

Study: Workers don't trust employers

By Lauren Weber, Wall Street Journal

U.S. employers have a trust problem.

Only about half of U.S. workers feel their employers are open and upfront with them, according to a survey about work and well-being set to be released this week by the American Psychological Association. And one-quarter of Americans say they simply don't trust the companies they work for.

That's bad for business, said David Ballard, who heads the APA's workplace initiative. When a sense of trust is missing, workers may put in less effort or otherwise subverting their employers' goals, he said.

"Employees want to know that there are fair processes in place and a sense of equity" in the exchange between their efforts and the compensation (monetary and otherwise) they receive in return, said Ballard.

One reason for the distrust and cynicism: with the recession receding in the rearview mirror, workers are angry that they're not sharing in the gains of the recovery, he said. For example, inflation-adjusted wages have barely budged since the economy began expanding again in 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"People are willing to suck it up during tough times, but as things get better and companies become profitable again, they want to share in the benefits," said Ballard.

Read the whole story

Firefighter to relive stories of breaking into male-dominated profession

□The South Lake Tahoe Friends of the Library Program for April 26 has been changed. Gina Geldbach-Hall, the first Las Vegas female firefighter, is taking the place of Debra Gauthier who is unable to travel.

Gelbac□h□-Hall never intended to be a pioneer, but this “firegal” changed the firefighting world forever.

At the end of a 25-year career in fire and emergency services, Geldbach-Hall retired as a battalion chief. But the winding road she took to get to that position was fraught with turmoil, harassment and a lawsuit that took nearly 12 years of her life.

Being a female firefighter was never easy, but because of a desire to make a difference, the author persevered, changing the culture of firefighting along the way. In her memoir, “Firegal Rising from the Ashes”, she recounts in vivid detail her journey of making it in a man’s world and doesn’t shy away from the troubles she endured. Yet at its best, the work isn’t about Geldbach-Hall’s awful treatment, but how she found peace, hope and, most important, herself.

eldbach-Hall will share her stories of life as a firefighter at the South Lake Tahoe Library (1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.) at 1pm Saturday.

Hundreds in South Lake receive free books



Karen Cutter, left, gives a book to Susanne Wink.
Photo/Denise Haerr

World Book Night is an annual celebration dedicated to spreading the love of reading, person to person. Each year on April 23, Shakespeare's birthday, tens of thousands of people go out into their communities and give half a million free World Book Night paperbacks to light and non-readers.

A group of givers from the Friends of the South Lake Tahoe Public Library gave out 320 books to people on the beaches, at bus stops, the Food Bank truck, city recreation center, Senior Center, Juvenile Treatment Center and Tahoe Senior Plaza among other places in town.

'Maniac' needs some work



By Jeremy Miller

"Maniac" is one of the quirkiest little horror flicks I've come across on Netflix. It stars Elijah Wood, Nora Arnezeder and America Olivo.

Frank (Wood) is a lonely mannequin shop owner with an oversized bag of issues (after all, he owns a mannequin shop). He's troubled mostly due to the fact that his prostitute mother wasn't really the best at keeping her occupation under wraps and he creepily watched her work most nights. The result was a pretty campy horror flick villain with an insatiable urge to kidnap and kill women, and shortly after he would scalp them and take the hair home and play dress up with his mannequin girlfriends.

At some point along the way he meets Anna, an up and coming artist who shows an uncomfortable interest in his shop. It becomes the subject of some of her photos. He develops a cliché stalker type crush on her and starts stalking her a little heavier than his ex-girls.



Now don't be too quick to judge him. He really tries to suppress this urge to scalp chicks and often we're exposed to inner conflict he has just before he does the dirty. It twists and turns and ends in a pretty insane climax.

What I liked about this one was that it was 99 percent first person. And I have to say, seeing women serial-killed through the killer's eyes is pretty unique and intense to say the least. There were times I was overly irritated at how cheesy and campy the dialogue became, and just listening to Elijah talk like a total creeper didn't feel as powerful as seeing him could have been.

The gore was pretty decent. It was well placed and realistic and never too much or too artificial. In fact, I thought there could have been more of it. To be honest, the first time stuff got real I was a little taken back, I didn't expect it to go that route.

I give it a mediocre rating simply based on the fact that sometimes it was just flat out stupid. Other times it was a successful horror flick that totally creeped me out. Most of the actresses were borderline talentless, but Elijah carried enough weight to keep the film afloat. Overall, it was decent. It was inventive, edgy and new. The script was as close to worthless as a major motion picture's script can be, but somehow I kept watching. With some more talent and a higher budget, some serious help on the script this thing could have been pretty wicked. I could see it scaring some for sure. I guess being a bit of a horror snob it takes just a bit more

than watching murder through Elijah's baby blues to get me terrified.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.

Denim Day shines light on sexual assault

By Diana Meza Cabrera

April 23 is Denim Day – an annual international campaign that brings awareness to sexual assault.

In 1997, a teenage girl in Italy was picked up by her 45-year-old driving instructor for her first lesson. He drove her to an isolated location, pulled her out of the car, and forcefully raped her. The girl was courageous and despite his threats, she reported the incident and he was arrested. After his conviction the perpetrator appealed the sentence and the case went all the way to the Supreme Court.

In the final ruling, the Italian Supreme Court overturned the rape conviction because the victim was wearing tight skinny jeans at the time of the attack. The statement by the chief judge read “because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex.”

The women in the Italian Parliament were outraged by the verdict and protested the court by wearing jeans to work. This action began the annual international demonstration known as Denim Day.

Every two minutes a person in the United States is sexually assaulted. Sexual assault has increased by 86 percent in El Dorado County.

There is much work to be done help us raise awareness and make South Lake Tahoe a safe and violence free community for everyone.

In observance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month, we will be hosting free self-defense classes. Classes will be April 25 and April 26 from 11am-1pm at Escobar Training Grounds, 972 Tallac Ave., South Lake Tahoe. It is women and children ages 5-12.

Diana Meza Cabrera works for Live Violence Free.

Turn off electronic devices for the kids' sake

By Patti Neighmond, NPR

It's not just kids who are overdoing screen time. Parents are often just as guilty of spending too much time checking smartphones and e-mail – and the consequences for their children can be troubling.

Dr. Jenny Radesky is a pediatrician specializing in child development. When she worked at a clinic in a high-tech savvy Seattle neighborhood, Radesky started noticing how often parents ignored their kids in favor of a mobile device. She remembers a mother placing her phone in the stroller between herself and the baby. “The baby was making faces and smiling

at the mom,” Radesky says, “and the mom wasn’t picking up any of it; she was just watching a YouTube video.”

Radesky was so concerned she decided to study the behavior. After relocating to Boston Medical Center, she and two other researchers spent one summer observing 55 different groups of parents and young children eating at fast food restaurants. Many of the caregivers pulled out a mobile device right away, she says. “They looked at it, scrolled on it and typed for most of the meal, only putting it down intermittently.”

This was not a scientific study, Radesky is quick to point out. It was more like anthropological observation, complete with detailed field notes. Forty of the 55 parents used a mobile device during the meal, and many, she says, were more absorbed in the device than in the kids.

Read the whole story

Devices can help save the environment

By Lynda Chervil

Just as intended, the 44th annual celebration of Earth Day is surrounded by talk of our environment, our impact on it and what we can do to better live in harmony with it.

We’re seeing more and more people who realize that, if each of us does what we can every day, collectively, we can have a tremendous impact.

All the people carrying reusable grocery sacks, people who’ve quit the plastic water bottle habit, folks heating their pools

or houses with solar panels – that’s what we should be celebrating this Earth Day.

This year’s March Gallup Environment poll found that 42 percent of Americans believe the outlook for the environment has improved, up from only 26 percent in 2008.

Here are four devices that would make a nice gift for Mother Earth on her day:

- HybridLight Solar Flashlight: These flashlights never need batteries, can be charged from any light source, and they always work. The 120 lumens model will burn for eight hours on one charge. HybridLight’s flashlights are so reliable, the Boy Scouts’ Utah National Parks Council endorse them – and they come with a lifetime guarantee. For every 10 hours of use, 100 HybridLight flashlights avert 60 pounds of toxic battery landfill waste. An added very cool note – HybridLights has a mission to light up corners of the world with little or no electricity. Recently, the company supplied everyone in a Kenyan village with their own flashlight. Cost: Prices start at less than \$20.

- Bedol Water Alarm Clock: Imagine a water-powered alarm clock that’s loud enough to scare you out of bed. Bedol’s water clocks run strictly on tap water – no batteries, no nothing else. The energy comes from a natural reaction between the water and two metal plates. The smallest clocks in the line run for six to 12 weeks before the display begins to fade, indicating that the water needs to be changed. Occasionally, you also need to clean the metal plates with vinegar. Just in time for Earth Day, Bedol is launch it’s 12-by-15-inch wall-mount water clock. Cost: Prices start at \$19.

- iGo Green Power Smart Wall: We’ve all heard of the “vampires” in our homes that suck up power whether we’re using them or not – everything from coffee pots to laptops. Stem the bleeding with this surge protector that cuts the suck by up to

85 percent. The unit, which plugs into the wall, has four outlets, two of which are always on. The other two automatically power down when the attached appliance is not in use. Cost: Prices start at about \$12.

- Pama Eco Navigator Satellite Navigation system: This GPS system also saves gasoline by providing you with the most energy-efficient routes to your destinations, and feedback on your car's performance, so you can adjust your driving habits to improve your gas mileage. It also saves all your routes, so you can assess their fuel efficiency. Cost: Watch for pricing and availability on Amazon.

Most of these items are not only budget priced, they save you money in batteries, electricity and fuel. Not only are you doing something great for the planet when you use green technology, you're taking a load off your wallet.

Lynda Chervil is the author of "Fool's Return," a new novel that incorporates valuable life lessons in a page-turning tale that touches on technology, the green movement, and other aspects of contemporary society.

Middle-aged kids moving in with parents

By Walter Hamilton, Los Angeles Times

Debbie Rohr lives with her husband and twin teenage sons in a well-tended three-bedroom home in Salinas.

The ranch-style house has a spacious kitchen that looks out on a yard filled with rosebushes. It's a modest but comfortable

house, the type that Rohr, 52, pictured for herself at this stage of life.

She just never imagined that it would be her childhood home, a return to a bedroom where she once hung posters of Olivia Newton-John and curled up with her beloved Mrs. Beasley doll.

Driven by economic necessity – Rohr has been chronically unemployed and her husband lost his job last year – she moved her family back home with her 77-year-old mother.

At a time when the still sluggish economy has sent a flood of jobless young adults back home, older people are quietly moving in with their parents at twice the rate of their younger counterparts.

For seven years through 2012, the number of Californians aged 50 to 64 who live in their parents' homes swelled 67.6 percent to about 194,000, according to the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and the Insight Center for Community Economic Development.

The jump is almost exclusively the result of financial hardship caused by the recession rather than for other reasons, such as the need to care for aging parents, said Steven P. Wallace, a UCLA professor of public health who crunched the data.

Read the whole story

Graphene – it's the material

of tomorrow

By Nick Bilton, New York Times

I just want to say one word to you. Just one word.

No, fans of “The Graduate,” the word isn’t “plastics.”

It’s “graphene.”

Graphene is the strongest, thinnest material known to exist. A form of carbon, it can conduct electricity and heat better than anything else. And get ready for this: It is not only the hardest material in the world, but also one of the most pliable.

Only a single atom thick, it has been called the wonder material.

Graphene could change the electronics industry, ushering in flexible devices, supercharged quantum computers, electronic clothing and computers that can interface with the cells in your body.

While the material was discovered a decade ago, it started to gain attention in 2010 when two physicists at the University of Manchester were awarded the Nobel Prize for their experiments with it. More recently, researchers have zeroed in on how to commercially produce graphene.

The American Chemical Society said in 2012 that graphene was discovered to be 200 times stronger than steel and so thin that a single ounce of it could cover 28 football fields. Chinese scientists have created a graphene aerogel, an ultralight material derived from a gel, that is one-seventh the weight of air. A cubic inch of the material could balance on one blade of grass.

Read the whole story

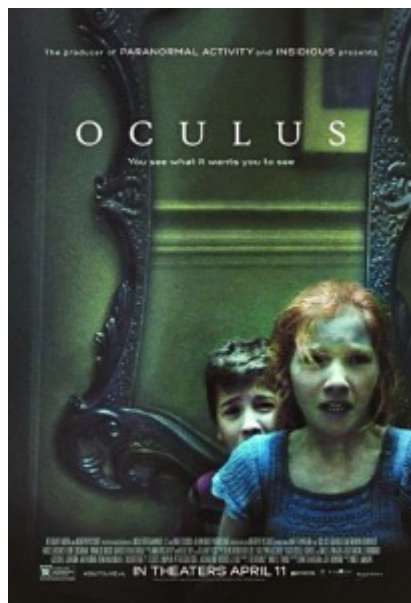
'Oculus' – more suspense than horror



By Jeremy Miller

I felt I was due for a nice horror flick and caught 20 seconds of the trailer for "Oculus" and said why not?

Come to find out, Mike Flanagan (writer/director) remade his own flick of similar name with a bigger budget and this was the result. That alone generates my affinity for a film just because I love when filmmakers revamp their own projects.



Starring Karen Gillan, Brenton Thwaites, Katee Sackhoff, and Rory Cochrane the film focuses on the once function Russell family. Kaylie (Gillan) and Tim (Thwaites) are the seemingly perfect children of an even more seemingly perfect marriage between Marie (Sackhoff) and Alan (Cochrane). Along with Alan's new job came a new house, new beginnings and new furniture. Included in their remodel came a creepy old mirror that most obviously doesn't belong anywhere

near your home.

Did we learn nothing from Alexandre Aja?

Anyways, the film bounces between the present time and the kids' upbringing 10-plus years ago. In present time Kaylie is an auctioneer and has a discomfoting crush on this creepy mirror. The mirror sells, but she pulls a move to keep it in her possession during a short transitional period. Her brother, Tim, is newly released from a psychiatric hospital simultaneously and the two siblings reunite. Kaylie almost immediately dives in to her meticulously calculated plot to not only destroy the mirror, but prove its supernatural capabilities.

Flashback to the past and we discover that at some point along the way Tim killed his father who earlier killed his wife and their mother. Tim has been convinced and convinced himself that there were psychological explanations for all supernatural occurrences leading up to the blood bath, but Kaylie begs to differ. She's adamant that the mirror has powers and sets out to clear the family name and show the world that the mirror was in fact responsible. She sets up a nice little rack of gear composed of computers and cameras to document the whole thing. She preps the room for all the "tricks" she anticipates the mirror to play on them. She then

goes ahead and gives the audience a nice little breakdown of all the people the mirror has driven to insanity.

The thing mostly causes hallucinations mostly. It gets people to brutally murder themselves and those around them, and it's capable of planting all kinds of thoughts in your head.

So once we know what the thing is capable of, the flick bounces back and forth from present time to the past, giving us little bits of each keeping tension high. Well, here's the thing. Was this a horror movie? Nah, I don't think so. Psychological thriller sure, but not horror.

There was some gore, creepy ghost stuff, suspense and what not, but it was scary in a traditional sense. This one gets to your head, not your stomach.

I thought they nailed the suspense and it wasn't 100 percent predictable. They could have done a better job with some of the special effects, as sometimes I felt they were way underplayed and not in a hipster kind of way, more of a "this is borderline Lifetime worthy" kind of way.

I did really dig the story; it's unique and kept me guessing and I thought it was pretty inventive with the mind tricks and hallucinations bits. It definitely forced discomfort, which was perfect. The jump factor was present, but not overbearing or tacky like the more recent developments of the "paranormal" franchise. Overall, pretty good little flick.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.