Letter: Grateful for Ameriprise's help at B&B

To the community,

In partnership with Feeding America, Ameriprise Financial Services Inc. advisors and employees participate in the national day of service by volunteering at events which help feed the hungry. On Nov. 28, private wealth advisor Richard Gross and client service manager Elizabeth Palmer from Tahoe's Ameriprise Financial Services office sponsored and volunteered at Bread & Broth's Monday meal.

Feeding 95 dinner guests, they joined the nationwide effort by Ameriprise Financial's volunteers to feed the one in six in our nation who struggle with hunger.

"Every year we are humbled to be able to serve," stated Gross. "All the volunteers have huge hearts. See you next year."

Gross and members of his Ameriprise Financial office have been sponsoring Adopt A Days for the past four years. Bread & Broth can always count on an Ameriprise dinner sponsorship in November and look forward to their cheerful and "ready and willing" attitude when helping at the event.

Bread & Broth would like to recognize and thank Ameriprise Financial Services for their dedication to utilizing the firm's resources and talents to improve the lives of individuals and help build strong communities. Through their partnership with Bread & Broth, Ameriprise Financial Services Inc. has taken the opportunity to help people in our community and provide an example of how corporations can positively impact the lives of those in need.

To partner with B&B as volunteer, donor or sponsor, visit our us **online**.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: 2 lesser-known reasons to celebrate public lands

By Martin Nie, High Country News

America has spent the last year celebrating the centennial of the National Park Service. Given that the agency protects 80 million acres – 3.5 percent of the United States – this is a birthday well worth celebrating.

But two other important birthdays passed almost unnoticed: October marked the 40th anniversary of both the Federal Land Policy Management Act, or FLPMA (pronounced “flipma”), which covers the Bureau of Land Management’s holdings, and the National Forest Management Act (pronounced “nifma”), which covers our national forests. The combined acreage overseen by the two laws amounts to almost 20 percent of the U.S.

Of course, the very notion of publicly managed lands, which are mostly concentrated in the West, has its adversaries. Most spectacularly, the Bundy Clan occupied the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon after decades of flouting federal grazing laws. Meanwhile, a more insidious threat to public ownership comes from those politicians and interest groups seeking the transfer of federal lands to the states or into private ownership.

Why have these two almost unknown laws inspired such resistance? Because each in its own way transformed the

federal lands into law-abiding areas that could be managed for our collective good.

Read the whole story

Opinion: How much can Calif. ask of its rivers?

By Joe Mathews

California is finally embracing its rivers. It may be a choking embrace.

We Californians have long celebrated our coastal splendor and beautiful mountains. But our rivers were seen as mere plumbing for our hydration convenience.



Joe Mathews

Now California's communities, seeking space for environmental restoration and recreation (and some desperately needed housing), are treating rivers and riverfronts as new frontiers, and are busily reconsidering how these bodies of water might better connect people and places.

A state bond passed in 2014 offers billions for water-related projects, and the epic drought is inspiring imaginative

thinking about our waterways.

But the new thinking is also opening up broad new conflicts. So many California places now are making so many plans for so many rivers that we may have to ask just how much change our rivers can handle.

Some of these conflicts are bigger, updated versions of older battles. The so-called California Water Fix—Gov. Jerry Brown's plan to build two tunnels under the Bay Delta—is really just another chapter in a decadeslong battle over how the state manages its longest and most important river, the 445-mile Sacramento. The tunnels would reroute water from the Sacramento in the name of creating a more predictable water supply for Southern California.

The newer—and, potentially, nastier fight—involves the river that, with the Sacramento, forms the Delta: the overtaxed and often dry San Joaquin. State plans to restore fish species by leaving more water in the San Joaquin and its vital tributaries, the Merced, Tuolumne and Stanislaus, present the hottest and most representative battle in this new era of river appreciation.

The river and its tributaries are part of the landscape of Yosemite and Kings Canyon National Parks, support abundant wildlife, supply some of the world's most productive agriculture, power 4 million homes, provide recreation, and help deliver drinking water to 25 million Californians.

But the state wants the San Joaquin to do even more for fish species. And those who currently rely on the river say that is too much to ask. San Francisco officials argue that the state plan to leave more water in the river could force their city to ration water. San Joaquin Valley officials have all but declared war on the state proposal, arguing that it underestimates the consequences of cutting water to existing users.

“With substantially less water, jobs will disappear, land values will fall and less will be collected in taxes,” wrote the Modesto Bee’s Mike Dunbar early this year in a withering critique of the state’s intentions. “A congressional report already calls us the Appalachia of the West; with less water, we could be the Sahara.”

Such fighting over water in California, while hard, can be easier than making peace. Back in 2010, stakeholders in the far north of California (and southern Oregon) negotiated agreements to restore the Klamath River basin by sharing water and removing some dams. But the deal required the agreement of Congress, which failed to act, forcing players to try to move forward themselves with certain aspects of the agreements.

In Los Angeles, a complicated debate has erupted over competing plans to restore the L.A. River, the famous concrete flood control channel. Many Angelenos see a beautified, renewed river as the spine of nothing less than a new L.A. with new open space, denser housing, and more amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists and, on the river, boaters. But there are growing clashes between the river’s elite and grassroots champions over details and control.

Rivers are also a big part of the conversation elsewhere in urban Southern California. Ventura County’s tight development restrictions have allowed for restoration of the Santa Clara River, the closest thing Southern California has to a wild river. The 96-mile Santa Ana River, which runs from near Big Bear all the way to Huntington Beach, is a hot topic in three counties—Riverside, San Bernardino and Orange—inspiring plans for parks, bike and equestrian trails and riverfront economic development. Further south, San Diego is planning a parkway along the length of the San Diego River.

That I’ve gotten this far without mentioning perhaps the most endangered river in America—the Colorado—is testament to just how river-crazy we’ve become. Drought, climate change and the

demands of agriculture and western cities are crushing the Colorado. And Mexico is demanding the river not dry up before it reaches the Gulf of California.

All California's river dreams and duels could be roiled by the currents of the Potomac. Among his bizarre campaign pronouncements, President-elect Donald Trump denied that California is in a drought, while promising farmers quantities of water that defy nature's laws.

I suppose we'll have to cross that river when we come to it.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Opinion: Western governor best choice to lead Interior

By Jim Ogsbury

On Jan, 20, 2017, Donald Trump will be inaugurated as the 45th president of the United States. The installation of a new administration naturally presents an opportunity to reset the state-federal relationship, and Western Governors' Association looks forward to working with the president-elect in that endeavor.

In the meantime, WGA is urging the appointment of a sitting gestern Governor to the critical cabinet post of Interior secretary. Department of the Interior operations have disproportionate impacts on WGA member states. The jurisdictional area of the Bureau of Reclamation, for example, is entirely within our footprint. The Bureau of Land

Management administers 264 million acres of public lands, the vast majority of which are located in the West. The policy issues confronted by the department – from endangered species to water scarcity to tribal matters – have profound and unique impacts on the West.

No one is in a better position to lead Interior than the governor of a western state. Western governors work closely with departmental bureaus on a daily basis and have a deep appreciation for the challenges faced jointly by Interior and the states. Western governors acquit themselves with honor, dignity and integrity as the chief executives of their respective states. WGA has no doubt that such an appointment would visit great credit upon the new administration.

You can learn more about the presidential transition when the governors convene Dec. 13-14 for their winter meeting in San Diego. The meeting opens with a keynote by David Eagles, the director of the Center for Presidential Transition at the Partnership for Public Service. That address will be followed by a transition roundtable featuring the governors.

Jim Ogsbury is the executive director of the Western Governors' Association.

Opinion: Calif. colleges aren't closing skills gap

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

The Public Policy Institute of California analyzes dozens of pithy issues, but sitting atop its priority list is the state's troubled higher education system.



Dan Walters

Once the envy of the world, California's three-level system – the University of California, the California State University system, and more than 100 locally governed community colleges – is now buffeted by a perfect economic, cultural and political storm.

PPIC's latest report underscores its dilemma. It found that "the vast majority of students entering California's community colleges are identified as unprepared for college and placed in remedial courses…"

Obviously, that's not the community colleges' fault, but rather one of the effects of an equally troubled K-12 system, which awards diplomas to students lacking the academic achievement they need to succeed as adults.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Reflections on true friendship

By Andrew O'Hagan, New York Times

Is childhood the golden era of friendship? And can you get those relationships back?

The other day, I took down from the shelf a beautiful novel by William Maxwell — "So Long, See You Tomorrow" — and I realized the title alone summons the unspoken bond, the constant availability, the relentless promise that friendship is when you are 12. My great friend at that age was Mark MacDonald. In those early, rain-soaked days on Scotland's west coast, Mark was my constant companion and my secret weapon: Whatever happened at home, there would always be Mark to brighten the day and spit with style like River Phoenix did in "Stand by Me," via a rolled-up tongue. We would be up at the crack of dawn to wander over the fields, scan the beaches for coins, climb the hills together and sit in the graveyard comparing our plans for world domination. Mark had Crohn's disease; he was often in hospital, and we'd write to each other planning our adventures for the summer. He told me I was a good writer and I told him he was a great painter, before we disappeared from each other's lives. I haven't seen him in 30 years.

When I recently tried to find Mark again, he didn't appear to exist. Like the boys in Maxwell's novel, he seemed like a figment, or a fragile piece of memory that crumbles when you turn it in your hands. He wasn't to be found at the old address I had for him in the seaside town of Saltcoats. His name is a popular one on Facebook, but none of the Marks I found was the one I knew, and he wasn't on Twitter or Instagram either. None of the search engines reveal anything about Mark. I tried death certificates, fearing, as I have for a long time, that my old friend might have died.

I asked my mother if any of her friends had kept in touch with the family but none had. I could remember two of his sisters' names but they didn't show up on the internet either. When I went back to Scotland recently, I drove to the square where we once lived, and I looked up at the window of my old house, remembering how I used to shine a torch from there to Mark's bedroom. Two flashes meant good night. Three flashes meant see you tomorrow.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Blue lives matter

By Ted Gaines

A handful of California families will find it hard to celebrate the holidays this year because they lost their fathers and brothers to senseless violence.

On Oct. 19, sheriff's Deputy Jack Hopkins of Modoc County responded to a disturbance call and was shot and killed in the line of duty. He was only 31. On Oct. 6, Los Angeles County sheriff's Sgt. Steve Owen was shot dead responding to a burglary. The two deaths are a somber reminder that for our peace officers, their lives are on the line every time they are on patrol.



Ted Gaines

Each of these losses, hundreds of miles apart in our vast state, was a tragedy. But the same month, something far more sinister played out here, showing that America and our law enforcement have entered a new, more dangerous and shameful era that threatens the foundation of the lawful and civil society we enjoy.

Two Palm Springs police officers, Lesley Zerebny, 27, and Jose

“Gil” Vega, 63, were murdered in a planned attack allegedly committed by John Hernandez Felix. These deaths did not occur during the commission of another crime, they were the crime. Felix reportedly set a trap for the officers and ambushed them, shooting them down in cold blood. It was not a one-off event.

In late November, a San Antonio policeman was ambush murdered as well. And, devastatingly, this summer’s hateful and violent anti-police protests culminated in the sickening assassination of five innocent police officers in Dallas. I only wish that the list were complete, but it’s not.

Driven by the media’s hysterical coverage of any shooting death that fits their political narrative of minority oppression at the hands of police, we’re trending into and upside down world where the protectors are viewed as predators. That’s wrong. It’s the open, politically inspired murder of police that is the real “hate crime” epidemic.

In this overheated environment, it’s little surprise that year-over-year law enforcement firearm-related deaths are up 67 percent in 2016.

This growing hostility toward the police is terrible for the men and women who serve to keep us safe, and it’s changing the way they police, with distressing effect.

The “Ferguson Effect” describes a retreat from effective, proactive policing that has been one driver of a multi-decade crime decline that is in danger of reversing. It’s a term rooted in the Ferguson police shooting of strong-arm robber Michael Brown, where the infamous and false “hands up, don’t shoot!” became the big lie slogan of rioters, activists, and a complicit, left-wing media and political cabal.

Police around the country, fearful of becoming a media story, or tired of the jeering, snarling mobs that now surround and confront them in the course of their duties, have predictably

began interacting more cautiously and less frequently with the public, to dire effect.

In Chicago, for example, police stops were down 90 percent in the first part of 2016, compared to 2015. Shootings in that city have skyrocketed. Heather MacDonald, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, blames the crime spike in Chicago (and other cities – it's not a Chicago-specific phenomenon) on the abandonment of "broken windows" policing that sees police actively intervening in small, low-level public enforcement crimes. This retreat leads to disorder and emboldens criminals to commit more serious crimes. It's a troubling shift in nationwide policing.

To make it worse, California is undertaking an unprecedented de-incarceration effort that is putting tens of thousands of criminals back out on the streets before their sentences are complete and making it more difficult to put offenders behind bars.

"Realignment," 2014's Proposition 47, and this year's Proposition 57, all send a strong message to California criminals that the state is not interested in punishing them for their crimes.

It seems simple to understand that if you introduce more criminals into society, the result will be more crime. True to form, California violent crime jumped 11 percent in the first six months of 2015, compared to 2014. Expect crime to spike even higher.

This is the worst possible time for the police to step back because they fear attacks, shaming or other fallout from simply doing their jobs to preserve law and order and keep us safe. The environment that has inflamed and emboldened sick criminals to murder public safety officers must change. It's a dangerous job where officers make life-and-death decision in a fraction of a second, and they deserve wide latitude from the

public and our deepest thanks.

Are there abuses of police power and individual officers who use bad judgment? Of course. And it's incumbent on us to hold those bad actors accountable. But it's foolish to attribute sins of the individuals to the whole profession.

FBI Director James Comey said in October that the "narrative that policing is biased and unfair … threatens the future of policing." Comey should not have stopped there. A media-fueled degradation of respect for law enforcement threatens much more than the future of policing, it threatens the safe, civil society that we take too much for granted.

Honor our police.

State Sen. Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra and Siskiyou counties.

Opinion: Importance of diversity in the outdoors

By Erin Berger, Outside

You may have seen Ambreen Tariq's selfies and peaceful tent shots in your feed, and you may have noticed that her account isn't the usual outdoor-lifestyle Insta fare. The 33-year-old runs the Brown People Camping account, which has gained more than 2,000 followers since she started posting in August.

Tariq, who lives in D.C., uses the platform to share photos of her adventures, everywhere from Virginia's Shenandoah National

Park to New Mexico's White Sands National Monument.

But just as important for her are the captions: Tariq talks about how her identities—as a woman, a person of color, an immigrant, and a Muslim—inform her experience outdoors.

We had a wide-ranging conversation with Tariq about why she created the account, how it's been received, and why the outdoors community needs to be more welcoming toward newcomers or those who don't fit the traditional mold of the outdoorsy type.

Read the whole story

Opinion: How Calif. became a very blue state

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee



Dan Walters

Demography, it's been said, is destiny – and the outcome of California's election this month proves it again.

California's political evolution over the last four decades, from a mostly red state to a purple state and finally to a very blue state, corresponds to its powerful demographic

trends, driven largely by equally powerful economic forces.

During that period – spanning Jerry Brown's two governorships and four others in between – the state's economy moved from industrialism to a post-industrial mélange of technology, trade and services.

Read the whole story

Letters: Elks give back at Bread & Broth

To the community,

The Tahoe-Douglas Elks Lodge No. 2670 is an organization that invests in its communities through programs that help those in need. On Nov. 14, the Elks Lodge hosted the Bread & Broth Adopt A Day of Nourishment Monday meal that provided hearty dinners to many disadvantaged members of our community.

With the $250 donation provided by the Elks Lodge's sponsorship, B&B was able to provide full course, nutritious meals to the grateful folks who came to St. Theresa Grace Hall for a free meal and food to take home.

On hand to help the B&B volunteers were Elks Lodge members Roger Barragan, Michael Corral, Steve Kurek, James Plamenig, Dan Wells and Gary Wendt. They provided incredible service. As Elks Lodge members they took the opportunity to help people in need and give back to the community selflessly.

Serving his first time at a B&B dinner, Corral commented, "I was very surprised with the quality of food and the help that was given. It was my honor to help the team. I hope to help

again.”

The Tahoe-Douglas Elks Lodge No. 2670 is a generous and frequent sponsor of B&B’s Adopt A Day program; generally hosting three to four Monday meals annually. B&B would like to thank the Elks Lodge and acknowledge their ongoing participation and contribution to easing hunger in our community.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth