

STHS student wins congressional art contest

Rep. Tom McClintock, R-Granite Bay, on May 14 will present awards to high school students who earned the top spots in this year's Congressional Art Competition.

The theme of this year's competition is Proclaim Liberty.

The honorees are:

First place – Liberty In Music/Artist Meghan Bryd

South Tahoe High School/Teacher Candi Lincoln

Second place – On Wings of Liberty/Artist Lexi Haddad

Granite Bay High School/Teacher Myron Stephens

Third place – Freedom Soars/Artist Brittany Sanders

Granite Bay High School/Teacher Myron Stephens

Honorable mention:

Rachel Aronoff of South Tahoe High for The Freedom to Dream
Mary Jo Lonsdale of Granite Bay High for Coming For to Carry Me Home

Brianna Rettig of South Tahoe High for Pioneer Californians

Colleen Curry of Connections Visual & Performing Arts Academy for Heroes Among Us.

The winning entry from each congressional district across the United States is displayed for one year in the Cannon Tunnel of the Capitol. The winning student from each congressional district is invited, along with one guest, to the unveiling of the exhibit and a reception in Washington, D.C., and is

provided two round-trip airline tickets for the occasion.

The reception Wednesday is 5pm at BI Design Studio, 1004 White Rock Road, Suite 200, El Dorado Hills.

‘Idiot’s Delight’ coming to STHS theater

South Tahoe High School’s drama department will be putting on Robert E. Sherwood’s 1936 Pulitzer Prize winning drama “Idiot’s Delight”.

A cast of eccentric and international guests – countesses, arms dealers, showgirls, revolutionaries, charlatans and lovers – spend a fateful weekend in a resort hotel in the Italian Alps. While songs are sung and dances danced and loves rekindled, the dark clouds of World War II come rolling in.

Performances will be at South Tahoe High School’s TADA Theater May 16, 17, 22 and 23 at 7pm and May 18 at 2pm. Tickets \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors.

Exfoliants are a serious environmental hazard

By Mary Catherine O’Connor, Outside

In 2012, advocacy group 5 Gyres, which draws attention to the

epidemic of ocean trash and the impact photo-degraded plastic is having on ocean ecosystems, turned its attention to the Great Lakes. Suddenly, the group's workload skyrocketed.

"We found high concentrations of micro-plastics, more than most ocean samples collected worldwide," said 5 Gyres' executive director Marcus Eriksen. "These were of similar size, shape, texture and composition to plastic microbeads found in many consumer products used as exfoliants..."

Thus began the group's campaign to pressure cosmetics companies to jettison these tiny beads from their products, such as facial scrubs and other types of soaps and toothpaste. The campaign saw some victories, but they were small, says 5 Gyres director of communications Stiv Wilson: "The only firm commitment we got was from Unilever, which said it would cut microbeads out by 2015. Some other companies still have not given a firm deadline. Procter & Gamble said it would eliminate them by end of 2017, but it's all based on when they can find alternatives. Johnson & Johnson has never given a timeline. Long story short, these timelines became a moving target."

Read the whole story

Borges Sleigh rides recognized by NCOT

Champions of Nevada's rural tourism industry were recognized this month at the VolunTourism Awards ceremony during the Nevada Commission on Tourism's Rural Roundup conference.

In the Reno-Tahoe Territory, Dwight Borges was recognized.

He is an active member of the Reno-Tahoe Territory, serving as chairman of the group's website committee. The owner of Borges Sleigh and Carriage Rides in Lake Tahoe also hosts numerous travel professionals and media visiting the Reno-Tahoe area on familiarization tours.

Nevada tourism is a \$58 billion industry.

Other recipients include:

Cowboy Country Territory – Sheree Tibbals has more than 20 years of tourism-related experience with the Winnemucca Convention & Visitors Authority.

Indian Territory – Ben Rupert of Carson City works extensively to share his knowledge of the Paiute and Washoe people with the larger community, facilitating interest in and tourism to Nevada's Indian cultural sites.

Las Vegas Territory – Earl Jobson volunteers with the Las Vegas Territory monthly meetings and helps with the selection of educational speakers and venues.

Nevada Silver Trails Territory – Don Shanks of Pioche has promoted rural Nevada tourism since 1990.

Pony Express Territory – Lorraine Clark is a tireless promoter of rural Nevada tourism, supporting not only Pony Express Territory, but many of the area's tourism organizations, including the Ely Chamber of Commerce.

Love your job? Thank your mom

By Aaron Hurst, Washington Post

The key to not growing up to be money obsessed and unhappy at work is simple: Have a strong relationship with your mother.

It has been understood since the 1970s that our initial development of values and behaviors happens during our middle- and high-school years. And research has consistently shown that, despite the influence of friends and media, parents have the greatest role in shaping these patterns.

What's been less clear until now is the difference in impact that mothers and fathers have. So prior to receiving her doctorate and joining Google, Kathryn Dekas partnered with her University of Michigan faculty adviser, Wayne Baker, to explore how parents affect the work lives of kids once they leave the nest.

They knew based on previous research – including seminal work by their colleague, Amy Wrzesniewski – that people tend to identify with one of three work orientations and maintain that orientation throughout their entire careers, regardless of job type.

Read the whole story

‘Sierra Stories’ author to give talk

Author and Sierra Nevada Native Gary D. Noy will talk about his newest book “Sierra Stories: Tales of Dreamers, Schemers, Bigots, and Rogues” on May 20 at 6pm.

This collection highlights unusual or lesser-known stories of the Sierra Nevada experience. Some stories are adventurous,

some are horrifying, some are inventive, but all are windows into local history. The book features 65 historic photographs that Noy will share during a PowerPoint presentation.

Questions and answers, book sale and signing to follow the free event at the South Lake Tahoe Library.

LTCC offering travel writing course

Do you love to travel and wish you could better tell the tales of your adventures? Have you written travel stories and would like to learn how to polish them for publication? Lake Tahoe Community College will be offering a special topics course in travel writing beginning May 21.

The six-week class meets Wednesday evenings from 6-9:45. Online registration is open through May 21.

This class is for the novice who is just starting out, as well as the writer who is polishing her work for publication. The course will cover narrative versus service travel writing; the effective use of arc and storytelling; character and dialog; setting and local color; and sensory image and figurative language in travel and adventure writing; as well as a discussion on publishing travel writing.

This is likely the last time Suzanne Roberts will teach this class at Lake Tahoe Community College. This class is not in the schedule for next year and Roberts does not expect to be an instructor at LTCC beyond next year.

For more information, contact Roberts at robertss@ltcc.edu

Asking more of workers during off hours may backfire

By Clive Thompson, Mother Jones

My airplane home from Boston is delayed for takeoff, so the woman next to me pulls out her phones to get some work done. Like many of us, she has two—an iPhone for her personal life and a BlackBerry paid for by her employer. “It’s a dog leash,” she jokes. “They yank on it and I respond. If somebody from work emails me on Friday at 10 p.m., they’re pissed if I don’t write back in five minutes.” When I ask whether she ever just turns it off, she shakes her head in annoyance, as though I’d uttered something profane. “My team leader would kill me,” she says.

Cultural pundits these days often bemoan how people are “addicted” to their smart phones. We’re narcissistic drones, we’re told, unable to look away from the glowing screen, desperate to remain in touch. And it’s certainly true that many of us should probably cool it with social media; nobody needs to check Twitter that often. But it’s also becoming clear that workplace demands propel a lot of that nervous phone-glancing. In fact, you could view off-hours email as one of the growing labor issues of our time.

In a recent survey of workers, 50 percent said they checked email while in bed, and 38 percent “routinely” checked it at the dinner table.

Consider some recent data: A 2012 survey by the Center for Creative Leadership found that 60 percent of smartphone-using professionals kept in touch with work for a full 13.5 hours per day, and then spent another 5 hours juggling work email

each weekend. That's 72 hours a week of job-related contact. Another survey of 1,000 workers by Good Technology, a mobile-software firm, found that 68 percent checked work email before 8 a.m., 50 percent checked it while in bed, and 38 percent "routinely" did so at the dinner table. Fully 44 percent of working adults surveyed by the American Psychological Association reported that they check work email daily while on vacation—about 1 in 10 checked it hourly. It only gets worse as you move up the ladder. According to the Pew Research Center, people who make more than \$75,000 per year are more likely to fret that their phone makes it impossible for them to stop thinking about work.

Over time, the creep of off-hours messages from our bosses and colleagues has led us to tolerate these intrusions as an inevitable part of the job, which is why it's so startling when an employer is actually straightforward with his lunatic demands, as with the notorious email a Quinn Emanuel law partner sent to his underlings back in 2009: "Unless you have very good reason not to (for example when you are asleep, in court or in a tunnel), you should be checking your emails every hour."

Constant access may work out great for employers, since it continues to ratchet up the pressure for turning off-the-clock, away-from-the-desk hours into just another part of the workday. But any corresponding economic gains likely aren't being passed on to workers: During the great internet-age boom in productivity, which is up 23 percent since 2000, the inflation-adjusted wages and benefits for college graduates climbed just 4 percent, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

Read the whole story

Study: Laughing may be the best medicine

By Melissa Healy, Los Angeles Times

Want the potential mental and physical health benefits of meditation without the work of chasing away all those intrusive thoughts and feelings? Try laughing, a new study suggests.

Laughter – the real kind associated with genuine joy and mirth – sets off brain wave patterns quite similar to those generated when experienced meditators ply their mindfulness skills, a new study finds.

Researchers know that when hooked up to an electroencephalograph, which measures electrical activity among neurons in the brain, those practiced in the art of meditation are able to achieve a brain state of what is called gamma brain wave activity: In it, virtually all of the brain's higher cortical regions begin to operate on a common frequency, somewhere in the 30- to 40-hertz bandwidth.

Unlike the dreamless sleep in which alpha brain waves sweep across the brain, or the cacophony of alert mental activity associated with beta brain waves, gamma waves tend to be synchronous throughout the brain. It's the brain wave pattern associated with cognitive "flow," with being "in the zone," with the highest state of cognitive processing.

Read the whole story

‘Greening’ a home adds to resale value

By Ilyce Glink, MoneyWatch

Going green may solicit an eye roll these days, but the smart homeowner knows that energy-efficient and green features can mean money in your pocket.

“The energy-efficiency trend is highly driven by money,” said Sandy Gordon, LEED-accredited interior designer at Madison, Wis.-based Sandy Gordon Interiors. “If we can tell our clients they’ll save money, that’s the ticket.”

Energy-efficient or green renovations can actually make a homeowner money by boosting a home’s resale value.

Resources for the Future, a research group that makes environmental policy recommendations, looked at several cities and found that certified green homes could command higher prices than their peers.

Read the whole story