

California Chrome owner bet big and early

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Steve Coburn, co-owner of Kentucky Derby winner California Chrome, keeps getting richer.

On Jan. 2, the Nevadan bet an undisclosed amount at 200-1 odds that his horse would win the Derby.

A spokesman for sports and race book operator William Hill said Coburn already has collected his winnings. But the company will present a blanket for the horse on Wednesday at Sharkey's Casino in Gardnerville.

Read the whole story

Memorial Day – a time for remembrance, family



American Legion Post 795 chaplain Curt Emrie at the May 26 Happy Homestead Cemetery ceremony. Photos/Lesia Witkowsky

Veterans and family members arrived hours before the Memorial Day ceremony to ensure each gravestone of a veteran was adorned with an American flag.

Dozens gathered at Happy Homestead Cemetery in South Lake Tahoe to remember those who lost their lives fighting for the United States. Music, prayer and words from community members and political figures filled the still morning air. All shared personal stories and memories with the underlying similarity of honoring the men and women who had died.

Others throughout Lake Tahoe celebrated Memorial Day by relaxing or spending time with friends and family on what was an unusually warm weekend with highs in the 70s. Many took to the water; some were going up the mountain via the Heavenly gondola, while others chose ice cream as a way to stay cool.

No vacancy signs were seen throughout much of the South Shore during the long weekend. It was practically bumper-to-bumper

traffic getting out of the basin on Monday via Highway 50.

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– *Lesia Witkowsky*

Financial spring cleaning can pay dividends

By Jeff Gorton

One lesson the average American should have learned from the recent financial crisis and gradual recovery is that putting more money into savings is, in general, good.

When things are fine, most of us are prone to commit less of our money to savings; when the economy is down, however, we realize that having money is far more important than spending it on things we don't need.

The personal savings rate in July 2005 hit an all-time low at 2 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But in May 2009, near the beginning of the recession, the average American's savings rate hit a high of 8 percent.

That rate dwindled as the economy recovered, which is unfortunate because you can do more with accumulated money, including benefit from investments yielding compound interest, which means that interest also earns interest in an investment.

Here are ways to trim spending in the short term in order to

get your financial house in order and accumulate more money in the long term:

- Car buying says plenty about how a consumer views their money. For most Americans, the question is whether to buy new or used. The moment you drive a brand new car off the lot after the purchase, the car's value drastically drops. Many of the benefits you may enjoy in buying a new car can be had with a certified pre-owned car: low miles, good-as-new functionality and, usually, that new-car smell. And, a given model will have a history, so you can avoid cars that have been recalled. Buying a certified pre-owned car will save you several thousands of dollars versus buying new.

- Summer vacation is an important lifestyle enhancer for many couples, but consider replacing the \$400-per-night hotel with a condo rented through a private owner, especially if your vacation will last for an extended period. A condo rental should cost you in the ballpark of \$200 per night, which totals \$2,800 savings for two weeks.

- Your home is probably your most significant asset if you're like most Americans. But with that grand house on the hill comes plenty of costs, many of which you may not need. As with a luxury car, rethinking the amount of luxury for a home can save you big on taxes, insurance and maintenance. The cost of maintaining a large home can be put toward lifestyle activities, such as travel and hobbies.

Of course, these are all simply suggestions; money plays a major role in how we achieve happiness, and I've found through years of working with clients, a few tweaks here and there frequently yields greater satisfaction with their money. You don't have to be on autopilot with your expenses.

Jeff Gorton is a certified public accountant and a certified financial planner.

Study: Being stressed at work is the norm

By Patricia Sabatini, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Feeling frazzled at work? So is your annoying co-worker.

A recent survey conducted by Harris Interactive for Everest College found 80 percent of Americans feel stressed by at least one thing on the job.

Workers in the Northeast were the most in need of a chill pill, with 86 percent feeling stressed compared with a low of 75 percent in the West.

Overall, long commutes and low pay tied as the No. 1 workplace stressors, closely followed by unreasonable workloads. Annoying coworkers ranked third.

Next came poor work-life balance, working in a job that is not a chosen career, lack of advancement and fear of being fired or laid off.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets

in South Lake Tahoe



Angel

Angel is an angel. She has piercing blue eyes and a beautiful tortoise-shell coat mixed with Siamese-like markings.

She is a very friendly and happy love bug. She loves to be petted and scratched. Angel is tolerant of the other cats at the shelter, so may be OK with another cat if introduced slowly with care and supervision.

Angel has been at the shelter for some time. She will blossom in a new home where she's loved and cared for.

Angel has been spayed, microchipped, and vaccinated. She is available 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 or 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.

Immunization law affects students in 2014-15

A California law that began Jan. 1 affects students entering child care or kindergarten, or advancing into the seventh grade, for the 2014-15 school year.

Assembly Bill 2109 changes the process for parents to request immunization exemptions for their children.

“The purpose of this new law is to better inform parents about the benefits and risks of immunizations,” Lynnan Svensson, supervising public health nurse with the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency, said in a press release.

The law also affects children transferring into California schools from another state or country.

Under AB2109, parents or legal guardians who choose to waive required immunizations must first meet with a health care provider to receive education about the benefits and risks of immunizations as well as the dangers of vaccine preventable diseases. The parent or legal guardian and the health care provider must sign the new personal belief exemption form.

“Childhood immunization rates have begun slipping over the last several years, while requests for immunization exemptions have increased,” Svensson said. “The personal belief exemption rate for kindergartners in El Dorado County is now 8.2 percent, while the overall rate in California is only 2.8

percent. Our concern is that as fewer children are immunized, we will begin to see large-scale and potentially serious disease outbreaks among school children and the community at large.”

Additional information, including questions and answers about AB2109, may be found online.

U.N. official: Obesity No. 1 threat to global health

By Melissa Healy, Los Angeles Times

The United Nations’ leading voice on hunger has declared that the international community must mobilize to combat obesity and unhealthy diets, not a lack of food, and called on U.N. members to rally around a “bold framework” of regulations limiting access to salty, sugary foods that are high in saturated fats and contribute to obesity.

Olivier De Schutter, special rapporteur to the U.N. on the right to food, said Monday that the global struggle against tobacco use offered a model for efforts to stem the rising tide of obesity and poor nutrition in countries both developed and developing.

De Schutter renewed his call for a raft of measures proposed in his 2012 report to the United Nations Human Rights Council, including the imposition of taxes and other regulations on unhealthy foods, crackdowns on the marketing of junk foods, an overhaul of agricultural subsidies that drive down the costs and drive up availability of some unhealthy foods (including sweeteners), and increased support for local food production.

Read the whole story

‘Gomer Pyle’s’ ties to Tahoe, Indianapolis 500

By Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS – Jim Nabors is back home again in Indiana, this time to say farewell.

The actor whose bumbling Gomer Pyle character endeared Nabors to an entire generation, and whose rich baritone has provided the soundtrack for the Indianapolis 500 for more than four decades, will perform “Back Home Again in Indiana” on Sunday for the last time.

“I’ll be honest with you, I didn’t want to stay too long at the fair,” the 83-year-old Nabors said with a hearty chuckle. “Everyone has been so incredible to me so many years. The first time I was here was 1972, so I guess most people have grown up with me.”

Indeed, millions of race fans have come to know Nabors not for his character on “The Andy Griffith Show” and its spinoff, “Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.,” but for his Memorial Day weekend tradition.



Jim Nabors will sign “(Back Home Again in) Indiana” for his final time at the Indianapolis 500 .
Photo/Darron Cummings

“To many Indianapolis 500 fans the pre-race pageantry is as important as the race itself,” Indianapolis Motor Speedway president J. Douglas Boles said this week, “especially as the lead-up reaches its highest point with Jim Nabors singing ‘Back Home Again in Indiana’ and Mari Hulman-George giving the command to start engines.”

People tend to forget Nabors was actually born in Alabama. He moved to California when he started out in show business, and was performing in Lake Tahoe one day for an audience that included Bill Harrah. The casino magnate happened to be a car aficionado, and he invited Nabors to attend the Indy 500 for the first time.

Nabors was supposed to be there as a fan, but Tony Hulman had also seen Nabors perform in Lake Tahoe, and the speedway’s owner asked if he would sing along with the Purdue marching band prior to the race. With that, Nabors picks up the story:

“So to the conductor of the Purdue band, I said, ‘What key do you do this in?’ And he looked at me funny and said, ‘We only have one key.’ I said, ‘No, the “Star-Spangled Banner” has two keys.’ And he said, ‘You’re not singing that!’ And I said, ‘Well, what the hell am I singing?’ It was only five minutes

to race time, too, and there's 500,000 people here," Nabors said.

"He says, 'It's the traditional song that opens the race, 'Back Home Again in Indiana.'" I kind of looked at him and go, 'I'm from Alabama!' And he started laughing and asked if I knew it. And I said, 'Well, I know the melody but I don't know all the lyrics.' So I'm writing them on my hand. The first time I ever sang it, I wrote it on my hand."

He knows every nuance by heart these days. While missing the race a handful of times over the years because of illness and other conflicts, Nabors' rendition of the Hoosier State's unofficial anthem is as much a part of race day as the milk swilled by the winner in Victory Lane.

In truth, his health is a big reason that Nabors is stepping away.

"I had a liver transplant, then I had a pacemaker put in, then I had a new knee put in, then I had a heart valve put in," he said. "I'm almost brand new. I have a lot of new parts."

There is always emotion when Nabors grabs the microphone on race day, and there will no doubt be tears flowing when he does it for the final time. But when asked who he would like to see take over, Nabors gazed out at a throng of fans gathered in the infield.

"I think y'all should do it. You know the words," he said. "I know y'all can sing better than they can at the Kentucky Derby, and they all sing. So why can't you sing?"

With that, a fan called out for Nabors to sing a few lines.

He did, and the crowd took over: "When I dream about the moonlight on the Wabash," they sang in unison, as Nabors leaned back and smiled, "then I long for my Indiana home."

'Older' crowd hard to describe with words

By NPR

About one-fifth of the U.S. population will be 65 or older by the year 2030. NPR's Ina Jaffe covers this population – and says it's often difficult to find the right words to describe it.

"I realized what a minefield this was after I'd been on the beat just a few months," she says. "I did profile of this 71-year-old midwife. She's still up all night delivering babies, and the headline on our website – and reporters ... do not write the headlines ... described her as 'elderly.'

"Listeners were furious," Jaffe continues. "Maybe once upon a time, 'elderly' referred to a particular stage in life, but now people think ... it means you're ailing and you're frail."

Jaffe sometimes uses "older adults" or "older Americans," she says, if it's relevant to the story. "Sometimes I use the term 'senior' – though I've met some older people who don't like that, either. And 'senior citizen' really seems to annoy just about everyone now. ... There really aren't a lot of widely acceptable terms anymore."

A traffic sign in the U.K. depicts "elderly people" as frail and hunched over. It was first created in the 80s, but many now consider it out of date.

So, there lies a paradox: Everyone wants to live a long time, but no one wants to actually be old.

Read the whole story

Camp teaches kids grief is a part of life

By Susan Wood

Steven Gerling shrugs at the thought of being a role model to young children so early in life – age 16. He's modest. He's responsible. He's sensitive. And he's ahead of his time – for reasons that have made him grow beyond his years.

He's lost four grandparents, all whom he was close to, in less than five years. With the first loss of his grandpa Jim in 2010 and grandma Mary in the same month of the following year (both on his father's side), he ended up at Camp Sunrise with his siblings.

The free camp sponsored by Barton Home Health and Hospice is like no other. It's set in the beauty of Glenbrook's spiritual retreat Galilee every spring, a time of renewal. It's specifically designed for ages 7 to 14.

Were there highs and lows?



Melissa Barcus with son Steven Gerling. Photo/Susan Wood

"My high was the whole experience – the fun activities, even the crying. It was a good thing to let it all out," he told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There were no lows."

To this day, tears well up when he thinks of the special relationships he had with his grandparents.

Regrets are few, but memorable, as is the case with most cases of grief. The teen had wished he had spent more time with his grandmother.

This is one example of the honesty that comes out at Camp Sunrise.

"My first thought was (my kids) don't need this. How depressing. But then I thought they don't necessarily want to talk to me about everything. They came back different, like they grew. It's made our relationship stronger. We've always been one unit, but it does make you closer," mom Melissa Barcus said of her four children – Steven, Jason, Michael and Sydney.

The family of five eats dinner together every night (with no cellular phones at the table), and they often go for walks after the meal. She specifically held back and let them approach her after the camp experience because she "didn't want to invade their privacy."

All of a sudden, the floodgates opened and the children opened up like never before.

"I think it's one of the best things that's happened to my kids," she said.

Upon his return, Gerling gripped his mom a little tighter during their usual hugs.

The teen started out as a participant in 2010. He got so much out of it that he asked Barton camp organizer Tina Bruess how many years he could attend. When he maxed out at age 14, that

didn't stop him. He chose to volunteer last year. He'll do the same for this year's camp slated from June 13-15. And he's still dealing with loss having lost two more grandparents in the last two years.

As anyone who has suffered from a loss of a loved one knows, you find kin in the fellowship of those who have experienced it. Children going through grief offer a different dimension of dealing with this life lesson.

"It's especially hard for children. They know grandma and grandpa as big people. Then, their physical presence is very different," Bruess said, while sitting to reminisce with Gerling and Barcus. "We let kids know it's a safe place to cry, but they can always be a kid."

One of Bruess's fondest memories is how Gerling tucked in his little sister, Sydney, every night to check on her and give her a hug and a kiss.

Neither Bruess nor Barcus was surprised by the behavior.

"He knows what it feels like to have a loss and the younger kids feel like he's cool and has made it through (the experience)," Bruess said, recalling how many of the younger children climbed all over Gerling for comfort and support.

"For Steven, it's natural for him," Barcus said, turning to her son. "You're a protector."

Such is the dynamic of the varied ages and roles at the camp. Parents join their children for part of the last day, after the participants have completed some heartfelt exercises on their own.

Gerling preferred the "memory" rocks the children placed in a labyrinth, a spiritual ring of hope. They also make "power sticks," in which the children dress up a piece of wood with materials that symbolize the loss or a characteristic about

the bereaved.

"Their power sticks are still hanging in their bedrooms," Barcus said of her children's receptiveness to the exercise.

Each year, Gerling's power stick has a different look.

To that, Bruess indicated: "Grief evolves."

No one knows better than the hospice services coordinator. She has staged many bereavement events and activities. This reporter participated in a moving tribute to a sister's memory that Barton Hospice put on last Christmas season. The health care department also goes to South Tahoe High School to do focus groups on grief. Camp Sunrise is Barton Hospice's premier event.

"Camp Sunrise provides a supportive space for grieving children to explore and express their feelings of grief," said Rebecca Phillipsen, licensed social worker and camp co-director.

For more information, call 530.543.5614.