

Letter: Thankful for those who tried to save bear



Jasper was killed by a Washoe County sheriff's deputy who thought he had loaded a rubber bullet. Photo/Provided

To the community,

Over the last few years I've been a strong and open critic of Nevada Department of Wildlife's bear management program, and of those individuals that oversee that program. I feel those criticisms were highly justified, but that is not the theme of this letter. As a matter of fact, it's the complete opposite.

On May 6 in Incline Village a very unfortunate incident occurred that severely wounded and ultimately took the life of

a matriarch of the Tahoe basin bear community, known to many as Jasper. This event could have been easily avoided by a better understanding of wildlife by both residents, and official entities that may be put in the unfamiliar position of having to deal with wildlife situations.

The actual point of my letter is to offer a heartfelt thank you to Dr. Peregrine Wolff, NDOW Director Tony Wasley, and all those at NDOW who went above and beyond to try and keep Jasper alive.

Toogee Sielsch, South Lake Tahoe

Opinion: Calif. public pension shortfall one of nation's largest

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee



Dan Walters

Throughout California, local government and school district officials are writing new budgets and confronting rapidly rising costs of pensions.

Many have seen their costs double in the last few years,

largely consuming revenue increases that the state's expanding economy have produced. For instance, a projected \$1 billion increase in school districts' teacher pension costs in 2017-18 will more than equal projected revenue gains.

However, as the old rock song says, "You ain't seen nothing yet."

Read the whole story

Opinion: Refuel your body and mind

By Lindsay Simon

What fills you up? When you are tired, worn down and need some refueling, what do you do?

These are just a few questions I ask parents and caregivers. For many, the daily demands are overwhelming and it is difficult to find time for self-care and to refuel. However, these are some of the very things your body and mind need to avoid burnout, regain energy, and provide support for your children and family.



Lindsay Simon

Imagine your body is like a car. What happens if you don't refill your gas tank before it reaches empty? Maybe you run out of gas on the way to work and have to call a friend or a tow truck. You are then late for work, have to reschedule meetings, need to find a ride for your kids, and the list goes on. Your day spirals costing time, money, and energy.

Just like your car, refueling your personal gas tank should be a non-negotiable. You might feel like you don't have the time to get gas, but you have to force yourself to refill the tank. Because if your car's tank reaches empty, the consequences are greater and harder to recover from.

What are some of the consequences that you have experienced for letting your personal gas tank go to empty? Did you lose your temper? Did you say unkind words to a co-worker or a loved one? It is important to know what motivates you to change so that, in the moment, self-care doesn't seem like a waste of time.

To refuel your body and your mind, take a few moments and write down what helps you relax and what brings you joy. Seriously, stop reading this article and find a pen and paper now. List at least three things. Then, write down when these things can get done and who will support you in accomplishing this goal.

This exercise is one of a variety of different techniques you can use to increase your parental resiliency. Resiliency is defined as the ability to recover from difficult situations and experiences. This is a very important quality for parents and caregivers. Inevitably, families will experience difficult times. How you respond to these difficulties will shape your children's coping skills and how they deal with tough situations.

Parental resiliency is one of five core protective factors I teach in the parent leadership workshop series. This is a fun,

interactive class that also covers child development, social and emotional competency, and ways to advocate for your children. The next parent leadership workshop series starts today and all parents and caregivers are welcome to attend.

Lindsay Simon is a licensed marriage and family therapist, clinical director, and owner of A Balanced Life in South Lake Tahoe.

Opinion: Concerns about women's health

By Molly Selvin, Sacramento Bee

The abortion restrictions that conservative Republicans shoehorned into Paul Ryan's American Health Care Act were just the latest volley in their ongoing, grim war on reproductive choice.

Notwithstanding the Ryan bill's spectacular collapse, President Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans could well succeed in banning abortion or further squeezing off legal access to the procedure and other family planning services. Regardless of the law, however, desperate women will still seek to terminate their pregnancies as they did before 1973, when *Roe v. Wade* allowed women to decide whether to carry their pregnancy to term.

How then will physicians respond?

Read the whole story

Opinion: Climate change is affecting snowpack

By Jeremy Jones, Reno Gazette-Journal

Dear Republican voters:

We need to talk. I'm a professional snowboarder, and during a 25-year career I've seen first-hand how winters have changed, how they've gotten warmer and inconsistent. For example, in the last 30 years, the northern hemisphere has lost a million square miles of spring snowpack and every year has been warmer than average since 1976. There has not been a colder than average year globally since I was a year old.

I know these changes worry you, too. "Sunny-day" flooding is a normal event now in Florida, sending sea water pouring into streets and homes at high tide, and a chunk of ice nearly the size of Delaware could break away from Greenland at any time. These are all glimpses into the future. Yeah, I know that the leaders of your party say climate change is a hoax, a global conspiracy, that it's natural cycles, etc. We both know that's not true. The science proves it, and polls show that Americans overwhelmingly think climate change is a problem that the government needs to address.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Healthy life requires balance

By Melinda Choy

Does it just seem like we need more than 24 hours in a day? I often think if I had eight more hours in a day that I could get so much more done. I realize this is an illusion and, in reality, the items on my list are never-ending. But for some reason the cultural message is that we are superhumans. We can do it all, get everything done, and look good while doing it.



Melinda Choy

I see this illusion in my patients. Many deal with chronic stress. Initially, the stress is addicting. It feels good to have adrenaline coursing through our bodies. Many of us find identity and identify accomplishments by how busy we are.

Unfortunately, there's a downside to this behavior. Chronic stress taxes the endocrine system and creates a constant stream of cortisol, a stress hormone excreted by the adrenal glands. This initially provides strength to get through an emergency situation, but frequent signals to the system can cause a cortisol imbalance leading to weight gain, reproductive issues, insomnia, chronic inflammation, and digestive disorders. This can eventually manifest into chronic illnesses such as heart disease, metabolic syndrome, depression, autoimmunity, and chronic fatigue.

Carving out time in the day for relaxation to nourish the endocrine system is a difficult task. However, creating some intentional lifestyle habits can teach our physiology to work in our favor. Through years of practice, I have come up with basic tools to promote greater balance. Here are three of my eight lifestyle tips for promoting balance.

1) **Breathe.** We can't live without breathing, but how we breathe can change the nervous system's response. Deep breathing is the physiological response to trigger a switch from the sympathetic ("fight or flight") to parasympathetic ("rest and digest") autonomic nervous system. Instead of taking a smoking or cell phone break, take a breathing break. Breathe as you do dishes and other daily chores so you can be productive and relaxed at the same time.

2) **Nourish.** Eat and drink with consciousness. Slow down and do not multi-task while you eat. A prayer or blessing before your meal sets your nervous system into a parasympathetic, "rest and digest" state.

3) **Reset.** Ultradian rhythm, also called circadian rhythm in Western medicine, is an awareness of listening to the body's needs. It occurs in physiological cycles every 90 to 120 minutes. Productivity improves when you take a break or support your body's needs every 90 to 120 minutes. No one can be productive for more than 120 minutes without a break. Get up, move, and reset your body.

Melinda Choy, LAc, is the owner and an acupuncturist at Elevate Wellness Center.

Opinion: Low-priced fruit demands workers cross borders

By Jerry Nickelsburg

Two hundred years ago this year, British economist David Ricardo published his monumental work "On The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation." In it he outlined a theory of international trade based on the notion of comparative advantage. The idea is that each country does something, maybe many somethings, relatively well, and they can therefore specialize and trade with each other to their mutual benefit.

Economics has since gone well beyond Ricardo's analysis. But it remains instructive when it comes to agricultural products. And that brings me to strawberries.

Everyone loves strawberries. They are sweet, they go well on ice cream and sponge cake, and, when covered in chocolate, they are a perennial favorite on Valentine's Day. There is even a website "strawberries.for.strawberry.lovers.com." The red fruit, a commercial hybrid of the genus *frageria*, is primarily produced for U.S. markets in two states, California and Florida.

In my part of the country, the Southern California coast, the strawberry fields seem to stretch forever, running inland from the ocean onto the Oxnard Plain. As an economist, I look at the fields and think, "There is Ricardo's comparative advantage." Southern California has a mild climate, moist sea breezes and fertile soil: perfect for strawberry production.

The climate that makes Ventura County ideal strawberry territory does not end at the Mexican border (and that won't change even with a big beautiful wall). On the Baja California Coast near San Quintín, you also find strawberries. With the expansion of cultivation in Baja, Guanajuato and Michoacán,

states, Mexican production and Mexican exports have been increasing in recent years. One reason is the climate allows for Mexican produce, like its Californian counterpart, to mature through the winter.

The consequence of being blessed with good soil and weather for strawberries is that both countries are major exporters of the crop. According to the California Strawberry Export Report, farmers in the Golden State exported about \$400 million of fresh and frozen strawberries in 2016. Mexico exported approximately the same amount as California.

Here's where things get interesting. Mexican exports tend to be to the United States; the United States exports to Canada and other countries. Why does the United States both export and import strawberries? One reason is the different harvesting season in Mexico, and the perishability of fresh berries.

But there's another defining quality of strawberries: they are hard to harvest. Any hiker who has come across the wild version knows you have to stoop down and remove each fruit one by one. Machines, now used to pick some other crops, would damage the delicate berry and fail to separate ripe from budding fruits. So it is up to people, typically immigrants, to pick strawberries.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, a good strawberry picker in Southern California can earn \$150 per day during the harvest season. That translates to \$18.75 per hour, well above California's current \$10 per hour minimum wage. According to the California Legislative Analyst's Office, between 25 and 30 percent of all non-strawberry pickers in the same region earn less than \$12.50 per hour. So why are these less well-paid folks not clamoring for jobs in the strawberry fields?

They have good reasons. First, strawberry picking is seasonal labor and must be pieced together with other fieldwork,

sometimes involving travel to nearby counties. Second, and more important, it is back-breaking work. So the higher wages earned by today's strawberry pickers are not nearly high enough to attract other low-income earners.

Down in Baja, strawberry harvest workers—no surprise—make much less than they do in Southern California. Even after a successful labor action last year, strawberry pickers' wages are a little less than 200 pesos, or about \$11 per day.

So if labor is cheaper in Mexico, why doesn't more of the strawberry business move south across the border? Soil and climate quality in California are a factor. And the labor price differential isn't yet so much as to force the move south. Strawberry farms here can still find people to work in the fields. But there is an issue: The people willing to pick strawberries in Ventura County for \$18.75 per hour are not Americans. They are Mexicans willing to brave the hazards of slipping across the border and living in the United States undocumented.

But the United States is changing. And so the delicate balance that allows both Southern Californian and Mexican strawberry operations to prosper is under pressure. The issue? The Trump Administration has vowed to deport undocumented residents. And where more effectively to deploy the limited resources of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) than where there is a concentration of the undocumented: in the strawberry fields?

Whatever one thinks of Trump's change in policy, it's inarguable that it will impact California and the U.S. economy.

The immediate impact of deportations will be a shortage of labor. This is what was experienced in Georgia when an employer verification law went into effect in 2012. According to separate analyses by *Forbes* and *NPR*, farmers left up to 30

percent of peaches and blueberries unpicked in the orchards; farmers also engaged in a failed attempt to enlist prison labor to replace what was estimated to be up to 11,000 fewer agricultural workers. So, California and the United States will have fewer strawberries picked and the berries in the market will command higher prices.

But this is just the initial impact. In the longer run, farmers will either pay pickers more, perhaps much more, or they will plant something else, specifically crops like wheat and corn that can be harvested by machines, and this means even fewer strawberries and even higher prices.

But that is not the end of the story. The same people who have been picking strawberries up and down the California Coast will still be picking our strawberries. They just will be doing it south of the border.

Let's summarize the costs and benefits. The shift of the strawberry business farther south should be a real boon to Mexican agriculture, food processing and trucking. For the agricultural sector here in the United States, profits will be lower as land ideally suited for strawberries will be used to grow feed corn. There also will be less demand for goods and services in the U.S. communities now serving the undocumented, and the juicy red fruit will take more of our personal budgets at the checkout stand.

Finally, there is the unintended consequence of a larger trade deficit. President Trump campaigned on closing the deficit with Mexico. The deportation policy moves in the other direction as more profits from the strawberry trade accrue to Mexican land barons rather than California farmers.

So by itself, it is a policy of "choose your poison." You can engage in mass deportations with consequent lower income for American farmers and their Mexican farm workers, and increase the trade deficit. Or you can forego mass deportations,

thereby increasing the income of American farmers and their Mexican farm workers, and keep the trade deficit with Mexico no greater than it is today. But you can't do both.

If you're willing to think beyond deportations, you'll find other options. One option would be to normalize the status of undocumented farm workers, perhaps via a new version of the bracero program of 1942 to 1964 that permitted U.S. farmers to recruit temporary agricultural help from Mexico. If lessons from that program's history were kept in mind, a new guest-worker regime could correct the flaws of the previous program. It also would have the side benefits of reducing illegal border crossings—U.S. farms would not be providing jobs to newly arrived undocumented immigrants—and this would allow undocumented immigrants already here to come out of the shadows.

Or there might be something akin to the 1981 Voluntary Export Restraint (VER) program between the United States and Japan that established a quota on Japanese exports of cars to the United States. A VER for strawberries from Mexico would take care of the trade deficit consequence of deportations, through limits on Mexican strawberry imports. But these limits on imports of Mexican strawberries would exacerbate the shortage of strawberries in our supermarkets and would make St. Valentine's Day even more expensive.

And this is just strawberries. In 2015 Mexico exported almost \$22 billion of agricultural produce to the United States. Strawberries are just the topping on the iceberg.

Jerry Nickelsburg, an economist at UCLA Anderson School of Management, writes the Pacific Economist column. He would love to hear from you at Jerry.Nickelsburg@Anderson.UCLA.edu or via Twitter @jnickelsburg.

This essay is part of an Inquiry, Does Global Trade Have to Be

a Zero-Sum Game?, produced by the UCLA Anderson School of Management and Zócalo Public Square.

Letter: Humane Society in need of local support

To the community,

Our local Humane Society needs our help. Day in and day out our local Humane Society answers the needs of people who have lost their cat or dog or those who have been forced to move to a place where their pets are not allowed. They host spay and neutering clinics to help with over population and other pet inoculation issues.

This past Christmas I saw them giving out pet food to those who were too poor to feed their pets.

Recently the Humane Society themselves became the ones needing the help. A loss of money due to an [alleged] embezzlement situation has left them in a bad financial situation. The South Tahoe Chamber already had a golf tournament scheduled for this August with the Humane Society selected as our designated charity. While we hope that people will sign up to golf or become sponsors, the need is much more immediate. They need us all to help them now.

Members of our board, including our Executive Director Tamera Wallace and our treasurer Julie Wright and myself, have met with members of the the Humane Society board. We are convinced

that they have corrected any issues that may have allowed indiscretions. Our chamber stands solidly in support of the Humane Society. We urge our chamber members and any members of the community to donate what you are able to help them become restored. Please help them out with donations of cash, pet food or even with change for the puppy banks you see at local stores.

The national Humane Society does not give funds to the local chapters. It is up to us to support our own. The pets and strays in our community need our help.

Duane Wallace, South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce president

Opinion: Census questions bring about different responses

By Jennifer Lee

Like most Americans, I spent most of my life not appreciating the herculean effort the U.S. Census Bureau undertakes every 10 years.

Since its inception in 1790, the U.S. Census has aimed to count every living person in the country, and the stakes are high. The results of the census determine the allocation of hundreds of billions of federal dollars, which affect every slice of American life.

In order to do so, the Census must ask Americans the right questions—and give them the right options for their answers. It seems relatively simple, but—as I learned in 2013, when I

became a member of the Committee on Population Statistics of the Population Association of America—the undertaking is so enormous that the planning for the 2020 Census began even before the completion of the 2010 Census. In 2010, the Census Bureau launched the Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE) to compare different Census questionnaire design strategies. Five years later came the National Content Test (NCT), in which different questionnaires were sent to a statistically representative sample of approximately 1.2 million households in the United States and Puerto Rico.

I had the opportunity to review the results of both tests and assess which questionnaire design results in the most accurate count of the U.S. population. That meant taking three interrelated components into consideration. The first is increased reporting: Which questions were people most likely to answer? The second is decreased non-reporting: Which questions were more likely to get groups who are susceptible to non-reporting (including poor families who get evicted, immigrants who do not read or understand English, and undocumented migrants who may fear government officials) to respond? The third is increased, detailed reporting: Which questions yield more information about the respondents?

The design of a question itself affects how people answer it. Take the race and ethnicity question. People who identify as Asian or Hispanic answer it differently depending on how it is presented on the Census form.

In the 2010 Census, Hispanic origin and race were listed as two separate questions. In both the AQE and NTC, the Census Bureau tested the option of combining race and Hispanic origin into one question, which they refer to as the “combined format.” In addition, they tested which combined format would elicit the most detailed reporting on origin.

One option was to list the racial categories only, with an option to write in their detailed origin. A second option was

to list racial categories and also provide check boxes denoting examples of detailed origin, along with the option to write in one's origin.

Figure 1 – Census Race 2010

Figure 2 – Census Race Combined With Write In Only

Figure 3 – Census Race Combined with Detailed Check Boxes

More than 70 percent of self-identified Hispanics said they were Hispanic when they were offered Hispanic as a race option (the combined option). When they are not presented with this option, as in the 2010 Census, self-identified Hispanics are more likely to check "some other race" or mark two or more races. In short, the combined option—in which Hispanic is listed as a race category—more easily allows Hispanics to accurately report their Hispanic identity. Moreover, when Hispanics are offered the combined option, they are significantly less likely to mark "some other race" or two or more races to self-identify. Both results indicate more accurate reporting on the part of Hispanics.

Moreover, Asians were most likely to mark their race, including their detailed race, when they are provided with a check box to mark their national origin (for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese). When these check boxes are removed, however, and Asians are presented with only a space to write in their national origin, they are less likely to report it. The difference is significant. The check-box format yielded a 97.4 percent response rate among Asian-Americans, and plummeted to 92.6 percent when they were provided only with a write-in option.

Detailed reporting among Asians is critical because it allows researchers to disaggregate data, which is essential to identifying health, educational, and economic disparities among Asian ethnic groups.

Such disaggregation may sound technical and mathematical, but it can have profound human impacts. For example, having data specific to different sub-groups on disease rates, health insurance coverage rates, and birth and death rates can allow policy makers and community organizations to make more informed decisions about how to best serve these populations.

Some Asian ethnic groups are more susceptible to certain health risks: Men and women of Vietnamese origin experience the highest rates of lung cancer among all Asian American subgroups, while men and women of Korean origin have some of the highest colorectal cancer rates. Such data can guide outreach on health insurance coverage; while 13 percent of Asian Americans lack health insurance, the rate is as high as 20 percent among Koreans.

In California, there's been broad recognition of the importance of breaking out such data. Last fall, Gov. Jerry Brown, signed legislation directing the Department of Public Health to disaggregate data for the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander populations on or after July 1, 2022. Following suit, the University of California and California State University have agreed to begin releasing disaggregated data on admissions, enrollment, and graduation rates—data that will help to unveil the wide disparity in educational attainment among Asian Americans.

Data disaggregation is a powerful weapon to dismantle the dominant narrative of Asian Americans as the model minority, which has resulted in their exclusion from policy debates on poverty, health care, and education. While Asian Americans may be touted as academic high achievers, one-third of Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong do not graduate from high school. Data disaggregation exposes these gaping differences among Asian ethnic groups, and points to the dire need for the federal resources to help boost the educational outcomes of these groups, which are essential to immigrant and second-generation integration.

If the 2020 Census provides only a write-in option to list one's origin, we will lose a lot of disaggregated data, and be unable to identify the stark differences among U.S. Asians. We will also miss a great deal of information on the country's growing and increasingly diverse Hispanic population.

Jennifer Lee is a chancellor's fellow and professor of sociology at UC Irvine. In July, she will join the Department of Sociology at Columbia University.

Letter: Bread & Broth thankful for generosity

To the community,

Through the generosity of the John McDougall Pay It Forward Lake Tahoe Community Fund held at the Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation, Bread & Broth provided a roasted chicken dinner with all of the fixings at its Monday Meal on April 24.

The \$250 grant funds enabled B&B to serve 107 meals and provide for 26 takeout meals to the grateful dinner guests who arrived at St. Theresa's Grace Hall for the weekly Monday meal.

"All the people who volunteer with this community service are so happy to assist Bread & Broth in the great work that this outreach program provides to hungry folks in our community," observed John McDougall. As the meal's host for the evening, McDougall invited fellow Unity at the Lake Church members Anik Dean, Kris Hakanson, Donna Janaczek and Leonard Smith to join him at his Pay It Forward sponsorship dinner.

Together these five sponsor volunteers had a great time helping the B&B volunteers make sure the evening dinner went smoothly and all the dinner guests were welcomed, had heaping plates of nutritious food and enjoyed their time at the dinner.

For more B&B information, join us on Facebook.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth