

Letter: Soroptimist give kids A Fighting Chance

To the community,

During the month of May, Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe brought their program, A Fighting Chance, to our South Lake Tahoe elementary schools.

This program was developed shortly after the kidnapping of Jaycee Lee Dugard. It trains children in our elementary schools to avoid being abducted.

The program starts in the third grade with lessons about how to be safe, and progresses through fourth, fifth, and eventually sixth grade, where techniques are provided to avoid abduction and get away from possible abductors.

Over the years, SISLT has brought this program to 22,000 kids, and in our latest set of trainings, SISLT trained 700 children at Bijou Elementary, Sierra House Elementary and Tahoe Valley Elementary.

Many thanks to the teachers at these schools for allowing us to teach these kids.

Colleen Manzer, SISLT

Opinion: Traveling without

killing the planet

By Jill K. Robinson, San Francisco Chronicle

They come in the form of small cards, rocks or pieces of wood – the hotel reminders that guests can choose to skip having their towels and sheets washed every day, in a bid to save water and energy. Over the years, they've become expected as a base level for a hotel or lodge to show that it's interested in being environmentally responsible.

Guests even notice when, after they have hung their towels to avoid daily washing, they're still replaced with fresh ones.

How much effect do these hotel linen programs really have?

Read the whole story

Letter: EDC Charter should not be changed

To the community,

On June 26, the Board of Supervisors forwarded for voter approval several proposed changes to the County Charter. One change would eliminate the voters' right to elect the positions of recorder-clerk, treasurer-tax collector, surveyor, and auditor-Controller, and instead leave the decision to the board. These positions would not be vetted by the people, but would be selected by only a handful of people.

In 1994, the voters overwhelmingly approved the County Charter to ensure that they would have effective input in their local

government. In essence, the County Charter is a local version of our nation's Constitution. It is our responsibility as citizens to stay informed and vigilant, to ensure that our rights stay intact.

Fortunately, the County Charter can only be amended by the people of El Dorado County. If our county doesn't have elected department heads with the knowledge and background necessary to fight for the rights of the people, then we may end up with a local government that is controlled by the select few.

Sincerely,

Todd White, Pollock Pines

Opinion: Don't let distracted boating get you

By Scott Croft

Just like Americans' hectic Thanksgiving Day holiday travel habits, July 4 is recreational boating's biggest holiday of the year. The nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water predicts crowded launch ramp and marina facilities with significant recreational boat traffic congestion on lakes, rivers and coastal waters. Operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, machinery failure, and alcohol use rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents according to the U.S. Coast Guard, and each could come into play on boating's biggest time of the year.

Here are five July 4 safety tips from the BoatUS Foundation:

1. Stop the distractions: Being distracted – even for an instant – can make a good day go bad. Before you head out on the water, learn how to use your GPS at the dock, rather than with your head down, trying to figure out how to toggle between screens while underway. Can you move your hand between the throttle and wheel without looking? Do you know the locations of the trim switch, running lights or bilge switch by feel? If not, spend some time memorizing the locations of your boat controls. When running, try to zone out of unnecessary conversations that are going on around you, with the exception of valuable input from a helpful lookout. Texting and boating is a dangerous activity, just as it is in a car.

2. Hold off on the alcohol until you're safely ashore or tied up for the night: Added to the effects of sun, wind and waves, alcohol lowers situational awareness. Bring lots of water and other nonalcoholic beverages.

3. The best life jacket is the one you will wear: Spending the extra money on a comfortable life jacket means your chances of wearing it greatly increase. Check out the newer, small lightweight inflatable-style life jackets that are nothing like the uncomfortable life jackets of old. And it's also always wise to have everyone aboard in life jackets when going to fireworks shows – accidents can happen very quickly, especially after the shows end and the mad dash for home begins. If you need a right-sized kids life jacket, you can borrow one for free from one of 550 locations by going **online**.

4. Some help just for paddlers: Paddlers should understand all of the nautical rules of the road, practice defensive paddling and assume no one can see you. At night, show a white light (glow sticks hung around the paddler's neck do not qualify). Avoid crowded anchorages and congested ramp areas.

5. About that broken down boat: The nationwide TowBoatUS on-water towing fleet traditionally reports hundreds of requests

from boaters needing assistance with battery jumps and anchor-line disentanglements over the July 4 holiday. To avoid having to contact BoatUS 24-hour dispatch (BoatUS.com/App) monitor your boat's battery drain during the long day on the water, go slow while hauling your anchor line, watch for wakes, and be super vigilant so you don't run over someone else's anchor line after the fireworks show ends.

Scott Croft works for BoatU.S.

Opinion: Time for a new approach to travel

By Randy Malamud, *The Conversation*

When I overcame a flying phobia, I resolved to make up for lost time by visiting as much of the world as I could.

So in the course of a decade, I logged over 300,000 miles, flying everywhere from Buenos Aires to Dubai.

I knew intuitively that my travels would "make me a better person" and "broaden my horizon," as the clichés have it. But I've come to believe that travel can, and should, be more than a hobby, luxury or form of leisure. It is a fundamental component of being a humanist.

At its core, humanism is about exploring and debating the vital ideas that make us who we are. We study music, film, art and literature to do just that. And while it's important to explore these ideas in our own communities, people and places that are not like us have a role to play that's just as crucial.

This is where travel comes in. It's what sent me packing to see some of the places I have spent so long reading about. And it's what compelled me to write "The Importance of Elsewhere: The Globalist Humanist Tourist," in which I wanted to make a case for a new approach to travel.

The imperialist tourist

In academia, travel studies have long looked at the intersection between imperialism and tourism, describing how they flourish in tandem.

From the 16th to 19th centuries, European empires gobbled up territories around the world, planting their flags and building embassies, banks, hotels and roads. Imperialists traveled to collect cinnamon, silk, rubber and ivory, using them, upon returning home, for pleasure and profit.

The golden age of travel roughly coincided with that period. Not long after the military and commercial incursions began, tourists followed imperialists to these far-flung locales.

Both tourism and imperialism involved voyages of discovery, and both tended to leave the people who were "discovered" worse off than they had been before the encounters.

Globalism's impact on the way we travel

Over the last century, globalism – a vast and daunting concept of transnational corporate and bureaucratic systems – has replaced imperialism as the dominant network of international relations.

Globalism can be overwhelming: It involves billions of people, trillions of dollars, innumerable inventories of goods, all ensconced in a technocratic vocabulary of geopolitics and multinationalism that's anathema to those of us who approach the world on a more human scale.

It has also made travel much easier. There are more airplane

routes, more ATMs on every corner and international cellphone service. You can travel elsewhere without ever leaving the comforting familiarities of home, with McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts and Holiday Inns now dotting the globe.

But why bother traveling if you want familiar comforts?

I would argue that we need a new travel guide that acknowledges the sweeping interconnectedness of globalism, but balances this with a humanist mindset.

Because beneath the innocuous activities of visiting cathedrals, lounging on the beach and collecting souvenirs, travelers can still harbor selfish, exploitative desires and exhibit a sense of entitlement that resembles imperial incursions of yesteryear.

In a way, globalism has also made it easier to slip into the old imperialist impulse to come with power and leave with booty; to set up outposts of our own culture; and to take pictures denoting the strangeness of the places we visit, an enterprise that, for some, confirms the superiority of home.

The right way to be a tourist

Humanism, however, is proximate, intimate, local. Traveling as a humanist restores our identity and independence, and helps us resist the overwhelming forces of globalism.

There's nothing wrong with going to see the Colosseum or the Taj Mahal. Sure, you can take all the same photos that have already been taken at all the usual tourist traps, or stand in long lines to see Shakespeare's and Dante's birthplaces (which are of dubious authenticity).

But don't just do that. Sit around and watch people. Get lost. Give yourself over to the mood, the pace, the spirit of elsewhere. Obviously you will eat new and interesting foods, but think of other ways, too, of tasting and "ingesting" the

culture of elsewhere, of adapting to different habits and styles. These are the things that will change you more than the view from the top of the Eiffel Tower.

Psychologists have found that the more countries you visit, the more trusting you'll be – and that “those who visited places less similar to their homeland became more trusting than those who visited places more similar to their homeland.” Immersion in foreign places boosts creativity, and having more diverse experiences makes people's minds more flexible.

With the products and conveniences of globalism touching most parts of the world, it simply takes more of a conscious effort to truly immerse yourself in something foreign.

My own empathy, creativity and flexibility have been immeasurably enhanced by such strange and fascinating destinations as a Monty Python conference in Lodz, Poland; a remoteness seminar near the North Pole; a boredom conference in Warsaw; Copenhagen's queer film festival; Berlin's deconstructed Nazi airport; a workshop in Baghdad on getting academics up to speed after Iraq's destruction; and an encounter as an ecotourist with Tierra del Fuego's penguins.

There's an especially vital argument to make for travel in these fractious times of far-right ideologies and crumbling international alliances, burgeoning racism and xenophobia. The world seems as if it's becoming less open.

A trip is the greatest chance you'll ever have to learn about things you don't experience at home, to meet people you wouldn't otherwise encounter. You'll probably find that, in many important ways, they are the same as you – which, in the end, is the point of doing all this.

Humanists know that our copious insights and deliberations – about identity, emotions, ethics, conflict and existence – flourish best when the world is our oyster. They dissipate in the echo chamber of isolationism.

Randy Malamud is a regents' professor of English, Georgia State University.

Opinion: An answer to Truckee's Soaring Ranch litigation

By Art Chapman, Moonshine Ink

In the litigation against the Town of Truckee over the approval of the Soaring Ranch project, anchored by a Raley's grocery store, a new development has recently come to light, therefore I want to provide your readers with an update.



Art Chapman

As you may know well, we have been working diligently to make the new Soaring Ranch development project come to fruition. This project will satisfy many needs in our community including a flagship Raley's grocery market and achievable housing (housing options for residents covering a broad range of income levels, from low to above moderate). In late April, a lawsuit was filed against the town by nonprofit Protect CEQA and local business owner Stefanie Olivieri, which we believe is motivated by interests tied to downtown Truckee. After

thoughtful consideration of concerns expressed in the lawsuit, JMA Ventures has proposed what we believe to be a meaningful settlement offer.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Split the state democratically

By Joe Mathews

All proposals to split California into multiple states share the same defect: a foolish fixation with geography.

The new “Cal 3” initiative, which would create three states, is simply the latest measure (the first was pre-Civil War) to make the mistake of dividing us up by regions.



Joe Mathews

The splitters’ logic is that many Californians are unhappy because we live in a state with too many people who don’t understand us because they’re too different from us. Splitters imagine we’d get more of what we wanted if only we lived in smaller Californias where more people were like us.

But this logic doesn’t apply here because our regions are too

much like our state—too vast and too diverse. No matter how you split us, millions of us would remain trapped in states with too many people with whom we don't agree.

So if you must break up California, do it democratically, geographically. Let every Californian choose their state, based on their dreams not their address. If California is really a state of mind, doesn't each mind deserve its own state?

The hard part would be figuring out the right categories for division. To start, let's stipulate that California shouldn't be divided by age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or race, since forming states on a discriminatory basis is probably unconstitutional, even under President Trump.

When I pose the question of how best to divide California, the most frequent answer is: by income. Why not give the billionaires their own state, since they like to decide everything? But, sadly, nothing would stop the billionaires from using their money to impose their values on the states for the millionaires, yuppies, the poor, and whatever's left of the middle class.

Housing might be one basis for a split. We could divide the place up by preference on that most divisive issue—density—with those who like tall buildings near transit no longer forced to share a government with devotees of the single-family home. Or why not exploit the way that Proposition 13 has divided us by property taxes, with new homeowners paying higher levies that subsidize their older neighbors? You could divide the state by the decade your current home was purchased and its tax base set. (You renters could have your own state too.)

Traffic could divide us too, with states for those who drive to work alone, carpoolers, bicycle riders, and scooter

enthusiasts? A small state could serve the 5.3 percent of Californians who actually use public transit. Or since the digital word is already polarizing our democracy, we could have states based on preferred social media platform, smartphone brand, or whether you rely on Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, or basic cable.

Health, a serious obsession here, might help break us up. We could divide by exercise (traditional yoga, hot yoga, barre, jogging, walking), smoking (cigarettes, cigars, nonsmokers, potheads, and vapers), food (vegans, vegetarians, meat eaters, faddish dieters), or childbirth method (with competing states of Doula, Midwife and Ob-Gyn).

We could divide by ideology (2nd Wave, 3rd Wave, and 4th Wave Feminism, with a fourth state for those who are pro-woman but just don't like the word feminist) or energy source (solar, wind, geothermal, fossil fuels, or nuclear, the last of whose residents could leave the AC on to keep their cores cool).

Since Californians take their entertainment very seriously, it might provide a basis for peaceful breakup. Why not four different Californias, each ruled by a stunning musical diva? I'd live in Beyonceland, but would respect those who chose to reside in KatyPerryland, TaylorSwiftopia, or The State of Rihanna. Or we could split into four states called Star Wars, Star Trek, The Matrix, and "Sorry, But I Actually Have a Girlfriend and a Life."

The fairest way would be to make the split random, with each Californian assigned by lottery to a different state. The downside is that each state would be a smaller version of today's California.

And if you don't like any of these ideas, why not try placating Tim Draper, the venture capitalist bankrolling the "Cal 3" initiative?

I saw Draper recently in San Mateo, where he had closed down

3rd Avenue for a “Blockchain Block Party.” Draper, a big believer in digital currency, handed out chocolate Bitcoins and revealed a banner saying “Tim Draper Predicts... Bitcoin Will Go to \$250,000 by 2022.”

Bitcoin trades at \$7,000 as I write, but we could still give Draper and his cryptocurrency disciples their own state, while creating separate states for those who pay with phones and with credit cards.

Let’s also maintain one California for those who prefer the security of cash—since they live in a state full of crazy ideas for tearing itself to pieces.

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

Opinion: How to be safe on Calif. roads

By Fran Clader

Summer in California is a time for many people to enjoy road trips, see the sights, and visit new places. The California Highway Patrol reminds everyone to put safety first and prepare for travel so summer fun does not become summer disaster.

“Good planning will make your trip safer for everyone – the driver, passengers, and other motorists,” said CHP Commissioner Warren Stanley. “Be sure you and your vehicle are both ready for your summer adventures.”

Summer driving can be more dangerous than winter for several

reasons. Vacationing motorists, unfamiliar with an area, may create more traffic and drive unpredictably, either admiring scenery or trying to find their way. More teenagers, who are inexperienced drivers, are likely to be on the road. Road construction occurring during the summer also requires caution.

The CHP offers these tips to help ensure roadway safety:

- Make sure your vehicle is ready for summer. Check the tires, lights, and radiator system.
- Summer temperatures place extra stress on your vehicle and all systems should be in good condition for safe travel.
- Know your route. Before you leave, research road conditions and construction. The California
- Department of Transportation has a mobile app for traffic information.
- Cell phones can only be used hands-free. However, it is much safer to stop before making or taking calls, even hands-free. Program any mapping devices before you leave.
- Buckle up. Be sure everyone in your vehicle is wearing a seat belt. Check that young passengers are using the correct child safety seat for their height and weight.
- Never leave pets, children, or the elderly alone in a car for any length of time. California laws
- address how to handle situations in which children or animals are left in vehicles. However, the best approach if you see an unattended child or animal is to call 911.
- If your vehicle has a problem, such as a flat tire, move it to a safe location, if possible off of the
- highway. The shoulder of a roadway, no matter how wide, is not a safe place for repair work.

Fran Clader works for the California Highway Patrol.

Letter: State of Jefferson against 3-way split

To the community,

By a unanimous vote, the 23 State of Jefferson County committees have announced their strong opposition to Draper's 3-Way State split initiative, as proposed.

Last week, Draper received news that his proposal to split California into three states, had qualified for the November ballot.

State of Jefferson (SOJ) encompasses 23 counties from Mariposa in the south and Siskiyou to the north. State of Jefferson dba Citizens for Fair Representation is the largest and only movement in the state, seeking equal/fair representation for all citizens living in California's 58 counties.

California has the worst imbalance of representation in their state Legislature of all 50 states. In May 2017, Citizens for Fair Representation (CFR) filed a lawsuit against Secretary of State Alex Padilla for lack of representation and dilution of vote. In a hearing on June 14, in the U.S. District Court in Sacramento Judge Kimberly Mueller denied the state/s attorneys motion to "dismiss with prejudice" CFR's case against Padilla.

Mueller has yet to rule on CFR's attorney's request for their case to be heard before a three-judge court, as ruled in the case Shapiro v. McManus. An action filed challenging the constitutionality of reapportionment of congressional and state Legislature districts. Under Title 3, Section 2284, cases involving representation or dilution of vote cannot be heard by a single judge and must be heard before a three-judge

court.

Jefferson has always been about forming the 51st State and representation for all in California's 58 counties. In January 2016, 21 counties filed declarations with the California secretary of State, seeking equal/fair representation and/or to separate (not secede) from the state of California. All went ignored by their elected representatives, leading CFR to take legal action. Mariposa and Stanislaus joined SOJ this year, bringing the total to 23 Counties.

State of Jefferson is in favor of splitting California into smaller, separate state(s). However, Draper's initiative does nothing to resolve the imbalance of representation, not only within the boundaries he established for those in the 23 Jefferson counties, but also those in Draper's two other proposed states.

Draper does not resolve the issue of the high costs incurred for candidates running for a state office. There are 11 counties in Northern California, represented by State senator. Any incumbents and/or their opponents, must pay filing fees in each of those 11 counties in order to have their candidates statement appear on the voters sample ballot pamphlet. Compare this to Los Angeles County, with 15 Senators representing one single county and candidates only having to pay one fee. This deters many good people from running for office.

Draper is fully aware of SOJ's well established policy's for their new state – smaller government, part time legislature, fewer regulations, no corporate business tax, to mention just a few. A business friendly state, where the voices of the people will be equally represented, respected and heard. In no way will this be the case in Draper's plan, that includes Jefferson's 23 counties in the same state with the greater San Francisco Oakland Bay Area, Santa Clara County, Silicon Valley and Sacramento.

Opinion: Work must continue to preserve Lake Tahoe

By Joanne Marchetta

Lake Tahoe is one of the clearest lakes in the world, known around the globe for its spectacular scenery. The lake's water clarity is one of the many attributes that make the Tahoe basin such an amazing natural resource and a mecca for outdoor recreation.

For half a century, TRPA and its many partners have worked to protect Tahoe's famous clarity and to restore the clarity that was lost because of impacts from logging, cattle grazing, and early uncontrolled development in the Tahoe Basin. In that same time, research partners have closely monitored Tahoe's clarity each year as a widely-recognized indicator of the watershed's health and our progress to restore it.



Joanne
Marchetta

Clarity is measured by the depth to which a 10-inch white disk remains visible below the lake's surface and it can vary

widely from season to season and year to year. Several major factors converged in 2017 to cause the lowest annual average clarity ever recorded—59.7 feet.

Last year, Tahoe saw the end of the most extreme drought in at least 1,200 years followed by one of the wettest winters on record. The five-year drought is thought to have caused large amounts of sediment to accumulate in Tahoe's tributaries. Record-setting rain and snow from dozens of atmospheric rivers that winter not only flooded streets and neighborhoods, but also flushed those sediments out into the lake, causing reduced clarity.

Interestingly, the record drought and record winter were not enough to cause the record low clarity average for 2017. Winter and summer clarity last year were 10 feet better and 3 feet better than the record lows for those seasons. These seasonal results show that projects to reduce stormwater pollution and restore streams, meadows, and wetlands are working to keep sediment out of the lake. Those projects build resilience to the kind of extreme weather events that we saw in 2017 that could become more frequent in the future because of climate change.

The other major factor in last year's clarity readings was record high summer temperatures and unusually low wind speeds. Together, they caused Lake Tahoe's surface waters to remain warmer than normal into September. Normally, clarity improves as Lake Tahoe cools in the fall. That pattern changed in 2017 because higher water temperatures kept lake sediments near the surface where they reduced clarity—an outcome that was predicted by past research and a phenomenon TRPA and its research partners will work to explore more.

The record-low clarity reading shows Lake Tahoe is not immune to climate change and the extreme weather that touched every part of the globe last year. But it also shows the importance of work to reduce storm water pollution and to restore the

streams, meadows, and wetlands that play an integral role in Lake Tahoe's health and water clarity.

Sediment particles that wash into streams and the lake with storm water are the biggest contributor to Lake Tahoe's clarity declines. Over the past 20 years partners at Tahoe have significantly reduced the amount of polluted storm water reaching the lake. As a result of our collective work, the lake's five-year running average for clarity is 70 feet.

Through the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program and the Lake Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load Program, partners around the Tahoe basin have upgraded more than 730 miles of roads to prevent erosion and reduce storm water pollution and built a growing network of area-wide systems to capture and treat storm water before it reaches the lake. We have restored thousands of feet of stream channel damaged by historic logging and cattle grazing to reduce soil erosion and sediment loads and restored large areas of meadows and wetlands that help filter water before it reaches the lake.

These projects are keeping hundreds of thousands of pounds of fine sediment particles out of the lake each year and last year's clarity readings would have been worse without them. TRPA and dozens of partners are working to accelerate this progress. There is much more to do as we work to restore Lake Tahoe's clarity back to its historic level of 97 feet by 2076, and now is not the time to backtrack on that commitment.

While last year's average clarity registered a new low because of the convergence of a record drought, record winter, and record-high summer temperatures, the longstanding annual declines in lake clarity have stabilized.

Lake Tahoe is rightfully cherished as a natural treasure. Its water is among the clearest and cleanest in the world. With local, state, federal, nonprofit, and private sector partners all working together we have made significant progress in

protecting and restoring Lake Tahoe's environment and we count on you joining us in doing everything possible to continue that progress in the decades to come.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.