Children less fit than their parents were as kids

By Michelle Roberts, BBC

Many children cannot run as fast as their parents could when they were young, a study of global fitness says.

Experts say the work – being presented at the American Heart Association's annual meeting – suggests children's fitness levels may be declining.

Researchers analyzed data spanning 46 years and involving more than 25 million children in 28 countries.

On average, children today run a mile 90 seconds slower than did their counterparts 30 years ago, they said.

Across nations, cardiovascular endurance – gauged by how far children can run in a set time – has dwindled consistently by about 5% every decade, according to the findings.

The decline is seen in boys and girls and across all ages from nine to 17 years, and is linked to obesity, with some countries faring worse than others.

Lead researcher Dr Grant Tomkinson of the University of South Australia's School of Health Sciences said: "In fact, about 30 percent to 60 percent of the declines in endurance running performance can be explained by increases in fat mass."

Read the whole story

More chewing may be the way to ingest fewer calories

By Heidi Mitchell, Wall Street Journal

Over the holidays, Americans will undoubtedly overindulge, gulping down their first plateful and racing back for seconds. But is there an optimal way to masticate?

One expert, Klaus Bielefeldt, director of the Neurogastroenterology & Motility Center at the University of Pittsburgh, chews on the subject.

Digestion starts in the mouth, says Bielefeldt, and chewing initiates the process.

“Mechanically, chewing breaks down the food into tiny pieces so that it is easier to digest,” he says. “Chemically, chewing releases saliva, a lubricant that helps food to slide down the esophagus and begin the breakdown of carbohydrates with the help of the enzyme amylase.”

The longer you chew, the more fragmented food particles become, which eases the digestive process in the gut and stomach.

“And you won’t swallow a whole toothpick that someone left in the turkey, which I’ve seen,” says Bielefeldt.

Read the whole story

Douglas County trying to come up with millions of dollars to repair dilapidated roads

By Anne Knowles

MINDEN – Douglas County is looking for money to repair its crumbling roads.

After years of underfunding road maintenance, and reallocating about $1 million from the current fiscal year's general fund for repairs, the county now wants a permanent fix to an old problem.

This week the county had two public workshops, in Topaz and Minden, to present possible options for raising at least an additional $4 million annually in order to maintain 171 miles of paved roads. An annual budget of $7.7 million, the county estimates, would also eliminate the county's $50 million road maintenance backlog in 10 years.



This sign would be common if Douglas County could find a way to pay for road improvements. Photo/LTN file

A Road Funding Task Force, comprised of about 20 residents created to investigate funding options, has met five times

since June and will meet again next month before presenting its recommendations to County Manager Steve Mokrohisky, who will present them to the Board of Commissioners sometime in early 2014.

In the meantime, the county is seeking public input on the issue in an effort to find a solution that sticks and isn't rejected by residents the way a bump in the gas tax has been in the past. In 1994, voters repealed a 5 cent jump in the tax implemented by the Board of Commissioners the year before. Ten years later, voters denied the 5 cent increase again, that time via a 2004 ballot measure.

"One of our concerns is the board doesn't want to implement a gas tax only to have the voters repeal it," said Mokrohisky at the workshop here on Nov. 20.

Residents of the county in Lake Tahoe may not be as aware of or as affected by rickety roads as other county residents. Eight general improvement districts there take care of most local road maintenance and the Nevada Department of Transportation is responsible for the state highways in the area. The county provides signal maintenance and maintains just 2.5 miles of roads, including Lake Parkway, according to the county.

But Lake Tahoe residents may end up paying more in fees or taxes, depending on the mechanisms chosen by the Board of Commissioners to raise the needed cash.

No single option presented at the workshops generates all of the needed funds, so the county will likely settle on a mix of solutions.

"There is no silver bullet," Mokrohisky said. "One option is not going to fix the problem.

The county manager discussed six possible avenues for additional funds:

• More money could be shifted to road maintenance from the county's general fund, the amount of which would be determined by the public's tolerance for a corresponding reduction in other services.

• New road GIDs could be created to pay for local roads within each GID. About 60 percent of the county's maintained roads are local roads in unincorporated areas such as the Johnson Lane area. The other 40 percent are so-called collector roads that are heavily trafficked such as Johnson Lane and Buckeye Road. Town residents, such as those in Minden and Gardnerville, pay a higher property tax than residents in the unincorporated areas to pay for local road maintenance. Property taxes for those residents in the unincorporated areas, which are below the state cap, could be raised to pay for maintenance of their local roads. The amount of money raised is still to be determined.

• A 1 percent increase in the utility operator fee on gas and electricity would raise about $800,000 annually. By law, the county could push up the fee by as much as 2.5 percent.

• The gas tax, by law, could be increased by as much as 5 cents. A jump of 5 cents would generate $900,000 annually.

• An infrastructure tax would be a 0.25 percent sales tax to produce $1.5 million every year.

• A public Transit and Road Maintenance Tax, which would have to be voted on, could bring in $3 million yearly.

The county may post an online survey on the topic. Details on the issue may be found at the county website. Mokrohisky said the workshop presentation would be made available there along with other documents and anyone interested in commenting may email or call his office.

Giving is something to be thankful for

By Mandy Kendall

It makes sense that Thanksgiving is the perfect time to focus more intensely on giving, but sometimes it can end up being just about friends and family. Don’t get me wrong, there’s is nothing wrong with that at all, but there are many people out there not as fortunate. Thanksgiving could be a time to spread the love a little further.

No matter how big or small there are so many ways in which to give.

Here are a few *Qwik*-*e* tips to help your Thanksgiving be all about the giving.

Donate



Mandy Kendall

Your time – There are so many places to donate your time. Organizations in your community will always be grateful for extra sets of hands, especially during the holidays. Food distribution centers or soup kitchens are usually very shorthanded at this time of year. Animal shelters are always looking for help, plus you get to spend time with really

adorable animals that will love you unconditionally. Everyone is so busy I'm sure there is someone you know who would really appreciate the offer of some help, perhaps with babysitting or with a cumbersome chore. Senior centers always welcome volunteers, even if it's just to sit and chat. You get to meet some very interesting people and often get to hear some amazing stories. This is a great website to investigate opportunities to donate your time locally in ways that you might not have thought about before.

Money – This may not be possible for everyone, but you could consider redirecting money you may be planning to spend on yourself to someone more in need. A friend puts aside money she would have spent on her daily coffee for the month of November and donates that to her favorite charity. Double your donation. Many grocery stores will offer to match a donation when you buy a bag of groceries to donate. So $10 donated will turn into $20 worth of groceries that go to a family in need.

Gifts – Finding it hard to find the perfect gift for someone? How about donating some money to a worthy cause on their behalf.

De-clutter – Are your closets full of things you never use? Clearing out and reorganizing before the holidays might just unearth some items that are suitable to donate to a local organization that will forward them to someone who could use them. If you're making a trip to deliver items, you could ask your friends, neighbors or work colleagues if they want to donate too, saving everyone a little time and energy.

Share

Local churches are a great source for knowing where help is needed.

Skills – Most of us have skills that we could share with others. If it's a flair for decorating, maybe a neighbor needs a hand. Perhaps you're an expert at computers. There will be

plenty of people who need a hand getting connected.

Equipment – Many of us have expensive equipment and tools that sit in our garages mostly un-used. Offering your time and equipment to the community in need is a great way of sharing, and as a bonus you get to meet people you may have otherwise never met.

Random Act of Kindness (things you do just because.) – There are an infinite number of ways to be kind to someone, even a total stranger. Perhaps pay for someone's meal at a diner, tip someone who wouldn't normally get tipped or deliver a home cooked meal to a neighbor's house. RAOKs don't have to cost anything. Shoveling someone's driveway or raking up his or her leaves is cost free and you get a good workout at the same time. Be anonymous if you like, that feels good too.

Happy HolidaysI

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at connect@healthconnective.com 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: Diversity matters in the boardroom

By Mike Myatt, Forbes

I do quite a bit of work on matters of board composition, selection and succession, and what I can tell you is this; board diversity is simply smart business. You'll never hear me recommend diversity solely for the sake of checking a box, but when diversity in the boardroom offers so many benefits to the CEO (and to the entire organization) it's nothing short of irresponsible for chief executives not to place their board composition under the microscope.



Mike Myatt

In today's column I'll share with you the top 10 reasons why diversity is good for the boardroom.

I was having an interesting conversation the other day with my colleague Patricia Lenkov, who chairs our executive search practice at N2growth. She recently spoke at the Global Women's Leadership Summit and just came off of a 2020 Women on Boards event in New York last week that examined gender diversity and the bottom line. Patricia's passion is board work, and like me, she has seen just about everything when it comes to the variety of agendas, motivations, and expectations when it

comes to building a board – they may often be well intentioned, but they're not all healthy.

We came to the conclusion that many CEOs and nominating committees simply focus on the wrong things for the wrong reasons when it comes to board composition – specifically when it comes to the topic of diversity.

It's not uncommon for a CEO's first instinct to be to create a board that looks good to the public, and that also carries some cachet with important constituencies – laudable goals but not necessarily lofty ones.

Read the whole story

Placerville elder abuse case ends with hung jury

By Marjie Lundstrom, Sacramento Bee

When 77-year-old Johnnie Esco died in 2008 after a short stay at a Placerville nursing home, her husband of 60 years wanted someone held responsible – civilly and criminally.

Don Esco of Cameron Park settled his civil lawsuit against the El Dorado Care Center and its owner in 2010 for $2.9 million. The criminal matter ended quite differently this week, with California's attorney general declining to seek a new trial against the facility's former head nurse following a mistrial.

More than five years after the elderly woman's death, an El Dorado County jury failed to reach a verdict in the case against Donna Darlene Palmer, charged with felony elder abuse.

Palmer, the former director of nursing at the facility, was one of two nurses charged criminally last year by the California attorney general's office. At the time, Attorney General Kamala D. Harris' office had announced plans to intensify efforts statewide to bring criminal cases against nursing home administrators and employees whose failings harm vulnerable patients.

Read the whole story

Garbage rates likely to increase on South Shore

Garbage rates on the South Shore are expected to go up Jan. 1.

South Tahoe Refuse is asking for a 2.78 percent increase in South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County and 2.73 in Douglas County. Per month, this equates to 69 and 79 cents for city and El Dorado County residents and 45 cents for Douglas residents with one 32-gallon can.

First the respective jurisdictions must sign off on the increase, which is based on the Consumer Price Index. That discussion will happen in December.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

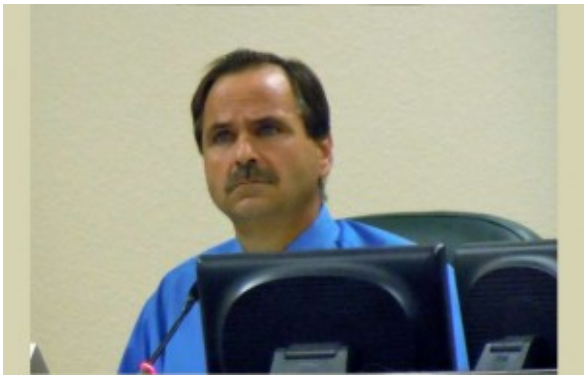
Nutting loses appeal of motion to dismiss

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting's appeal to have the motion to dismiss overturned was denied Thursday.

Nutting wanted the 3rd Appellate Court in Sacramento to overturn the Sept. 20 El Dorado County Superior Court decision where the motion to dismiss the felony charges against him was denied. The appellate court upheld the lower court's decision.

Nutting, 53, faces four felony counts regarding more than $70,000 he received from the state to clear brush from his 350-acre ranch in Somerset. (His brother owns an adjacent 350 acres.) He is accused of not reporting the income, voting on contracts that affected him financially and perjury. After those felony charges were leveled in May, the district and state attorneys general offices filed seven misdemeanor charges against Nutting regarding how he got his $55,000 in bail money. He is accused of taking loans from county employees.



El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting's trial starts Feb. 4. Photo/LTN file

“Our position has been the same all the way through this. We will present this to a jury of his peers in February and trust them with the outcome once they hear both sides and not one side,” David Weiner, Nutting’s attorney, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He believes the grand jury indicted Nutting because only one side has to be presented to the grand jury. There is no cross-examination or opposition at those hearings.

“It’s a one-dog show,” Weiner said of the grand jury process. “The grand jury only hears what the DA wants them too hear.”

Prior to the Nov. 21 decision by the court, Nutting had sent out a press release boasting of the appellate court hearing the case.

To this, the District Attorney’s Office, wrote, “Mr. Nutting conversely appears to attempt to stall the proceedings with motion after motion. In the end, this case will be decided in a courtroom based upon the law and evidence, not some silly, misleading press release.”

On Thursday, District Attorney Vern Pierson told *Lake Tahoe News*, that everything is set on their end to have the trial start Feb. 4 without delay. The proceedings will be in Placerville.

Hwy. 50 near Cave Rock closed to westbound traffic

A two-car accident near the tunnel at Cave Rock has sent two people to the hospital and is blocking westbound traffic on

Highway 50.

Nevada Highway Patrol hopes to have the road open by 6 tonight. Troopers are asking people to avoid the area until the road opens.

Names of the injured drivers were not available, however Trooper Dan Lopez told *Lake Tahoe News* that the injuries were not life threatening. Both people were transported by CareFlight to Renown Medical Center in Reno.

“Slow is better,” Lopez said of how to drive in snowy conditions.

While snow totals are not great in the Lake Tahoe Basin with Thursday’s storm, the roads are slick and the snow continues to fall. The winds will be picking up later tonight and lasting into Saturday, which could impact visibility for drivers.

There is also an accident near Marla Bay that is blocking one lane of travel headed east.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Common sense can prevent Turkey Day fires

By Teri Mizuhara

The Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire wants to make sure everyone’s Thanksgiving holiday is a fire safe holiday.

Across this nation there are approximately 2,000 house fires

reported on Thanksgiving Day, the highest number of house fires for any single day of the year. These fires result in injury, death and over $21 million in damage in one single 24 hour period.

Over 70 percent of these fires occur between noon and 4pm and nearly 70 percent are cooking fires which are mostly small, but any fire has the potential to destroy lives.

So what can you do to prevent a holiday disaster?:

- Leaving your food cooking unattended is the leading cause of cooking fires. It is best to never leave food cooking unattended. If you must leave the cooking area, turn off the burner, oven, etc.
- Be sure to turn the handles of the pots and pans toward the back of the stove where they are out of reach and are less likely to get bumped.
- Keep a lid or baking sheet nearby to cover a pot or pan that has caught fire.
- Frying poses the greatest risk of a fire, so consider an alternative such as the infrared oil-less fryers available for less than $100.
- Avoid wearing loose fitting clothes with long sleeves while cooking because clothing catching on fire accounts for 16 percent of cooking fire deaths.
- Establish a “no kid zone” for a minimum of 3 feet around any cooking surface.
- Make sure your smoke detectors are working and linked throughout your home.

Teri Mizuhara works for the Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire.