

STHS grad receives honor from NASA

Ray Hoff, who graduated from South Tahoe High School in 1966, has been awarded NASA's Distinguished Service Medal for Distinguished Service and Leadership.

Hoff is a professor of physics at the University of Maryland and is also director of the Joint Center for Earth Systems Technology.



Ray Hoff

Hoff has 35 years experience in atmospheric research. His research interests are in the optical properties of aerosols and gases in the atmosphere and the pathways and fates of toxic organic and elemental chemicals in the environment. These diverse research interests stem from his formal training in physics, but also require a firm knowledge of atmospheric chemistry.

He has conducted research at UMBC, Environment Canada, NASA Langley Research Center, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the NASA Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's Environment Research Laboratories.

– Del Laine

Study: Physically fit kids do better academically

By Serena Gorddon, HealthDay News

Middle school students who are physically fit are likely to score higher on standardized tests measuring reading and math abilities, a study has found.

And the average scores went up in correlation with levels of fitness, the findings showed.

"The more physically fit kids were, the higher their scores," said the study's lead author, Trent Petrie, director of the Center for Sport Psychology at the University of North Texas in Denton.

"Parents should encourage their kids to be physically active. There are some real cognitive and academic benefits that come from physical fitness," Petrie said.

Results of the study were presented Friday at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in Orlando.

The study included more than 1,200 middle school students from five schools in a suburban area of Texas, with 561 boys and 650 girls.

About 57 percent of the children were white, and nearly one-quarter were Mexican American. Nine percent were black and about 2 percent were of Asian descent.

The school district provided the researchers with information on the children's race, age, grade level and whether they qualified for the free school lunch program, which was an

indicator of the family's socioeconomic status. The schools also provided scores to the tests, which were given between one and four months after the researchers had assessed the children's levels of fitness.

Fitness tests were administered during physical education classes to determine the youngsters' heart and lung health (cardiorespiratory fitness), as well as their body mass index (BMI), an indicator of how much body fat a person has. The children also filled out questionnaires that helped the researchers determine factors such as self-esteem and social support.

After accounting for factors such as age, sex, family income and self-esteem, the researchers found that for both boys and girls, higher levels of cardiorespiratory fitness predicted better scores on the math and reading tests.

For boys, perceived social support also seemed to boost their reading scores, the investigators found.

In girls, while being physically fit predicted higher reading scores, so too did a higher BMI – which indicates more body fat. “We were a little surprised by this finding,” Petrie said.

“It was not as strong an association as the one with physical fitness,” he added. The authors suspect it may have something to do with girls this age entering puberty, which may be related to a higher BMI and slightly higher cognitive (brain) development. He said he plans to look for this relationship again in larger studies to see if it was a chance finding, or if the association holds up.

“While we can't say 100 percent that physical fitness causes better academic performance, we can say that there is a strong and predictive relationship between physical fitness and academic performance,” Petrie said.

“It’s hard to tease apart the exact reason for this association,” said Becky Hashim, an attending clinical psychologist and assistant professor in the departments of psychiatry and pediatrics at the Children’s Hospital of Montefiore, in New York City.

“It may be that the children are getting more oxygen. When the heart and lungs are working at a higher capacity, it may allow the brain to work at peak performance. Children who are less fit may be sleepier during school,” she noted. “I personally feel that there’s probably a strong relationship between the confidence you get from being able to do something physical well and academic performance.”

Whatever the reason behind this association may be, “there’s certainly no harm in pushing physical fitness,” Hashim added.

“Physical fitness may make you feel better, give you more confidence and improve your performance across the board,” she said.

Petrie agreed. “Physically fit kids are happier, have higher self-esteem, tend to have better relationships, and now we’re beginning to see, there also seem to be benefits cognitively and academically. Our study sends a strong warning to policymakers to reconsider the utility of physical education classes for kids,” he said.

Because this study was presented at a medical meeting, the data and conclusions should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Opinion: Medicinal marijuana going up in smoke

By John Redman

When Californians passed the “Compassionate Use Act” – otherwise known as Proposition 215 – in 1996, most voters thought that it was reasonable to allow chronically ill patients to use marijuana without fear of arrest. And if those patients could not grow marijuana on their own, the initiative stipulated that patient caregivers could help to grow marijuana for their patients collectively or cooperatively for a patient’s personal use.

Those descriptive words were adverbs not nouns.

That is an important distinction that advocates disregarded. Flagrantly violating the law and common sense, for-profit “collectives” – smartly renamed “compassion centers” – spread like wildfire throughout the state.

But there are some major signs that the pot party is over.

Last week, the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to shut all medical marijuana stores after hearing from residents outraged by the fact that they were bombarded by shady dispensary owners and wafting marijuana smoke at all hours of the day. Immediately afterward, all four federal judicial districts in California announced that federal judges had dismissed lawsuits this year advocating for dispensaries.

Marijuana advocates have overplayed their hand. Though the medical profession has largely rejected smoked marijuana as medicine because it has not passed FDA muster, a handful of unscrupulous doctors and dispensary owners have made millions of dollars in the name of compassion off of the sick and dying. They have been trying to fit a square peg in a round

hole, and not only has it not worked – it has made many of us angry.

A recent California study found that most people use marijuana medically to help with pain, sleep and relaxation. Another study found that less than 3 percent of people using medical marijuana had a chronic disease like cancer or AIDS. The average medical marijuana card holder in California is a 32-year-old white male with a history of alcohol and marijuana use.

That is why it should not surprise anyone that U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag in San Francisco moved to shut down the biggest granddaddy offender of them all: Harborside Health Center. Harborside is the antithesis of what was intended by voters, as it takes in million of dollars in sales every year and does nothing to ensure its product is safe or effective. Rather, its owner thinks that time is better spent on television evangelizing the cure-all wonders of pot.

This is hardly what Californians voted for, and there are signs that California's love affair with marijuana is receding. Medical marijuana moguls bankrolled an unsuccessful effort to legalize marijuana outright, and it turns out that none of the five attempts to get it back on the ballot in 2012 will be successful.

The Rev. Scott Imler, who co-wrote Proposition 215 and advocates for the limited use of medical marijuana, put it best recently when he said, "We created Prop. 215 so that patients would not have to deal with black market profiteers. But today it is all about the money. Most of the dispensaries operating in California are little more than dope dealers with storefronts."

Selling joints to anyone with a pulse and \$200 cash was never the bill of goods that the voters were sold.

John Redman is the executive director of Californians for

S. Tahoe officials looking at ways to stimulate economy

By Kathryn Reed

With a deficit of more than \$1 million that could grow to \$1.5 million depending on how property taxes come in, South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry is looking at ways to bring more money into city coffers.



She presented a plan to the council on Tuesday that calls for an era of cooperation instead of competition. That discussion will be further expanded on Aug. 11 when the City Council has a three-hour workshop starting at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport to discuss its priorities.

Kerry on Aug. 7 spoke of the need to meet with government and regulatory agencies, as well as private businesses in the basin to find the common themes each has in their respective strategic plans in order to find the common denominator.

The council believes recreation is the theme. But that in itself is a broad goal. It could mean having an Olympic training ground, something involving sports medicine, or having a sports complex for various athletic pursuits.

The idea Kerry presented is that the entities will need to give up some of their turf – literally and figuratively – for

the greater good. She doesn't want a plan; she wants to define projects and bring them to fruition.

Mayor Claire Fortier asked how this is different than the Prosperity Plan.

"The Prosperity Plan is a planning document. This is an implementation discussion," Kerry told the council as to what the gathering of the players would be.

While it was not brought up at the meeting Tuesday, a piece to the puzzle could be the use of the vacant Kingsbury Middle School site in Stateline. While Douglas County School District wants to sell this acreage and the buildings on it, it could possibly be repurposed as the South Shore attempts to find its niche in the world of tourism. The ultimate goal is to find an economic driver.

Entities throughout the basin continue to go into debt (roads for South Lake Tahoe) or borrow from reserves (softball field for Lake Tahoe Unified) to make ends meet and provide what residents would call "the basics".

Revenues are stagnant everywhere.

Councilman Tom Davis was the biggest naysayer to Kerry's idea to create a collective vision by getting everyone to agree to focus on one or two projects. He believes it will take too long and not everyone will get on the same page and sounded reluctant to even try.

Councilwoman Angela Swanson was the most supportive of the idea.

"I think the time is now. The agencies are hungry for an action plan," Swanson said. "This gets us beyond siloing."

Kerry's idea to go from recession to recovery to revitalization will be talked about more by the council at Saturday's workshop.

In other city news:

- A \$150,000 ambulance bought by the city-county joint powers authority is on the streets.
- For the umpteenth time, the council talked about signs. Now sandwich boards will be allowed Saturdays (8am-5pm), Sundays (8am-5pm), holidays, and Dec. 24-Jan. 11 (8am-5pm each day).

Relay for Life more than a walking event for cancer

Relay for Life in Stateline is full of various events that are designed to recognize those with cancer and those who have survived, as well as caregivers.

The event is at Kahle Community Park on Aug. 11 from 11am-11pm.

Cancer survivors are encouraged to come for the opening ceremony at 11am, with a free lunch at 12:30pm. There will be live entertainment, a disc jockey, bounce house for kids and more activities.

At 7pm is the Canine for Cure Parade. Cost is \$10. Dress your dog and yourselves in the Magic of Disney theme. Luminary bags are \$10. At sunset, the bags will be lighted.

All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society.

Trail building weekend near Donner Summit

The U.S. Forest Service and Truckee Trails Foundation are hosting a trail volunteer weekend Aug. 18-19.

The Hole in the Ground Trail is a popular mountain biking trail on Donner Summit. Volunteer participants will work under direction from local Forest Service and trail advocate crew leaders.

Bring sturdy shoes, sunscreen, water, lunch, and appropriate clothing for a full day (or two) of trail work. Meet at the Interstate 80 Pacific Crest Trailhead (Boreal/Castle Valley exit) at 8:30am. The workday ends at 4pm.

Interested volunteers must preregister by emailing allison@truckeetrails.org.

Volunteers will complete such tasks as brushing, drainage work, tread enhancement and repair, and even a minor re-route. To complete the remaining deferred maintenance on the Hole in the Ground Trail, the Forest Service received a \$14,000 grant from the Nevada and Placer County Resource Advisory Committee.

South Shore broadcasters to

become hall of famers

Three of Lake Tahoe's well-known radio voices are being inducted into the Nevada Broadcasters Hall of Fame on Aug. 18 in Las Vegas.

Bill Kingman, Curtis Fong and Ed Crook have 115 years of experience between the three of them.

They will be recognized locally on Aug. 10 at an open house at KTHO's offices in Heavenly Village from 4-7pm.



Bill Kingman

Kingman started his broadcasting career in 1959 while in high school. Two years later he was working for KOWL, which was broadcast from Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

He has been a disc jockey and chief engineer at every Lake Tahoe station, plus freelancing at Reno and Carson City stations. In the 1980s, Kingman was part owner of KOWL.

When an extortionist planted a bomb at Harveys hotel-casino in Stateline in August 1980, KRLT's transmitter atop Harveys was silenced when the building was evacuated. KOWL's studios inside Harrah's also had to be vacated. Hours before the bomb exploded, Kingman wired KRLT's studios to KOWL's transmitter. The staffs broadcast coverage together.

Kingman has long been the voice of the South Shore – from delivering community news to breaking news.

He tried to retire in 2001, but he took on a “one-weekend project” to restore defunct KTHO from silence so the community would have a choice. He stayed 10 years.

Kingman announces the annual July 4 fireworks show and still records public service announcements for the community on his home laptop and imports them via the Internet.



Curtis Fong

Fong, best known as the Guy From Tahoe, has been keeping skiers and snowboarders informed with his winter daily mountain report first on KRLT and now KTHO, and online via *Lake Tahoe News*.

He provided live reports from the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games and was the weekend announcer on KRLT from 2000-06.

Fong started in radio as an account executive for KSFM-102 in Sacramento from 1978-1979. He has worked for KMTN-TV and RSN Lake Tahoe.



Ed Crook

Crook's broadcast experience spans more than 50 years, having started in 1951 when as a student at John Muir Junior College in Pasadena he hosted a weekly show on KWKW.

From 1960-73, he worked in the aerospace industry during the day and as a disc jockey in the evenings and weekends at KWOW-AM, KGRB-AM, KBOB-FM, and KDWC-FM.

Crook moved to Lake Tahoe to build and put KRLT-FM on the air. In 1979, he became general manager of KPTL-AM and KKBC-FM in Carson City-Reno.

In 2001, Crook was asked to help restore KTHO-AM back on the air after being silent for almost a year due to a failed buyer. He was interim general manager until the owner sold the station in 2009.

Crook is now the director of operations for KTHO.

Stateline man murdered in Phoenix

By Kathryn Reed

Phoenix police are investigating the death of a Stateline man.

Matthew McMaster's body was found in some brush along a highway after firefighters extinguished a blaze about 6am July 28. This was one week before he would have turned 25.

"The circumstances around it led us to believe it was a

homicide," Phoenix Sgt. Tommy Thompson told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He said results from the autopsy are not expected back for about a month.

Thompson would not reveal what clues led detectives to the conclusion McMaster's death was a homicide, but said it was obvious it was not a case of someone camping and a fire getting out of control.

McMaster was born in Lake Tahoe and grew up in Stateline, having attended the local schools.

He was in Phoenix going to the Motorcycle Mechanic Institute. His father, Barry McMaster, told *Lake Tahoe News* his son had been in Arizona since the spring to pursue a dream of becoming a motorcycle mechanic; and that he was getting good grades.

McMaster loved the outdoors. He was an avid snowboarder, but also skied. He played disc golf and regular golf.

He also loved animals.

McMaster is survived by his parents, Barry and Nancy McMaster of Stateline; brother Tobias (Melanie) Sharp, and nephew Tyler Sharp of South Lake Tahoe; and grandmother Madeline Kerr of Carson City.

A celebration of life will be Aug. 12 at Lakeside Beach at 7pm.

Even after her death, Julia Child remains a food icon

By Craig Wilson, USA Today

WASHINGTON — Like a fine wine, which she was known to enjoy, Julia Child is aging well.

Yes, she died two days short of 92 in August 2004, but her spirit lives on. Aug. 15 will mark what would have been her 100th birthday, and she would have liked nothing more than to celebrate with a big slice of cake made with lots and lots of butter.

Or, as she once famously said, “if you’re afraid of butter, use cream.”

Eight years after her death, Child remains a virtually untouchable American icon, even among foodies who are not known for playing well with others. As she did in life, she remains clear of any food fight. Like a good cream, rising to the top.

Read the whole story

Mountain bikers to work on Sunflower Hill Trail

The Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association, Tahoe Mountain Bike Patrol and Nevada State Parks will be hosting a trail work day Aug. 11 to work on the Sunflower Hill Trail from 8:30am-4pm.

The Sunflower Hill Trail is a 2.6 mile multi-use trail that creates an alternate route to the steep and dusty Hobart Road just east of Marlette Peak. It has been built primarily by volunteers from various mountain bike groups in cooperation with Nevada State Parks.

The trail has been a work in progress for nearly five years. Through multiple work days over the last two years, volunteers have constructed the trail to the highest sustainable trail standards established by the International Mountain Bicycling Association.

This will be the fourth trail day so far this year and should be the day that the connection is made between the bottom and top sections that have already been built. There may be additional trail days for finishing touches to the trail tread, but actual construction of the trail should be complete with a good turnout on Saturday.

Volunteers should wear long sleeves, long pants, and sturdy shoes; and bring a lunch, water, and sun protection. Crews will meet at 8:30am at the Lakeview Gate, located at 4500 Hobart Road, Carson City. It is about a 3-mile drive to the worksite and then about a mile hike in to the work location. Mountain bikers are welcome to ride in and meet crews on the trail.

For additional information or to RSVP, email info@tahoebikepatrol.org.