Research shows dogs have human-like emotions

By Huffington Post

New research is telling the world something that dog owners have known all along – that canines have emotions just like humans.

Gregory Berns, a professor of neuroeconomics at Emory University, has spent the past two years training dogs to go into an MRI scanner "completely awake and unrestrained."

Berns says the scans reveal that the structure and function of the caudate nucleus is similar in dog and human brains. In humans, the caudate activity spikes when we anticipate things we will enjoy like food or love.

In an op-ed in Sunday's *New York Times,* Berns summed up the study's conclusion thus: Dogs are people, too.

In his study, Berns and his colleagues tracked dogs' caudate activities when they were shown a hand signal that meant they'd be getting a food reward.

Read the whole story

Rim Trail hurt by shutdown, some Tahoe operators OK

While it's still possible to hike the 165-mile Tahoe Rim Trail, work on it and guided hikes have stopped.

Mary Bennington, executive director of the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, sent an email saying, "… due to the government shutdown all TRTA activities on USDA Forest Service are postponed until further notice. This impacts our trail construction and maintenance, guided hikes, ambassador programs and our trailhead outreach/Where's McCleod? Trail Challenge Give Away Days. Stay tuned for additional updates."

U.S. Forest Service campgrounds are closed, however some South Shore concessionaires are operating.

"USFS properties at Lake Tahoe that are operated by private concessionaires, such as Round Hill Pines, Zephyr Cove and Camp Richardson, were open through last weekend and continue to be open indefinitely until further notice. The private concessionaires were originally slated to be closed, but we worked with the USFS and other local agencies to keep them open," Steve Mokrohisky, Douglas County manager, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This means weddings can continue, rum runners will flow and the Dixie will churn.

The Tahoe Tallac Association has been told it's OK to have weddings at least through this weekend. Officials there expect another update from the Forest Service next Monday, assuming one is needed, in regards to what can happen the following weekend.

A beneficiary of the shutdown is state parks. California and Nevada state parks are reporting an influx of visitors because of the shutdown.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Federal shutdown doesn't threaten ski season

By Steven K. Paulson, AP

DENVER — A group representing the nation's ski industry said Monday it expects no major impact on this year's ski season because of federal furloughs, even though about a third of the more than 350 resorts are located on federal land regulated by the U.S. Forest Service.

Michael Berry, spokesman for the National Ski Areas Association, said most expansion projects and construction that require federal approval have been completed as opening days approach in the $6 billion a year industry. Delays could occur as a result of other projects in the pipeline, he said.

Berry said he talked with Forest Service chief Tom Tidwell to clarify how the shutdown would affect the 121 ski areas operating on federal land and was assured resort leases are not immediately affected.

"The fact of the matter is, this will have no impact on ski area operations. Having said that, there are certain things in progress, and Forest Service furloughs may slow things like that down," he said.

The federal government regulates expansion projects, environmental reviews and lease agreements that are subject to public review.

The ski association sent a memo last week to all ski areas operating with a special use permit on public lands administered by the Forest Service, advising them about the federal agency's decision.

"Ski areas may continue to operate, as the improvements are

not government-owned. Privately owned improvements are not to be affected by the shutdown," the memo said.

The ski areas were advised that the U.S. Forest Service will work with areas that are under construction on a case-by-case basis if an agency inspection or other action is needed.

Jeff Hanley, spokesman for Aspen Skiing Co. in Colorado, said hiring is under way and this year's projects have been completed.

"We're fired up and ready to go," he said.

However, the shutdown could affect plans by the company to create a better exit route off Burnt Mountain into the Snowmass Ski Area, which has already been tentatively approved. The project is now in a 45-day public comment period, which still has to be reviewed by the government before construction can begin next year.

He said because of the shutdown, he doesn't know where members of the public should go to turn in their comments.

"Right now, we have no property or anything impacted, but we don't know what we might see in the future. Hopefully, this won't last too long," Hanley said.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Tahoe Transportation District is asking people who play outdoors between Spooner Summit and Sand Harbor to take this survey.

• Sierra Nevada College’s Holiday Gala is Dec. 6 at 5:30pm, with dancing going to 10:30pm. The black-tie event is at the Hyatt in Incline. For more information, contact Aga Dabrowska at adabrowska@sierranevada.edu or (775) 881.7589.

• Lake Tahoe Community College is developing a vision for its future. This is a link to a survey asking people what their vision is for LTCC.

• South Tahoe Middle School has 500 iris bulbs to plant thanks to Larry Lambdin and Club Live. Planting will be Oct. 26 from 10am-noon at STMS as part of National Make a Difference Day. Call the school to help.

• Sugar Bowl-Royal Gorge is having its annual job fair on Oct. 19 in the Coldstream Room at Judah Lodge from 9am-3pm.

Twain to be guest of honor at library fundraiser

Mark Twain said, “Good friends, good books. This is the ideal life.” The South Lake Tahoe Friends of the Library has taken this poignant quote to heart and is hosting a unique fundraising event called A Toast to Twain.

On Nov. 3 from 4-7pm a party in the library will be held in honor of this incredible American’s 178th birthday. In addition, the library will be celebrating the publication of “Autobiography of Mark Twain, Volume 2”.

Samuel Clemens, will be the guest of honor, as the event will showcase the talents of McAvoy Layne, noted Mark Twain

impressionist. In addition to his books and performances, Layne's projects include a major role in Nevada's sesquicentennial and developing a distance learning platform for living history in the classroom. Twain will share stories of his life through his unique humor and personality.

Guests will dine on hearty appetizers, sip wine and may bid on a plethora of silent auction treasures. The proceeds from this fundraiser will go toward the purchase of new books and other resources to serve the South Lake Tahoe library.

Tickets for the event are $40 per person and are available for purchase through Oct. 30. For tickets, call or visit the South Lake Tahoe Library at (530) 573.3185 or 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.

Recreation, transit unite South Shore politicos

By Kathryn Reed

Multiple jurisdictions providing the same services in a small geographical area. That's a huge problem in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Some of the bravado and territorial issues that have existed between South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County and Douglas County went by the wayside on Monday when the elected officials from each of those areas met at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel.

A simple way to show solidarity is to eliminate the out-of-state fee that is charged at city and county recreation facilities – at least for those in the area.

Recreation and transportation dominated the discussion. And

while South Tahoe Mayor Tom Davis, who was chairing the Oct. 7 meeting, at first tried to stifle conversation for the sake of time, ultimately he was convinced by his peers that they had no problem turning what was supposed to be a two-hour meeting into four hours.



South Tahoe, El Dorado and Douglas electeds convene for the first time on Oct. 7. Photo/LTN

Many said that while everyone was gathered it was best to get things out on the table instead of waiting for who knows how long. After all, this was the first time these three bodies had ever met together.

(El Dorado County Supervisor Ron Briggs went home sick after lunch and South Lake Tahoe Councilman Hal Cole was in Placerville meeting with county staff.)

No action items were on the agenda. But the group decided that two members (to be named later) from each elected body would be named to an ad hoc committee to work on South Shore issues. Future meetings between all of the electeds are possible.

The three entities are already working in partnership to devise a recreation master plan. An economist is on the consulting team to analyze return on investment. This is being created as a to-do manual, not a theoretical document.

City Manager Nancy Kerry revealed some of the results of a recreation survey that was taken this year that is part of the master plan. People love Lakeview Commons, want more bike trails and definitely want signature events.

Part of the problem with having any kind of substantial athletic tournament here is the various entities to deal with, which equates to time and money for the organizer.

“Chaos happens” is how Scott Morgan, Douglas County community services director, described the process for someone wanting to schedule a tournament or special event here.

Depending on the event the organizer may have to deal with the three jurisdictions, possibly three school entities, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and maybe two state departments of transportation. And each of those usually has a fee they want to charge and permits – aka paperwork – to secure. When people learn this, many start calling other places with less cumbersome processes.

And then there is the issue of getting people to and from the various locations. BlueGo, the public bus system on the South Shore, doesn’t go to Meyers or Zephyr Cove Park. And it doesn’t go to Lake Tahoe Community College on Sundays.

Carl Hasty, executive director of Tahoe Transportation District, said to provide the current bus service for free it would take $700,000. That is what is collected each year in fares. It doesn’t include the money private and public agencies contribute.

“Successful resort communities have free transit,” Hasty said. He also pointed out how when TTD has received money to have free bus days the number of riders doubles.

TTD is also tied to recreation. It is the lead agency for the Stateline-to-Stateline bike trail. The second mile that links Rabe Meadow to Round Hill Pines will be finished this month.

Hasty said the problem on the South Shore is there are no dedicated transit funds. On the North Shore, Placer County uses part of the hotel tax for transportation. South Shore relies on state and federal dollars.

‘Why I Farm’ author to give talk

The Friends of the Library and South Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners are partnering to present Gary Romano, author of “Why I Farm: Risking it All for Life on the Land”, in a talk and book signing as part of the Friends of the Library fall programming.

The Oct. 22 6pm event is free and open to the public.

The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Editorial: Calif. helping workers with rap sheets

Publisher’s note: ***This editorial is from the Oct. 4, 2013, New York Times.***

The California Legislature passed a bill last month that bars government agencies from asking job applicants about criminal

convictions until the agency has determined that the applicant meets minimum qualifications for the job.

This measure will help remove unfair barriers to employment that keep millions of qualified workers trapped at the margins of society. Gov. Jerry Brown should sign this sensible bill.

About 65 million Americans have criminal records that place them at risk of being shut out of work, often for minor convictions that occurred in the distant past or even for arrests that never led to conviction.

In addition, many people are shut out of jobs because of mistakes in criminal background databases that, even under the best circumstances, are difficult to get corrected.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Tahoe Youth & Family Services needs an executive director because Alissa Nourse has resigned after having the job for nine years. She is going to be Alpine County's director of Behavioral Health.

• California Controller John Chiang has updated the public employee compensation website with the latest wage and benefit data for community college employees.

• A new edition of the Eastern Sierra Fall Color Guide & Map is available online.

• Here is the Sierra roadwork schedule from Caltrans for this

week.

• Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 6-12.

Theaters were slow to embrace food during movies

By Pagan Kennedy, New York Times

In the 1920s, movie palaces rose up around the country like so many portals into a glamorous world. After you bought a ticket, you might pass through gilded archways and ascend a grand staircase lighted by a crystal chandelier to find your velvet seat.

Eating was not meant to be part of the experience, says Andrew F. Smith, author of “Popped Culture: A Social History of Popcorn in America.” Theater owners feared that audiences would strew popcorn and peanuts on those crimson carpets. They hung signs discouraging people from bringing in food from vendors parked outside and didn’t sell it themselves.

A widow named Julia Braden in Kansas City, Mo., was one of the rare concessionaires who managed to talk her way inside. She persuaded the Linwood Theater to let her set up a stand in the lobby and eventually built a popcorn empire.

By 1931, she owned stands in or near four movie theaters and pulled in more than $14,400 a year — the equivalent of $336,000 in today’s dollars. Her business grew even in the midst of the Depression, at the same time that thousands of elegant theaters went bust.

Read the whole story