Feds, states want to track drivers' mileage

By Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON – As America's road planners struggle to find the cash to mend a crumbling highway system, many are beginning to see a solution in a little black box that fits neatly by the dashboard of your car.

The devices, which track every mile a motorist drives and transmit that information to bureaucrats, are at the center of a controversial attempt in Washington and state planning offices to overhaul the outdated system for funding America's major roads.

The usually dull arena of highway planning has suddenly spawned intense debate and colorful alliances. Libertarians have joined environmental groups in lobbying to allow government to use the little boxes to keep track of the miles you drive, and possibly where you drive them – then use the information to draw up a tax bill.

The tea party is aghast. The American Civil Liberties Union is deeply concerned, too, raising a variety of privacy issues.

And while Congress can't agree on whether to proceed, several states are not waiting. They are exploring how, over the next decade, they can move to a system in which drivers pay per mile of road they roll over. Thousands of motorists have already taken the black boxes, some of which have GPS monitoring, for a test drive.

Read the whole story

Tickets on sale for Blue Ribbon Awards dinner

The 6th annual Blue Ribbon Awards dinner and ceremony at MontBleu in Stateline is Nov. 14 at 5:30pm.

More than 175 nominations were received, the finalists have been chosen, and the winners will be announced at the dinner.

Tickets are $50 and may be purchased online. The deadline to purchase tickets is Nov. 8.

For more information, contact Emily Abernathy at (775) 588.1728, ext. 303 or emily@tahoechamber.org.

Sanctioned BASE jumping at Foresthill Bridge?

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Built to accompany the long-delayed and never-completed Auburn Dam, the unusually long legs of the Foresthill Bridge has teased parachute daredevils for decades.

With its forest-green deck 730 feet above the American River Canyon, the bridge is the fourth highest span in the United States. The bridge’s height, combined with its proximity to a major population center and an interstate highway, make it an extremely desirable site for BASE jumpers worldwide. (BASE is

an acronym for the four categories of fixed objects enthusiasts jump from: Building, Antenna, Span, Earth.)

But while the span was immortalized in the action movie “xXx” in 2002 – with an extreme sport athlete played by Vin Diesel driving a stolen Corvette off the bridge and leaping from the car midflight to parachute to safety – there are very few legal opportunities for real life extreme sport athletes to jump from the span.

That may soon be changing.

Read the whole story

Snow impacts schools, roads in Lake Tahoe

Douglas County schools at the lake are starting one hour later because of snow. Lake Tahoe Unified schools are open. In Tahoe Truckee Unified it’s a snow day for Donner Trail Elementary and there is no bus service on Donner Summit.



Not the ideal spot for morning coffee on Oct. 28 in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

A fast moving storm dumped 6 inches of snow in South Lake Tahoe overnight. A winter weather advisory remains in effect for the basin until 1pm Monday.

At 7:45am it was hailing at Stateline.

The National Weather Service in Reno told *Lake Tahoe News* more snow is expected to fall through today, with light showers this evening. It will be dry Wednesday, with close to normal temperatures by the weekend.

"It was a pretty good system for late October, but it's not out of the usual," Brian O'Hara, NWS meteorologist, told *LTN*.

Chain requirements are in effect on most mountain passes. Click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* for road conditions.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Geoffrey

Geoffrey is a 2-year-old goof. He looks like a Lab, except that he's a little bigger than your average Lab, and he has wiry hair and a scraggly beard. He is one-quarter Irish Wolfhound.

And he's got tons of energy, and very few manners. He'd just as soon jump on you as pull you down the street. But he is handsome, and very sweet and affectionate. He'll lean up against you and try to jump into your lap within seconds of meeting you. With a few lessons and firm, consistent handling, Geoffrey will be a great, well-behaved family pet.

Geoffrey is neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated. He 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

Shoulder injuries don't have to end in surgery

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Knee injuries aren't the only thing skiers and

snowboarders need to worry about. Orthopedists in Lake Tahoe see a number of dislocated shoulders, too.

Kyle Swanson, a doctor with Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, went over the various shoulder injuries and treatments during a lecture Oct. 23 at Kahle Community Center.

While dislocation is common in younger people, many shoulder issues tend to be associated with age. But for those who experience a dislocated shoulder when they are younger than 25, there is a 75 percent chance it will happen again.



Alan Barichievich, front, demonstrates shoulder exercises. Photo/LTN

Swanson showed videos of some of his surgeries. He does between 50 and 100 a year. Some of the nearly 40 people in the audience turned away at the magnified mess of shoulder innards.

It looked like a pair of pliers pulling the tendon back in place. Anchors are placed several places to hold things together during the healing process. Bone marrow is popping — to which Swanson says, “This is a good thing.” Even the needle for the suturing process is visible on the video.

Swanson is not a huge proponent of cortisone injections — and certainly not more than twice a year. He also believes surgery should be the last resort.

“We are living longer and we are active longer,” Swanson said are the reasons more people are having shoulder issues.

Thirty percent of people between the ages 40 and 60 can expect a rotator cuff tear, and 80 percent of those older than 60.

Surgery is not always needed for rotator cuff tears. It depends on the person. Sometimes physical therapy can help increase range of motion.

The cause could be a single traumatic event or repetitive stress.

Then there are the people who need total shoulder replacement surgery.

What doctors can’t cure is shoulder arthritis.

Eventually anyone who has had an injury to a joint is going to get arthritis, Swanson said. An X-ray is the definitive way to diagnosis it.

“Shoulders can tolerate a lot of arthritis because they are not weight bearing,” Swanson said.

He said studies involving stem cells and platelet-rich plasma are showing positive signs in terms of helping restore the lost cartilage.

Alan Barichievich, director of rehabilitation for Barton Health, said his goal is to keep people out of Swanson’s office.

Stretching and exercising are important. And it’s not the just the shoulder to pay attention to – core exercises like the plank are important, good posture can increase range of motion, how the ribs and thoracic vertebrae move can also affect the shoulder.

“Pushups is one of the greatest exercises. I’m a big proponent

of gravity," Barichievich said.

He brought up a half dozen spectators to participate in a series of eight exercises using a TheraBand. He prefers a circuit of exercises instead of doing a ton of reps.

"The key is doing exercise for prevention," Swanson said. He would rather people do more repetitions instead of lifting a ton of weight.

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Note: The next free health lecture from Barton Health is Nov. 6 from 6-7pm at Lake Tahoe Community College's board room. Barichievich will team with doctor Terry Orr to talk about winter sports knee injuries.

Editorial: Calif. needs better vision for higher education

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the Oct. 18, 2013, Sacramento Bee.***

In a report that should not sit on a shelf, the Little Hoover Commission this week urged Gov. Jerry Brown and legislators to devise a new master plan for higher education to meet anticipated demand for 2.3 million more college graduates within 12 years.

A revised master plan, completed 50 years after the first one, would make for an ideal undertaking for a governor whose father is identified with the expansion of California's public

colleges and universities.

As the commission sees it, California must envision higher education on a much greater level than it does now, embrace online education and create seamless transfers from community colleges to four-year institutions, all worthy notions.

The success of public colleges and universities is an economic development and a social justice issue. College must be kept affordable, though the public institutions should not count on large infusions of more public money, the commission said.

Read the whole story

Military to receive free meal at Carson Valley Inn

The Carson Valley Inn will serve a free spaghetti lunch to all veterans and active military – plus one guest – on Veterans Day from 11am-4pm.

Veterans and active military personnel must present a military ID for entrance. There will be a Veterans Day colors presentation, the national anthem and an invocation at 11am.

The Carson Valley Inn is located on Highway 395 in Minden.

Study: Exercise increases teen academic success

By Lois M. Collins, Deseret News

Parents who want their teens to do better in school might want to send them outside to play hard for a bit. Research from the United Kingdom indicates that moderate to vigorous exercise helps teens academically. And it's especially good at helping girls do better in science.

The study is published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

Researchers from the universities of Strathclyde and Dundee said the improvements lasted, "with the findings pointing to a dose-response effect – the more intensive the exercise taken, the greater the impact on test results," they said in a written statement.

The results are based on a sample of close to 5,000 children who participated in the Children of the '90s study. That study tracked long-term health of around 14,000 children from southwest England, born in 1991 and 1992.

Activity levels were measured using a device called an accelerometer, worn on an elasticized belt by the subjects when they were 11. The duration and intensity of exercise was examined for between three and seven days. On average, boys clocked about 29 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise, while girls racked up about 18 minutes. Experts recommend they get 60 minutes a day.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Royal Gorge, North America’s largest cross country resort, has launched a new website.

• Oakland’s hair-folk group Tumbleweed Wanderers is headlining the Crystal Bay Club Red Room on Nov. 23. The 10pm concert is free.

• Ian McFeron will be at The Cottonwood in Truckee on Nov. 9. The 7pm concert is free.

• Barton Auxiliary’s Holiday Faire is Nov. 3 from 9am-3pm at Grace Hall on Lyons Avenue in South Lake Tahoe.

• Results of the El Dorado County-South Lake Tahoe survey for the Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan are online.