Consumers giving up plastic for glass

By Stephanie Strom, New York Times

Glass water bottles, so yesterday. Plastic, so convenient; metal, so hip.

But now, in back to the future fashion, glass is making a bit of a comeback. And it is being helped in a small way by an entrepreneur who is developing a reusable glass bottle that is hard to break and will not shatter if broken.

The shift to reusable glass water bottles from plastic and metal, which began taking off a couple of years ago, is becoming big business, retailers said.

“I’d say glass bottles account for 20 percent, 30 percent of water bottle sales on our site now,” said Vincent Cobb, founder of reuseit.com, which sells a variety of reusable products. “More and more people are looking for glass.”

The interest does not stop at water bottles.

Consumer concerns that chemicals used in packaging can leach into the products they eat and drink are driving more and more beverage makers and food producers to use glass containers, said Lynn Bragg, president of the Glass Packaging Institute, an industry association. “They’re also looking for sustainable products to be ecologically responsible.”

Coca-Cola is expanding the distribution of products — Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Coke Zero and Sprite — that it sells in 8-ounce glass bottles, and S.C. Johnson now sells a line of reusable Ziploc containers called VersaGlass that can be used in a microwave, a freezer and, without their lids, even in an oven up to 400 degrees.

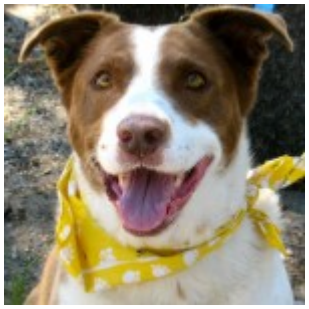
“It’s part of our overall effort to increase packaging diversity so that people have more choices of packaging and portion size,” said Susan Stribling, a Coca-Cola spokeswoman.

No one expects glass to replace plastic anytime soon. After all, billions of plastic bottles are used every year. But in a survey of more than 4,000 consumers this year by EcoFocus Worldwide, a research and consulting group, 37 percent said they were extremely or very concerned about the health and safety of plastics used in food and water packaging, compared to 33 percent in 2010.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Sugar is a young Australian Shepherd (2-years-old) who is a real sweetheart. She is very friendly, and approaches all people and dogs wagging her little tail like crazy. She knows sit, down, and stay, and is very energetic. She will chase a ball and bring it back to you all day long. Sugar would do best in an active household.



Sugar 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 description 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

Simple tips for a safe barbecue



Barbecues are a fun summer tradition when operated in a safe manner. Only use approved lighter fluid.

Never use gasoline or any other flammable liquids to start the charcoal.

Never add additional fluid once the fire has been started because singed eyebrows are embarrassing.

After your barbecue, place the used coals in a metal container with a tight fitting lid.

Leave the container on a non-combustible surface for at least three days before discarding them in the trash.

Have a fun and safe barbecue season.

— Sallie Ross-Filgo, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department

Lake Tahoe fire academy grads ready for front line

By Kathryn Reed

Steven Nichols didn't have time for graduation. He had a job to do. To fight a fire in Colorado.

But his presence was clearly felt at Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy's graduation June 23. He is one of 32 graduates of this year's program that is run through Lake Tahoe Community College in cooperation with the basin's various fire departments.

"This cadet will probably go on to be a fire chief," Leona Allen, one of the academy coordinators, said as she talked about Nichols and why he was receiving the leadership award.



The sixth class of the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Academy graduates June 23. Photos/Kathryn Reed

That honor and the motivation award winners are voted on by their peers. Nichols received both awards.

This is the sixth class to graduate from the program – and the largest. Twenty of them are from the basin, with one from Mexico and another from Germany.

Dressed in navy blue slacks, neatly pressed shirts with the academy badge, and black boots that looked shiny enough to see one's reflection in, the cadets have coalesced into a family during the past 10 months. Some look barely old enough to shave, while others are already parents. Among the 32, two are women.

Their motto as a class is – Together We Rise.

With more than 650 hours of instruction, they are ready for entry-level firefighting jobs. They've been to the top of the 100-plus foot ladder truck, in Lake Tahoe on ice (this is the only California fire academy that teaches ice water rescue), turned SUVs into convertibles on extrication day, and of course, have willingly walked into burning buildings.

A video of their 10-month journey was shown in Duke Theatre on the college campus. This gave the standing-room-only audience of friends and family a chance to see what their loved one had been enduring all this time.

While all spoke of the hard work, there was a sense of camaraderie among them that was nearly palpable.

"What a firefighter does is change the outcome," Ben Sharit, chief of the Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, told those in attendance.

He told the cadets to keep challenging themselves, to never stop learning. He also said, once in the fire service, learning is a continual part of the job.

Sharit said there would be structures they will be asked to save and they will wonder why.

“To somebody, it’s all they have,” Sharit said. He said when you see the gratitude in someone’s eyes it all seems worthwhile.

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Opinion: From rags to resorts through entrepreneurship

By Doug French

When most people think of starting a business, or contemplate others doing so, the common belief is that a person should go into a business they have knowledge in – not just something they know about, but something they know lots about. But is expert knowledge of a particular industry really a prerequisite to opening a new business in that industry or taking over an existing business?

Self-made billionaire Sheldon Adelson says the secret to his success was “never knowing anything” about the businesses he entered. That sounds like an exaggeration, but he emphasized that point when speaking to students at UNLV recently, upon receiving the Hospitality Industry Leader of the Year by the UNLV’s Harrah Hotel College.



Doug
French

“You could hand me your laptop and I wouldn’t know how to turn it on,” Adelson told the students. “It was amazing I had success in developing Comdex.”

Comdex was a computer expo in Las Vegas and was one of the largest computer trade shows in the world. Geek Week, as it was called, had a stunning rise from its beginning in 1979, with 167 exhibitors and just over 3,900 attendees to a peak in 2000 of 2,337 exhibitors and over 211,000 visitors.

Adelson’s company, the Interface Group, sold the show to Softbank Corp., a Japanese software conglomerate, in 1995 for nearly $1 billion.

Adelson purchased the Sands hotel and casino on the Las Vegas Strip in the early ’90s with hopes of building a convention center to house Comdex. “Entrepreneurs are not in the business of making others rich,” Adelson said, explaining why he bought the Sands to build his own convention center rather than leasing facilities from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, an entity funded by the room tax that operates the competing Las Vegas Convention Center.

Adelson knew little about the gaming industry and says he doesn’t even know how to play baccarat, the game that generates most of his company’s earnings at casinos in Macau and Singapore, properties that generated more than 83 percent of the company’s revenues in the latest quarter.

Gaming insiders laughed at him for thinking he could build a fortune catering to low-rolling convention goers. Now Las

Vegas depends on convention traffic to fill its rooms during weeknights. Every new property built in Vegas includes convention space – after Adelson proved the model works.

Scholars in the area of entrepreneurship might call Adelson's acumen Kirznerian alertness, or Schumpeterian innovation, Schultzian adaptation, or Misesian foresight of future consumer preferences. Or more completely, as they explain in their new book, "Organizing Entrepreneurial Judgment: A New Approach to the Firm", Nicolai Foss and Peter Klein stress an entrepreneur's judgment making "in the specific context of exercising control over heterogeneous resources in the service of satisfying future imagined customer preferences."

However, for the seventh-richest man in America, it's much simpler. "This is the nature of entrepreneurship. It's the willingness to take a risk," Adelson said. "It's a willingness to do things a little bit different."

Thinking differently included not accepting the Las Vegas business-as-usual practice of kowtowing to the Culinary Union. When Adelson purchased the Sands, he inherited its union employees and didn't necessarily care one way or the other about being a union property. This changed one morning when Adelson went to buy a yogurt.

The Culinary Union employee working behind the counter refused to serve him. The employee who had the job classification that allowed for waiting on customers was on break. The two employees left behind the counter could not, per the union contract, serve him (or anyone). What Adelson quickly realized was; he couldn't operate a 5-star resort with those union rules.

However, the Culinary leadership wouldn't budge, and told Adelson that the Venetian would never get out of the ground if he didn't sign their contract. After all, Las Vegas is a union town, the "new Detroit" they called it. Bartenders and maids

can’t be outsourced to India.

Adelson believed his employees should vote as to whether they wanted union representation. The union brass would have none of it. They would only organize from the top down, demanding that Adelson sign a “neutrality agreement” that is anything but. Adelson chose to fight, and against all odds, the Venetian remains the only nonunion Strip property to this day. But the fight goes on daily; with labor laws stacked in the union’s favor, it takes crafty lawyering and Adelson’s iron will to keep them at bay.

Forbes magazine estimates Adelson to be worth $24.9 billion, with the majority of his wealth being Las Vegas Sands Corporation stock. But a look at the price chart for LVS shows that it has been anything but a smooth ride, illustrating Adelson’s determination, confidence, and guts.

The company began trading on Dec. 14, 2004, with the shares jumping in price 61 percent the first day of trading to close at $46.56. The stock then steadily marched upward to over $133 in the fall of 2007. People around Vegas thought the shares could hit $200. But the financial crisis eradicated funding for Sands projects in Macau and Singapore. The company was bogged down with over $10 billion in debt and Las Vegas Sands shares went into free fall, declining to under $2 each in early 2009. But while the public believed a bankruptcy filing was possible, Adelson was shaking up Sands’ management and investing another $1 billion of his own money in the company.

Recently, Las Vegas Sands reported to Wall Street that it collected more than $1 billion in pretax earnings during just the first quarter of this year, a first for a gaming company.

While academics try and identify what entrepreneurship is and what entrepreneurs do, with the hopes of training future generations of Sheldon Adelsons, what is apparent is that success can’t be created without change. And changes to an

industry or to the world don’t come from tired, internal thinking but from fresh, external thinking.

Also, it’s apparent that entrepreneurial abilities lie outside the particular skills and knowledge needed in a specific industry. You don’t need to know how to make a Bloody Mary to start a successful saloon. At the same time, knowing how to make a killer martini doesn’t mean the bartender has the required business judgment to make the saloon successful.

“Knowledge can be a subtle curse,” writes Jonah Lehrer in his impossible-to-put-down “Imagine: How Creativity Works”. “When we learn about the world, we also learn all the lessons why the world cannot be changed. We get used to our failures and imperfections.” Lehrer goes on to point out that to be creative over time, “to not be undone by our expertise – is to experiment with ignorance, to stare at things we don’t fully understand.”

Studies show that people’s creativity tapers off as they get older. But Dean Simonton, a psychologist at UC Davis, explains that it’s not age that saps creativity; it’s that experience in a discipline makes people risk averse and they become part of the status quo. “If you can keep finding new challenges, then you can think like a young person even when you’re old and gray,” says Simonton.

Adelson, while now a billionaire many times over, started or acquired 50 businesses, and each time, as the Las Vegas Review-Journal’s Howard Stutz writes, “he wasn’t sure exactly what he was getting himself into.” Suffice it to say, the success of one of the businesses overshadows the other 49. However, Adelson has for the most part been consistently successful, starting with the first business he purchased – Vend-A-Bar, a candy-bar vending company he bought at age 16, using $500 he had saved, a $3,000 loan from a credit union, and a seller-carryback note of $6,500.

The young entrepreneur had to repair half the machines that came with the sale, but he expanded the business selling ice cream at the factories where his machines were located during the summer.

He learned court reporting at night, and became the secretary to Celia D. Wyckoff who had taken over Magazine of Wall Street from her husband after their divorce. By 1963, Adelson was in the mortgage business and at age 30 was a multimillionaire. But at the end of the decade he was broke. In the 1984 book "The Computer Entrepreneurs: Who's Making It Big and How in America's Upstart Industry", authors Robert Levering, Michael Katz, and Milton Moskowitz, write of Adelson's brief downturn: "Not one to dwell on failure, he refers to that incident as a 'two-hour cry,' as opposed to the 'half-hour cry' he had a couple years later when he lost $1 million in a condominium development that went bust."

Quickly back on his feet, Adelson purchased a small publishing company, but, "He was no more interested in publishing than he was in quantum physics. It was just another company to invest in."

Adelson saw the trade show as "a magazine in the flesh," with the exhibitors as the advertisers, attendees as the readers, and the editorials as the conference. "Hey, I got a magazine. Why can't I do something like this? I'd make a million dollars in three days," said Adelson, and eventually Comdex was born.

At age 78 Adelson is not slowing down. Besides expanding his Asian presence with possible projects in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, he intends to test his integrated-gaming-resort model in Spain, at a cost of $35 billion. "We are looking at 12 integrated resorts, 3,000 rooms each. A mini Las Vegas, about half the size of the Las Vegas strip in Spain for the European market," said Adelson, speaking recently ahead of the opening of another Macau property.

Clearly something continues to drive the man Levering, Katz, and Moskowitz call “a Jewish Horatio Alger.” Mises perhaps described it best in “Human Action”: the entrepreneur is “a speculator, a man eager to utilize his opinion about the future structure of the market for business operations promising profits.” And while the entrepreneur is confident in his view of the “uncertain future,” that view “defies any rules and systemization.”

Hard to define and impossible to model, entrepreneurship makes the capitalist world go around and the rest of us much better off.

Doug French is is president of the Mises Institute and author of “Early Speculative Bubbles & Increases in the Money Supply” and “Walk Away: The Rise and Fall of the Home-Ownership Myth”.

Endurance triathlon starts in Zephyr Cove

The inaugural Expedition Man Endurance Festival will be Aug. 25 throughout Northern Nevada.

This is the region’s first ultra distance triathlon.

The course starts swimmers at Zephyr Cove.

The 112-mile bike ride will utilize a variety of Northern Nevada’s scenery, including a 1,400-foot elevation drop into Carson City.

Three fast out-and-back’s around the Sparks Marina will cap

off this extraordinary race.

For more information, go online.

El Dorado County judge tied to firm grand jury probed

By Kathryn Reed

When the El Dorado County Grand Jury report comes out in the next week an item about the Pioneer Fire Protection District will seem a bit vague to those not in the know. This is because the consulting firm in question has not been named.

The firm in question is Dan Dellinger Consulting.

The Pioneer Fire Protection District hired the consultants after Dellinger listed Superior Court Judge Steven Bailey as a reference.

It appears Bailey did not want the general public to know about his dealings with Dellinger and did what he could to ensure the ties would not come to light.

Last summer the grand jury started looking into the small rural fire district's hiring of Dan Dellinger Consulting, which is run by Dan Dellinger and Cris Alarcon.

(Alarcon was arrested Feb. 6, 2012, by El Dorado County

sheriff’s deputies on suspicion of using a false license plate and using a false vehicle registration. In March, Alarcon was arraigned on 14 charges. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges and is scheduled to be back in court in July.)

The original contract between Pioneer fire and the consulting firm was modified in August 2011 because the original contract appeared to contain services for illegal campaign activity in violation of California Government Code Sections 8314 and 54964.

The grand jury prepared a draft report on the entire matter and submitted it for review to Bailey. Bailey is the presiding judge of the grand jury and has been for a few years.

He never recused himself from this matter despite having ties to Dellinger. Bailey was not available for comment. But Bailey also has ties to others in the county. Bailey is the brother-in-law of county Supervisor Ron Briggs and son-in-law of former state Sen. John Briggs. The elder Briggs is famous for the 1978 proposition called the Briggs Initiative that had it passed, would have meant all employees in California’s education system who are gay or lesbian and their supporters would have been fired.

It’s not just Bailey to whom this consulting firm is tied to. Dan Dellinger Consulting in the past has managed the political campaigns of Sheriff John D’Agostini and county Supervisor Ray Nutting. The consulting firm is currently providing advice to Superior Court Judge Warren Stracener for his November election bid. Former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Stracener to the bench.

Dellinger is also in the same camp as Rico Oller, who represented Lake Tahoe in the California Assembly and Senate, and who is trying to be this area’s assemblyman again. Years ago, Dellinger and Oller were involved in a questionable incident involving the killing of a bear.

What gets convoluted is how it came to pass that Dan Dellinger Consulting is not mentioned by name in the report. When it came time to decide which of the two versions of the grand jury report involving Dellinger was to be the final one that would be printed Bailey was out of the office.

El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury told *Lake Tahoe News* she was given the reports one day and told to make a decision that day. She does not know what the urgency was. But it was Bailey who asked her to read the reports. Both work in the courthouse in South Lake Tahoe.

"All I did was read two different versions and selected the one that was better written," Kingsbury told *Lake Tahoe News* on June 24. "I didn't edit anything. I read two different versions, pure and simple. One had attachments with extraneous writing. I didn't know where that came from."

Without supporting documentation to the handwritten items, Kingsbury said it was not publishable on those grounds. The naming of people was not a concern to her.

But who wrote on the documents is not known, but presumably it was Bailey who marred the documents because grand jury foreman Ted Long told *Lake Tahoe News* the originals went to Bailey and they came back "edited to pieces."

Kingsbury said she made no edits.

For a number of months the grand jury had been debating whether to include Dellinger's name in the report. Libel and slander were reasons for concern, though Long said that can be the case with any investigation.

Long sent an email to *Lake Tahoe News* and others (that *LTN* has not edited), that says, "After review Kingsbury invoking penal code section 929 was concerned about potential libel/slander actions, choice to remove the attachments and the specific mention of Dillinger Consulting."

That code deals with the slander-libel issues.

But Kingsbury is adamant her decision “didn’t involve section 929.”

Also on June 24, Long spoke with *Lake Tahoe News*, stating that Kingsbury invoked 929 as her reason. However, he admitted that Kingsbury neither told him this in writing nor verbally, but that he surmised there could be no other reason for picking the report she picked. He was not aware the version with Dellinger’s name had handwritten notes on it because it didn’t when it left the grand jury office.

Squaw offers fun and serious trail runs

This summer, in conjunction Big Blue Adventure and the Auburn Ski Club, Squaw Valley is introducing a trail running series ranging from easy, light races to more substantial trail runs.

Here are the trail runs:

July 7: Village Run

9:30am start;

Run to Squaw Creek, back over to Red Dog via Western States Trail via a 5K or 10K trail. Race starts at the East end of The Village at Squaw Valley.

Aug. 4: 32nd Annual Mountain Run

9am start

Starting at the base of Squaw Valley (elevation 6,200 feet), runners, walkers and hikers will climb the 3.6 mile mountain run to High Camp (elevation 8,200 feet) where awards, raffle, music, light refreshments and beer are provided. The race is a fundraiser for local cancer programs and the Auburn Ski Club Junior Nordic Program.

Distance: 5.7K

Aug. 25: Mutt Strut Fun Run

11am start

Prior to the kick-off of Squaw's pet-friendly Peaks and Paws Festival, pet lovers can enjoy a quick 3K around Squaw's base area with their furry friends, $5 registration. All profits benefit the Truckee Tahoe Humane Society. Dogs welcome.

Sept. 8: Alpine to Squaw Run

9:30am start;

Runners will start at the base of Alpine Meadows, running up the slopes to connect to the Pacific Crest Trail. Following the legendary PCT, participants will run along the mountain ridges to the peak of KT-22, before making their final descent to The Village at Squaw Valley. Transportation to Alpine start line included, $30 pre-registration, $35 day-of registration.

Distance: 12K

Sept. 15: High Camp Run and Pool Party

11:30am start at High Camp,

Run on the High Camp trails at elevation 8,200 feet with incredible views of Lake Tahoe and the surround Sierra Nevada mountains. After the race, participants can enjoy access to Squaw's High Camp Pool and Hot Tub and poolside Umbrella Bar, both located on the top of the mountain. Click here for

details.

Distance: 5k & 10k

Oct. 6: Oktoberfest Run to Squaw

Get your juices flowing before enjoying Oktoberfest by running to Squaw from Tahoe City. This 7.9-mile course travels alongside the Truckee River. Enjoy spectacular views along this stunning scenic corridor, 8am start. Click here for details.

Distance: 7.9 miles.

Details about all the events and how register are online.

Tahoe Improv Players ready to entertain at Valhalla

Tahoe Improv Players is returning to Valhalla with three shows, plus a bonus show from select performers.

The first is July 3 at 7:30pm in the Grand Hall.

The next is Aug. 7 at 7:30pm in the Boathouse Theatre.

The third show is Sept. 1 at 7:30pm at the Boathouse. Laura Hall – "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" – and Rick Hall – "Curb Your Enthusiasm" – will perform with the Tahoe Improv Players.

The special show is Sept. 2 at 7:30pm for the Laura & Rick Hall Show at the Boathouse.

To buy tickets or for more information, call (530) 541.4975.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society received a $10,000 grant from the Nevada Commission on Tourism to improve the lagoon seawall and dock to enable more arrivals by boat.

• Tahoe Craft Village is being constructed on Marjorie Springmeyer’s property in South Tahoe where the old amusement park was.

• Truckee is having a meeting regarding the Hotel Avery project from 5:30-6:30pm on June 26 in the Council Chambers at Truckee Town Hall.

• Here are the Caltrans roadwork schedules for Sierra and El Dorado-Tahoe for the coming week.

• Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care caught on video by First Track Productions: