition that has stymied doctors and drug developers.

“When I thought about obesity, I thought about Yogi bear,” Corbit says.

Ursus arctos horribilis isn’t the typical lab rat. A grizzly can lift a heavy tree trunk—with one paw. In the wild, the bears win duels with wolves and mountain lions. They are powerful enough to tear through the side of a barn or even crush a small car. Also, the bears growl.

But bears do know a thing or two about weight gain, and that makes them more like people than rats whose genes are manipulated to make them obese.

Read the whole story

Anderson ensures students

ride this winter

By Kathryn Reed

Growing up in a family of eight kids, Jamie Anderson knows outfitting youngsters to ride or ski is expensive. She also knows what it means to be on the slopes when you are young.

Although Anderson is only 23, the Meyers resident is a veteran snowboarder. She's been taking home gold since she was a teenager. On Friday she won the snowboard slopestyle at the Dew Tour in Breckenridge, Colo. She is aiming to be on the Olympic team for the Games in Russia.

But before going after more hardware, Anderson spent time Dec. 16 Skyping with students in Lake Tahoe Unified School District. She is still in Colorado. The students are competing to win a season pass to her home resort, Sierra-at-Tahoe, as well as a full set of gear – mostly from businesses who sponsor her. Without Anderson and Sierra's generosity, these students would not be snowboarding this winter.

To be in the running for this prize, students had to write an essay about why they believe they deserve to be recognized by Anderson.

South Tahoe High School Principal Ivone Larson said, "They wrote a letter describing how it would impact them."

Most were serious in nature, while sophomore Paul Mutz took a more creative comical approach that caught the attention of reviewers.

Sixth-grader Allison Kennedy told *Lake Tahoe News*, "I wrote about how my dad was in prison for four years and that he just got home last year and we haven't had that much money."

Administrators narrowed the field to the 10 finalists. Essays

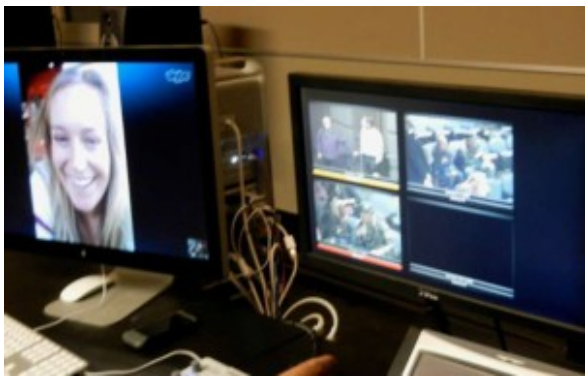
from the finalists have been emailed to Anderson.

All but the one person who was out of town read part of their essays to Anderson on Monday.

As fifth-grader Monserrat Franco spoke she got choked up and barely could get out how she wants to ride with her cousins, have them teach her to snowboard so then she can teach her younger brothers.

Junior Jorge Luquin spoke of how money from his part-time job goes to pay household bills. There is no money for playing on the mountain.

“You are amazing; all of you,” Anderson told them. “I’m excited to meet you guys in person. All of your letters were heartwarming.”



In the control room of South Tahoe High School’s screening room Jamie Anderson, left, can be seen Skyping with students on Dec. 16. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Anderson didn’t have the normal school life. Mostly, except for a spell at South Tahoe Middle School, she was homeschooled.

She told the kids she knows things can be hard, that people can be mean. She asked them to try to rise above all the

negativity.

“It’s more than about boarding. It’s about the love. It’s more about passing along love,” Anderson told them.

On Dec. 28 the youngsters will go to Sierra and ride with Anderson. That is when they find out who receives what.

This is the third year Anderson has partnered with Sierra and LTUSD to give students an opportunity to ride. The first year it was two students, last year four and this year it will be eight.

“Jamie is a world champion in so many ways, but a real class individual,” John Rice, general manager of Sierra-at-Tahoe, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “It is a great program. She wanted to expand it this year. It’s really showing that she is maturing as a human being and using her celebrity status to share with the world.”

Derby Dames recruiting players for 2014

The Tahoe Derby Dames are looking for skaters and volunteers to join the flat track roller derby team in South Lake Tahoe.

TDD consists of women from a variety of professional and athletic backgrounds. No prior skating experience is necessary. Minimum age is 18.

The first practice of the season is Jan. 5 from 8-10pm at Kahle Community Center in Stateline. Practice will be at Kahle on Sundays and Tuesdays through March.

Go online if interested in joining the team.

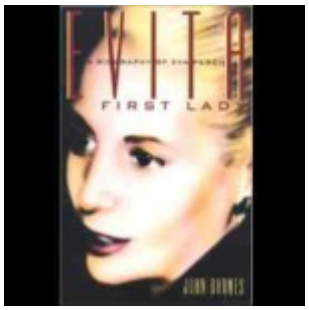
Eva Perón biography portrays a complicated woman

By Kathryn Reed

I decided to stick with my South America themed reading and started in on “Evita: First Lady.” It has been on my bookshelf for years.

It is a biography of Eva Perón written by John Barnes. It was published in 1975. My guess is I picked it up some time shortly after I was in South America in 2001.

Like any book it brought out more details about Perón’s life than what can be portrayed in a play or film.



Many books have been written about the controversial first lady of Argentina. Her life has been made into a musical both on Broadway and in film. The former was an Andrew Lloyd Webber hit that won a Tony for Best Musical. The latter starred Madonna.

My journal did not have much about visiting her burial site in Buenos Aires other than to say her husband was buried elsewhere. And unfortunately I don’t have photos to jar my memory because that roll of film was stolen with my camera. What I remember is Americans being interested in seeing the burial site and Argentines walking on by.

This biography is more complimentary of Evita than critical. While it does not shy away from saying how not everyone was thrilled with the Peróns, it read like a significant part of the story was not being told. But that can happen with biographies. This isn't billed as an unbiased historical look at that time period.

But the book is interesting as it captures here childhood of poverty, her determination to make something of herself, and her rise to be nearly as powerful as her husband, Juan, who was president.

Evita's crusade to better workers and the unions is well documented, but then is juxtaposed against her spending lavishly on herself from donations that came via the people she said she was helping.

Eva Perón was first lady from 1946 until she died in 1952. She was 43.

Economy has Americans staying put

By Annie Lowrey, New York Times

Economists admire Americans for many traits: our profound respect for property rights, our tendency to forgo vacation days, our ingenious methods of mass-producing "food."

Another important attribute is our willingness to move, between houses, between states and across the country. Some economists believe our inborn rootlessness makes the country's work force more dynamic and strengthens our economy's growth.

Imagine how much worse off the country might be if the 49ers had decided against making the trek to California or the sharecroppers chose to stay in the South.

Economic mobility and geographic mobility have been closely linked for much of American history, so economists find it troubling that migration rates have been in decline lately. The proportion of Americans moving has fallen to new postwar lows in the past few years.

According to Census Bureau data from 2013, about 4.8 million Americans moved across state lines in the previous year. That is down from 5.7 million in 2006 and 7.5 million in 1999. All in all, the percentage of Americans moving across state lines has fallen by about half since the 1990s.

Read the whole story

Law would allow Congress to vote without being in D.C.

By Bryan Steele, California News Service

WASHINGTON – Since he began his new job in January, Rep. Eric Swalwell, a freshman lawmaker from Pleasanton, has commuted roughly 250,000 miles from California to Washington.

That's equivalent to flying around the planet 10 times. And for California representatives, the commute is not unusual.

Rep. David Valadao, R-Fresno, didn't mind the three-hour drive from Fresno to Sacramento when he served in the state assembly. But add another six hour flight across country and the commute begins to take a serious toll. Rep. Alan

Lowenthal, D-Long Beach, calls the repeated trips the hardest part of his job.

The long commute inspired Swalwell to introduce a measure that would let members vote remotely on non-controversial bills.

Under the provisions of HR287, which Swalwell introduced in late June, representatives would be able to vote via secure computers on the road or while at home, on issues with low priority. They would also be able to use video conferencing to participate in committee hearings.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• The Emergency Medical Services Agency and Public Health Preparedness program of the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency have moved to 2900 Fair Lane Court in Placerville. The move is expected to save the $40,000 per year in lease costs. Phone numbers will remain the same.

• Here is the Caltrans roadwork schedule for this week for El Dorado-Tahoe.

• The 86-year-old Spindleshanks building in Tahoe Vista is expected to be razed next year and be replaced with 39 timeshare units.

• Chas Guldemond, who rides for Northstar, is interviewed at the Dew Tour:

See More Videos at AlliSports.com

Tahoe fire agencies improve cardiac care

By Kathryn Reed

Saving lives is nothing knew for fire departments. How they to it, though, changes regularly as technology evolves.

Two agencies in the Lake Tahoe Basin this month were recognized by Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval as a Heart Safe Community – Tahoe Douglas and North Lake Tahoe fire protection districts. The mission of Nevada Project Heartbeat is to save lives through promotion of early defibrillation, education in sudden cardiac arrest, and promotion of training in AED-CPR.

In the United States, more people age 40 and older die of sudden cardiac arrest than anything else. That is one of the main reasons there is a strong push to get AED units distributed to areas beyond the typical medical facility.

Automated external defibrillators – or AEDs – can save lives. They are portable devices that shock the heart back into action. The machines require little training to use.

It is because the fire districts have worked at getting them distributed into their respective communities that the governor singled them out.

“It’s pretty big,” Eric Guevin of Tahoe Douglas said of the recognition and program. “It means that the public has access to AEDs, there are people trained to use the AEDs and can perform CPR. It means we should have a higher survival rate then other areas that don’t.”

There are about 60 AEDs in the district. Ten automated

defibrillators are at the various stations as well ones on the engines. They are also at county facilities, including schools and the Zephyr Cove tennis courts.

Private businesses have bought AEDs in case of an emergency. Guevin said his department has been working on this for a while to get more AEDs in the community, especially in locations where people gather, like the Stateline casinos.

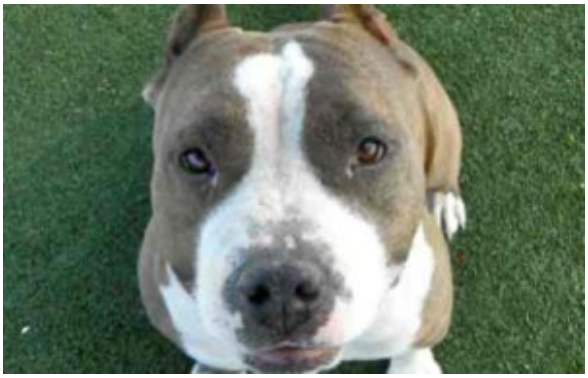
Dispatchers know where they are in Tahoe Douglas so if someone calls 911 with a cardiac emergency, it might be possible to locate a nearby AED to help the patient before paramedics arrive.

Tahoe Douglas gets about 200 cardiac calls a year.

“For every minute that goes by without shocking the heart you lose a 10 percent chance of saving that life,” Guevin told *Lake Tahoe News*. “This program will save lives. Every year more than 200,000 people die of sudden cardiac arrest, according to the American Heart Association.”

A heart attack is when there is an injury to the muscle, whereas sudden cardiac arrest is when heart stops and immediate care is required.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Shay

Photos don’t do Shay justice. She has the short, blocky, stout body of an English bulldog, and a huge head, and she’s probably got some pit bull in her.

She is a sweetheart; very quiet in the shelter, she loves kids and other dogs and walks very nicely on her leash.

Go to the animal shelter’s Facebook page to see a video of her playing with a couple of the puppies.

Shay is about 2 years old and will fit into just about any household that has no little furry creatures (including cats).

Shay is spayed, microchipped, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go online to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz