

Lincoln well-remembered in Nevada

By Guy Clifton, Reno Gazette-Journal

Abraham Lincoln never set foot in Nevada, but the histories of the state and the nation's 16th president are forever intertwined.

"It's hard to think of a president who had a bigger impact on Nevada," Michael Green, a history professor at UNLV, said about the president who was shot by assassin John Wilkes Booth 150 years ago today.

"Without Lincoln, we don't have a Civil War, we don't have statehood, we don't have laws that were passed during the Civil War that affected Nevada."

We might not even have Mark Twain – the pen name Samuel Langhorne Clemens picked up while working for the Territorial Enterprise in Virginia City. If Lincoln hadn't appointed Clemens' brother, Orion, to be the first secretary of the Nevada Territory, Sam might have never followed his brother West. No "Roughing It," no "Fairest picture the whole earth affords" musings about Lake Tahoe, no tall tales from the Comstock.

Lincoln wanted Nevada to become a state, in part to help ensure his re-election in 1864, but ultimately to help him secure the needed votes in Congress for the 13th Amendment to end slavery.

Read the whole story

As population ages, hospice care grows

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

Mary Miller is full of opinions. During her weekly visits with hospice volunteer Joe Lenihan, the 88-year-old doesn't hesitate to speak her mind – solicited or not. She'll talk the ear off of a wrong-number caller, and she's known affectionately around the neighborhood as "Mean Old Mom."

"There are days when Mary is a little cantankerous – it's not all sunshine and lollipops," Lenihan said. "It can be a difficult time for some folks, and to share that with people is a real joy."

Miller has been in hospice, an at-home care service provided to patients in their final days, since her congestive heart failure was deemed terminal in January. She chose the option because she wanted to remain in the McKinley Park house where she's lived for 37 years, the past 15 without the company of her late husband, Henry.

Over the past decade, the hospice industry has seen substantial growth with the aging baby boomer population. Adults over 50 are expected to make up 20 percent of the population by 2030, and 90 percent of Americans want to grow older at home, according to a recent report by AARP, formerly the American Association of Retired Persons.

Read the whole story

Artwork sought for Champions Plaza

South Lake Tahoe is seeking an artist to create an original art piece and/or flag design to be permanently displayed at the city's newly established Champions Plaza, located on the corner of Highway 50 and Lakeview Avenue within the Lakeview Commons area.

On the heels of the 2014 Winter Olympics, in which several local athletes earned Olympic medals, the idea of creating a Champions Plaza was born. To honor and recognize these athletes, and all local athletes who have achieved national and world titles, the City Council approved the construction and design of a Champions Plaza.

Proposals are due by noon June 12.

For more information, go online.

In a cameras-everywhere culture, science fiction becomes reality

By Tracey Lien and Paresh Dave, Los Angeles Times

Science fiction writer David Brin calls it “a tsunami of lights” – a future where tiny cameras are everywhere, lighting up everything we do, and even predicting what we’ll do next.

Unlike George Orwell’s novel “1984,” where only Big Brother

controlled the cameras, in 2015, cheap, mobile technology has turned everyone into a watcher.

A snowboarder with a GoPro can post a YouTube video of a friend's 540-degree McTwist in the halfpipe. But also – as happened recently – a Penn State fraternity can upload Facebook photos of partially naked, sleeping college women.

A San Jose homeowner cowers behind a locked door while she watches an intruder stroll through her home on a surveillance video. A man launches a drone to spy on his neighbor tanning by her pool. Pet owners monitor their dogs.

That includes the police, whose actions can be recorded by anyone with a camera phone. In South Carolina, a cellphone video released last week showed a police officer firing eight shots at a fleeing man's back. In San Bernardino County, news choppers captured footage of deputies punching and kicking a man as he lay face-down on the ground with his hands behind his back.

"Painting a picture that cameras are everywhere and anywhere is pretty provocative," said Ryan Martin, a technology analyst at 451 Research, but it can also present opportunities to increase accountability and improve safety.

Read the whole story

Being a night owl may be bad for your health

By Nicholas Bakalar, New York Times

A new study suggests that early to bed and early to rise makes

a man healthy – although not necessarily wealthy or wise.

Korean researchers recruited 1,620 men and women, ages 47 to 59, and administered a questionnaire to establish whether they were morning people or night owls.

They found 480 morning types, 95 night owls, and 1,045 who fit into neither group.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Jacky

Jacky is a 4-year-old who looks like a cross between a whippet and maybe a Doberman. He's about 35 to 40 pounds and very sweet.

He likes to talk when he's excited, is house trained, and does well with other larger dogs and cats. He's a bit scared of

smaller dogs, and we think he'd do better in a home without small children.

Jacky spent his earlier years in India, and was brought to the United States by several groups to find his permanent home.

Jacky is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, 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 to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page 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

Shorter stature may pose higher risk of heart disease

By Gina Kolata, New York Times

To the surprise of researchers who had thought the very notion a joke, an international consortium of investigators reported on Wednesday that shorter stature increases the risk of heart disease.

After gathering genetic data from nearly 200,000 men and women worldwide, the investigators found that each extra 2.5 inches

of height brings a 13.5 percent reduction in heart disease risk. The relationship is present throughout the range of adult heights.

A person who is five feet tall has a 30 percent greater chance of developing heart disease than someone who is 5 feet 6, said a lead author of the new study, Sir Nilesh Samani, a professor of cardiology at the University of Leicester in England.

Of course, the increased risk pales in comparison to that caused by smoking, which elevates the odds of getting heart disease by 200 to 300 percent.

Read the whole story

Valhalla music fest upgrading facilities



"Motherhood Out Loud" is a special fundraiser in May.
Photos/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Eclectic. That is the word the director of the Valhalla Art,

Theatre and Music Festival is using to describe the 2015 season.

Evangeline Elston is returning for her second year as leader of this nearly 40-year-old South Shore tradition.

As with years past, there will be a mix of offerings for a variety of ages.

This season there is also a concerted effort to raise money to upgrade the aging facilities. Events are mostly staged at the Boathouse Theatre or Grand Hall. These are on U.S. Forest Service property just past Camp Richardson on Highway 89. The buildings have been around for decades. Columns around the Grand Hall should be replaced before the season starts.



Quinn DeVeaux and the Blue Beat Revue play July 29.

"We have not given enough attention to the boathouse electrical system. We call them lighting ghosts. Sometimes you sit there with the lights dim for theatrical purposes and then every light goes on at once," Elston told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It's quaint, but we're getting tired of it."

Upgrading to LED lighting will occur. This will save money and reduce the amount of heat that is generated. Cost estimates are being sought for the desired improvements.

The main fundraiser for this project is a one-night engagement

of the play "Motherhood Out Loud", which sold out a couple years ago. This is the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend next month.

A smaller fundraiser is April 27 at Lake Tahoe Paint and Sip.

The nonprofit arts group has revamped its website. Tickets can now be bought online, plus there are packages available and ways to donate to the cause.

Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser is opening the season on June 17.

"What we are going for this year is eclectic programming," Elston said.

Her forte is music, so bringing in diverse acts is especially important to Elston. Music will range from jazz to folk to classic to rock. In addition to the midweek shows at the boathouse there will be four free concerts on the Great Lawn on Sundays.

Reaching out to the Hispanic community is a goal of the board that runs the festival. One way to do so is with the Calidanza traditional Mexican folk and contemporary dance troupe on June 27.



Susie Glaze and the Hilonesome Band play Aug. 5.

While normally the festival puts on two two-week plays, that isn't the case this year. "On Golden Pond" will have a three-week stint, while the young adult theater's "Midsummer Nights Dream" will have a four-day run.

"A lot of times what happens with theater is it picks up steam along the way," Elston said. This is an experiment to see if a three-week show will draw more people in.

Four nights of comedy will return, as will some of the longstanding traditions like the artists in residence program and Great Gatsby Murder Mystery Dinner.

Word Wave in the fall is a major addition to the schedule. Elston described it as a "festival of story rather than a literary festival."

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Notes:

- More information is available online.
- Telephone: 530.541.4975.
- "Motherhood Out Loud" fundraiser is May 9. For tickets, go online.
- April 27 fundraiser at Lake Tahoe Paint and Sip.

Then and now: Changing ski shops



The Sugar House in the mid-1960s. Photo/Private Collection

A long time local favorite lasting into the 1990s, Caddy Sherer's Sugar House was at the corner of Lake Tahoe Boulevard and LaSalle Street near Stateline. The coffee shop seen at the left in the photo above later became a steakery and until recently was Womack's Texas-style Barbecue. Today it is Mayas Mexican Grill.



The Powder House has this another location. Photo/Bill Kingman

Now the building houses the Powder House's main store. The current owners have opened a second Powder House store in the Chateau complex, one block away.

– Bill Kingman

Festivals are more than just the music

By Zocalo

This weekend, tens of thousands – maybe even nearly 100,000 – music fans are rocking out at the Coachella Music and Arts Festival in Indio. With multiple stages going full-blast, festival-goers will face difficult decisions such as: Should I catch the soulful roots-rockers Alabama Shakes or the haunting Swedish singer-songwriter Lykke Li? Should I skip the electro-pop duo Odesza to get a good spot to see the superstar hip-hopper Drake?

And music isn't the only delight on offer: When festival-goers get tired from dancing or being packed cheek-to-jowl in the crowd, they can eat up hot pots by Kogifood truck master Roy Choi, green gazpacho from "Top Chef's" Marcel Vigneron, or boozy popsicles from the L.A. restaurant the Church Key. There also will be large, brightly colored sculptures to check out.

If Coachella isn't your bag, there is a festival somewhere in the country for every interest – classical music at the Spoleto USA Festival in Charleston, S.C.; paintings that come to life at the Pageant of the Masters in Laguna Beach; all the Bard you can consume at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, just to name a few. In advance of the Zócalo/James Irvine Foundation event, "Do Arts and Music Festivals Matter?", we asked a panel of experts: What does the popularity of music and arts festivals say about the ways Americans are experiencing art now?

Charlene Villaseñor Black: Seeking transcendence

As a scholar whose work has one foot in the historical past and the other in the contemporary world of Chicana/o art and culture, I am struck by how current music and arts festivals embody a universal need for humans to join together, and a universal desire for transcendent experiences, such as those fostered by listening to music or experiencing the arts.

In the past that I study, the Hispanic world, 1492 to 1800, people transcended their ordinary concerns often through their spiritual practices. They were joined together and carried away by the communal practice of the Catholic liturgy, with its attendant rituals, sights, sounds, and smells. They prayed together, chanted together, or joined in worship together before cult images of beloved holy figures. Similar collective experiences were had at large fairs, at markets known as *tianguis*, or in the main square called the *plaza mayor* or *zócalo*, where people witnessed fireworks, royal entries, priestly processions, penitential parades, or the Inquisition's public punishment of supposed heretics.

In our current digital age, the revival of music and arts festivals, which have more immediate roots in Woodstock and Grateful Dead concerts, testifies to our desire to connect beyond the digital world, to unite in person with other real humans, as well as our need to do something beside pushing a webpage's "like" button. We long to participate in and create community – to imagine we belong to a community of like-minded souls, as the scholar Benedict Anderson described one of the key processes involved in nation-building.

It is in this imagining, this coming together, that we truly experience our humanity, in dialogue with others, in their physical presence. We are at our most human when we are with other people.

Charlene Villaseñor Black is a professor in the departments of art history and Chicana/o Studies at UCLA. While much of her research investigates the politics of religious art and

global exchange, Villaseñor Black is also actively engaged in the Chicana/o art scene.

Christi Salamone: A more relatable approach to art

The popularity of the La Quinta Arts Festival – which has had the honor of being ranked by the Art Fair Sourcebook as the number one fine art festival in the nation three years running – speaks to the power of communal feasts for the senses.

Do you recall your first art experience? My guess: In or around fourth grade, you and your classmates were ferried off to a local museum. In my case, this was an imposing marbled edifice containing gilded master works where order (no touching!) and decorum (no talking!) ruled the day. Intimidating!

The natural and informal ambiance of outdoor arts festivals sets the tone for a casual and comfortable shared cultural experience. If you can present people with the opportunity to interact and engage directly with an artwork's creator, the esoteric becomes tangible and compelling. Often heard at our festival: "How did you find the inspiration to create that?" "How long did that take to make?" "Did you study art in school?" These interactions humanize art, make it approachable and relatable. At our festival, we want to make it easy to view, learn about, and ultimately decide to purchase a piece of art.

Then, to be able to share your newfound knowledge and original art treasure with your friends and family while listening to music, watching a dance performance, and enjoying some food and drink – all the more rewarding.

Christi Salamone is executive director of La Quinta Arts Foundation located in La Quinta, producers of La Quinta Arts Festival held annually in March. Visit www.LQAF.com to learn about the foundation's programs and offerings.

Larry Wilson: Sensory pleasures

What could be better than being at a festival of like-minded souls, most of them younger than yourself, but still, rocking the music, art, or literature that you like, too?

Well, perhaps the anticipation of such a 'palooza, or the nostalgic haze after it. Woodstock – for all its significance as a beacon for flower children in 1969 – required much slogging through rain and mud, as photographs attest. When I went to the Coachella Music and Arts Festival last year with my daughter, there was waiting, hiking, and heat – not to mention the questionable artistic value of performance pieces with giant puppets. And the really loud techno – I thought this is what sonar must sound like to whales.

While there's nothing quite like singing at the top of your lungs with thousands of other people to make you feel like part of a movement, I believe communal pleasures can be found in smaller gatherings as well. At our LitFest Pasadena, we are in our fourth year of talking books with great writers. (This year's will be on May 9 in Pasadena's Playhouse District.) The hallowed Vroman's Bookstore will help host; panels will take place in the Pasadena Playhouse itself as well as in bars and other shops. There's a book reading every night in every major city, but the power of a literary festival lies in bringing together many sensory pleasures: 350 people last year showed up to listen to food writer Ruth Reichl talk about her first novel *"Delicious"*, while drinking really good wine from Everson Royce and tasting fantastic *guancia* by Robert Simon, whose career was launched by one of Reichl's reviews. And when that was over, they could simply walk down the street to another session.

It was an easy-to-like afternoon – and it said everything about why Americans go to arts festivals.

Larry Wilson is public editor and columnist for the Pasadena

Star-News and a member of the Los Angeles News Group editorial board. On the side, he is the co-founder and artistic director of LitFest Pasadena, and the author of a chapbook, "Twenty Surf Poems and a Song of Despair."