

Spooner Lake State Park offers cross country skiing again

By Janice Keillor

As we transition into winter, many of us start to eagerly anticipate all the activities associated with a good Sierra snowfall. Skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, sledding, and even snow biking are all popular winter sports in northern Nevada. One easily accessible destination for winter recreation, particularly cross-country skiing, has been Spooner Lake State Park. The Park has offered cross-country skiing for many years, but due to recent problems with grooming equipment, cross-country skiing at Spooner Lake State Park took a hiatus, and local cross-country skiers had to find alternate locations.

But thanks to the efforts of Nevada Nordic and Nevada State Parks, the acquisition of a new snow groomer last year reinstated cross-country skiing trails. Volunteers from Nevada Nordic spent many hours grooming and fine tuning approximately three miles of trail, for both classic and skate skiing, starting from the parking lot and winding through the forest and open meadows. The trails are flat to rolling and can be enjoyed by all levels of



(Photos: J. Keillor)

Three miles of cross-country tracks await skiers at Spooner Lake State Park. Janice Keillor appreciates the freshly groomed loipe. A new snow groomer sets tracks for classic skiing and smooth lanes for skate skiing.

Cross-Country Skiing Do's and Don'ts

When using the trails, please be mindful of trail etiquette:

- Do not walk on the trail in shoes or boots.
- Dogs should be on a leash of not more than 6 feet in length and off to the side of the groomed trails.
- Snowshoers are welcome but should stay to the far edge of the trail and be careful not to damage the center of the trail for skate skiing, or the tracks set for classic skiing.

skier. Park staff plan to continue grooming operations and reestablish the trails as soon as the park receives sufficient snow.

Located near the intersection of Highways 50 and 28 make Spooner Lake an ideal location for a fun and convenient winter adventure for anyone who lives

or stays in Carson City, Reno, Incline Village, South Lake Tahoe, Minden, and Gardnerville.

Although the park has been under construction since July, visitors will still be able to access the ski trails from the main entrance. Parking will be limited,

so plan to arrive early. All access to cross-country ski trails is open to the public at no additional charge. There is an entrance fee into the park of \$10 per vehicle (\$15 for non-Nevada vehicles).

Janice Keillor is deputy administrator at Nevada Division of State Parks.

Out with the old, in with the new

By Liesa Leggett Garcia

This time of year is filled with customs and traditions, celebrations and rituals—something for everyone. Even New Year's Eve, which we tend to think of as a secular holiday and a time to celebrate with indulgence and romance, has deeper origins. Underneath the glitz, noisemakers and glitter of this tradition lie deeper roots.

It begins with the winter solstice, the darkest day of the year. The days between the Solstice and New Year's Day are magical. Cultures around the world have their own New Year celebrations but common themes run throughout.

According to British folklore, you are not supposed to sweep on New Year's Day, or you will sweep your good luck away. You only want to bring in new, good things to guarantee abundance in

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Letter From the Publishers

Here comes winter! Let's hope all the ski resorts get heaps of snow to make up for the winter past. Winter sports is one of the main reasons many of us like to live here. Cross country skiing tracks will be open at Spooner State Park and up at Tahoe Meadows. If you like making your own tracks, the options are endless. Enjoy!

Reno seems to be busting at the seams. In my over 20 years as a realtor, I've never seen such a crazy market. Everyone wants a piece of the quality of life that Northern Nevada offers. Next year should be very interesting and I guess we'll all see what the future holds. For local real estate information see the recently sold properties in the central portion of the paper.

As we all shop for what we hope to be the best Christmas in years, please remember your local merchants. Some of the supply chain issues larger companies will have should be much less problematic for local merchants and service providers. Many of their products are made locally and who does not like a gift certificate for a spa day? This year is more important than ever to offer the community your support. If you're a small business that

needs our help, please reach out to us.

I hope everyone enjoys this holiday edition of The Galena Times and please remember, if you have any ideas for an article or need our help getting the word out about a community event, we are here to help and connect. We want to thank all our readers, writers, advertisers, and the Galena Times staff for another great year.

Happy holidays, everybody!

Richard & Janice Keillor



Richard and Janice Keillor make a toast to a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

The Lodge survives adversity

By Tom Burkhardt

While the pandemic brought many challenges to the hospitality industry, it also presented amazing opportunities. Who would have thought that the young man waiting tables at The Lodge in the summer of 2020 would return a year later as a gold medalist?

Bowe Becker had quit swimming when the pandemic started, leaving his training group in Auburn to move back home to Reno, working at the coffee shop and bar, only to return to the pool six months later and getting on the Olympic team. When he returned from Tokyo, he wore a gold medal for

the 4x100-meter freestyle relay. To no surprise, the celebration at The Lodge was a full-house event. A photo montage on the hallway wall leading to the restrooms proudly commemorates his accomplishments.

Overcoming obstacles and thriving in light of adversity is every Olympian's pathway to success. And The Lodge, too, has persevered. Despite the Delta variant and wildfires, lacking staff and customers, The Lodge remained stubbornly open but had to reduce days and hours.

Many guests are enjoying several improvements made during the

pandemic. Weather permitting, outdoor music entertains on Wednesday evenings. A lower deck was added to enlarge the seating capacity in the outdoor spaces. The expanded deck also invited larger events which have included birthday parties, art lessons, fashion shows, and private gatherings.

The menu keeps evolving. Along with a full bar and lots of great beer and wine, a wider variety of comfort foods like organic soups and pizza fill hungry bellies and include daily discounted food and drink items. During football season, additional specials will keep fans satisfied on Thursdays and Sundays

during the games.

As The Lodge expands its service hours, this South Reno "go to" place is looking for people interested in part-time employment. No gold medal required.

Tom Burkhardt is the owner of The Lodge. To get up to date info, visit thelodgereno.com for all the latest information on everything from our hours, events, menus, etc. While The Lodge is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, that is when you can book it for private events. Sign up for the mailing list to get special event announcements. To apply for a job, send your resume to cheers@thelodgereno.com.

RTC Washoe begins Transportation Optimization Plan Strategies

Submitted to the Galena Times

The last few years have brought major change to the Truckee Meadows region, impacting every aspect of life – including public transportation. To better serve our community, Washoe County needs a transportation network that reflects the new ways we live, work, shop, travel and play.

The Regional Transportation Commission's 2022-2026 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies, or TOPS, is the tool to get us where we need to go. TOPS will look at all facets of transportation in the region and make recommendations for how to optimize and improve them.

The goal of TOPS is to improve mobility and enhance quality of life in the Washoe County metropolitan area. TOPS will recommend strategies for:



To optimize public transit strategies, the RTC is requesting public input.

- Retaining current transit riders and attracting new ones
- Improving customer service

- Improving and combining technology
- Making RTC's operations financially sustainable
- Community engagement

The cornerstone of TOPS is community input. The RTC wants to hear from current and former riders as well as from the community at large. Which parts of the system work well for you, and what could be improved? If you stopped riding transit during the pandemic, what would encourage you to return? If you've never ridden a bus, what would entice you to try it out? Are there areas of our community that are not served by public transit that you think should be served by public transit?

The RTC plans to finalize the recommendations through this process and take them to the RTC Board in spring of 2022.

To learn more about TOPS, including how you can provide input throughout the process, please visit rtcwashoe.com/public-transportation/tops.



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The Galena Times is dedicated to providing the Mount Rose corridor and parts of Incline Village and Carson City with a neighborhood paper that informs and connects local businesses and residents.

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The Galena Times encourages everyone to write and express opinions about the community or the paper. We welcome your stories and photos, but reserve the right to edit submissions.

Please contact Richard with all inquiries regarding the Galena Times: Richard.Keillor@cbselectre.com or visit our website: www.galenatimes.com

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22 things to do in 2022

By Julie Ullman

Washoe County Library System can help you have a fulfilling and fun 2022. Here is a list of 22 free activities. Some may require a library card. Library cards are free for all Washoe County residents. Registration required for in-person events. Visit the Library's website at www.washoecountylibrary.us to start your 2022 adventure, or stop by your local branch where friendly library staff are ready to help you with these 22 activities and many more.

- Read a magazine or e-book, or listen to an audiobook on your mobile device with the Libby app.
- Enjoy the view of the snow-covered mountains through the floor-to-ceiling windows at the South Valleys Library.
- Use the free Wi-Fi at all library branches, available 24-7.
- Enjoy a free dance or music group.
- Bring your young child or grandchild to a Story Time, including Bilingual Story Time and Baby Story Time.
- Read to a friendly dog. Local therapy dogs from Paws 2 Read visit library branches once a

month. Reading aloud to a non-judgmental K-9 is a great way for young readers to build confidence and ability. Registration required.

- Discover a new favorite author while browsing the New Arrivals shelf in your local branch.
- Catch up on timely topics using staff-curated book lists on a variety of subjects. #WhatToRead.
- Listen to KUNR 88.7 for weekly "On the Shelf" and "On the Kids' Shelf" segments featuring Library staff talking about great reads for adults and kids.
- Visit a library seven days a week. Hours were recently expanded at many branches.
- Sign up to receive a weekly Library News & Events newsletter in your email.
- Enjoy the art of amazing local artists in our Virtual Galleries from home or visit a local branch for an in-person experience.
- Attend a book group at the library.
- Attend an author event at the library.
- Get a free ticket to museums and cultural attractions in Northern Nevada and Northern California through Discover and Go: Museum Passes. www.washoecountylibrary.us/downloads/

discoverandgo.php.

- Read the New York Times online, for free.
- Listen to an audiobook with your child, using Tumblebooks.
- Make something in The Quad, the library makerspace located in the Downtown Reno Library.
- Get some help with your mobile device.
- Visit the Virtual Events Archive on the Library's website to enjoy dozens of Story Time videos featuring Library staff. www.washoecountylibrary.us/events/archive/
- You can also view past virtual library events with speakers from the Historical Reno Preservation Society, the Nevada Historical Society, and more in the Virtual Events Archive.
- Get access to thousands of books, audiobooks, DVDs, and electronic resources.

Julie Ullman is the managing librarian at Washoe County Library System/South Valleys Library, 15650A Wedge Parkway, Reno. She can be reached at (775) 851-5190 or jlullman@washoecounty.us. For a complete listing of current services and hours at all library branches, visit www.washoecountylibrary.us.

in with the new *continued from cover*

the coming year. In Brazil, even the color of underwear worn on the first day of the New Year has meaning. Pink brings love, yellow brings prosperity, and white peace and happiness. In Vienna, pigs – as symbol of good luck – are let loose in restaurants for people to touch for luck as they run by. And in many cultures, people jump into the sea (or Lake Tahoe?) on New Year's Eve to symbolically wash the

slate clean. Everything that's done on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day is filled with significance for the future.

It has long been viewed as a time to take stock of yourself and the year. What was great about the year, and where might there be room for improvement? We have all made New Year's Resolutions, though following through with them is another thing entirely. But it's all part of the ritual

of completing one cycle of life before starting another.

Although many customs may seem more like superstitions, they all come from a similar belief: by ending the old year with respect and beginning the new one in the way we would like it to begin, we establish our intentions for the New Year. Whether we watch the ball drop in Times Square, set off firecrackers at midnight, or clink

champagne glasses with our loved ones, we are acknowledging an important transition and welcome a fresh start. We are ready!

Liesa Leggett Garcia, a Nevada native, is the Senior Minister of Center for Spiritual Living, located in southwest Reno. It is a positive, inclusive community that teaches "Change your thinking, change your life." For more info, visit www.cslreno.org.

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Bear proofing garbage cans gone horribly wrong

By Hawley MacLean

First, I did not realize that posting the words “bear” and “garbage can” in the same post is like tossing a match into a fireworks factory. I want to thank the NextDoor Community for the dozens of helpful tips on bear proofing our garbage. But things went horribly wrong.

I first put a fence around my new steel, bear-proof trash cans. Waste Management refused to drive their truck down our driveway to empty them. So now we have several weeks of garbage piling up. During this time the HOA sent me a nasty gram saying that the new enclosures were not approved. They suggested that I pay \$750 to have the enclosures officially denied by the HOA. This process could take up to a year after several resubmissions.

We diligently started washing all our garbage. We have several people in the house, this was taking a lot of time after each meal. Being a resourceful person, we have two dishwashers. Things were working great until the third meal, then the two dishwashers got clogged up and flooded the kitchen. We called our home warranty company and after being on hold for five hours they said cleaning garbage in your dishwasher was not covered and voided all warranties.

Since washing the garbage did not work out well, I emptied my garage freezer and put all the frozen food on the work bench. Note to self, go to Walmart, and buy several ice chests. I then bagged up all of bones and meat scrapes and put them in the freezer. That seemed to do the trick. No more smell in the garage.

My mother-in-law, who loves to cook comfort food, found a large bag of bones and pieces of meat in our freezer. Within a few hours she had prepared a lovely meat stew. Although it had a peculiar smell to it, the family really enjoyed it. And so off to bed...

About one in the morning, we were all in a rush

to urgent care. We all simultaneously had severe indigestion with explosive and uncountable bowel movements. We called our friends to come over and watch our dog while we raced to urgent care.

We had just bought a new plug-in hybrid car. We installed a 220-volt, high power plug to rapid charge the new car. One of the helpful tips was to put an electric fence around the garbage cans. Now normally these work off a 110-volt household plug. The dog sitter was taking the dog outside to go to the bathroom. She noticed that the transformer for the electric fence was unplugged. Wanting to be helpful, she plugged the electric fence into the car charging plug. Other than a loud hum and severe vibration, the electric fence worked great.

Trixie, our miniature poodle, having been inside for several hours, ran out the garage door when it opened and immediately lifted his leg on our metal bear proof can. Trixie had not realized that when the garbage truck had tried to empty the bear cans, they were pushed into the electric fence. Poor guy, he had no idea what had happened. Living up to his name, Trixie did an immediate, triple back flip, about 5 feet into the air and landed in the bear can that the garbage truck had broken open.

Now several family members are in urgent care and the dog sitter and Trixie are rushing to the emergency vet. The bright side of this incident is that now we do not have to get him neutered.

I had several tips on what to put into the garbage cans to keep the bears away. I should warn you, do not mix all these ingredients at the same time. I am a little bit old school: if a little is good, more is even better. Lesson learned. Pine-Sol, Ammonia, and Clorox mixed together in the garbage can with a good helping of dog and cat poop will create a problem if left unattended.

Much like the movie Christmas Vacation, a green,

fluorescent fog started billowing from the bear proof cans. This new smell attracted the attention of the neighbors and most bears within a five-mile radius. The neighbors being concerned called 911. Soon the hazmat team had arrived. But not soon enough. The bear had smelled this wonderful concoction. He managed to eat most of the garbage. The Clorox and ammonia did a nice job on whitening his teeth. The Pine Sol seemed to turn his scat into a pile with a slight smell of a pine tree.

Earlier in the week, I had installed a sensor up the street to warn me when the garbage truck would soon be arriving. Many of the neighbors loved this idea and wanted to be hooked up to my sensor. We are supposed to have our garbage cans on the street before 7am. Often the truck does not come until late afternoon. Now with this sensor, all the fine folks on our street can put their garbage out just in time for the truck.

I did not realize that to a sensor, a fire truck looks a lot like a garbage truck. Within minutes of the fire truck arriving, everyone had put all their trash cans on the street. The HOA is now having a meltdown over all these garbage cans out on the street on the wrong day. They have started sending courtesy letters telling everyone to only put their trash out on the correct day. They said that this will help with the bears getting into the trash.

I tried to contact several of our county and city agencies. All that I got was recordings that said, “Due to COVID, and in order to serve you better, please leave a message.”

Well, that’s enough for now, I need to go get ice chests at Walmart for all the frozen food that is melting on my work bench.

Hawley MacLean is co-owner of MacLean Adventures. For more info, visit macleanadventures.com or call (775) 683-9115.

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Sky Tavern brings out the fun in family skiing

By Randi Thompson

Joe and Lorna Denton moved to Reno in 2001 from Britain. Like so many residents, they loved the outdoors and took up snowboarding. After their kids were born, they wanted to teach their kids how to ski. They discovered the SkyKids program at Sky Tavern in 2010. SkyKids was created by Olympian David Wise's dad, Tom, as program specifically designed for 4- and 5-year-olds.

Thomas Denton started at age 5, while Millie started at 4. In just three years, both advanced so much that they qualified for the race team.

Thomas is now 16 and Millie is 13. Both are racing for the Sky Tavern Race Team in the Far West USSA races. These races take the family all around the West most winter weekends. Lorna says the travel allows them a chance to spend quality time with the kids and catch up on the latest about school and friends.

As the kids improved, Joe and Lorna wanted to keep up, so they both pursued the ski instruction training that



Thomas (left) and Millie Denton are racing for the Sky Tavern Race Team while their parents keep up as volunteer instructors at the local ski school co-op.

Sky Tavern offers from the Professional Ski Instruction Association. After a few seasons, Lorna is now a PSIA Level 1, while Joe is PSIA level 2 instructor.

When the kids aren't racing, you'll find the Denton family at Sky Tavern. In the mornings, Joe and Lorna will be teaching, while the kids ski with friends and run

gates.

"We are a stronger family because of skiing together," says Lorna. "As the kids worked to improve, so did we. The kids also support each other, helping with ski drills. In the afternoon, we all ski together and they become our coaches."

Lorna and Joe get a lot of reward from teaching kids and adults. They love how Sky Tavern provides support to families who want to ski together. The atmosphere is like no other ski area.

"I know I can let my kids go off and ski on their own, and they will be safe," says Lorna. "Sky Tavern brings out the fun in family skiing."

The Dentons are just one example of how Sky Tavern converts people into life-long skiers. That is why Sky was awarded the National Ski Area Association's top award this year, the "Conversion Cup." It's the highest honor a place like Sky can receive.

By Randi Thompson is a Sky Tavern Board member. To learn more, visit SkyTavern.org.

Gift experiences, not things



By Meaghan Maillet

Amid the holiday season, many of us turn our energies toward gift giving. An act that should bring joy, can often produce anxiety. With news of shipping delays and distribution disruptions, even online shopping might be stressful this year. But giving gifts of experiences, not things, can bring loads of joy with less

stress and worry. They can create memories to last a lifetime and simultaneously help service-oriented, local businesses that are still recovering from the challenges of the pandemic.

Thinking back on gifts I have received, a few items stand out, like my first bike or a special piece of jewelry. But the most

wonderful memories I have of the holidays are the experiences I have shared with family and friends. I will never forget the year my brother took our entire family of nine to the movies to see The Aristocats.

There are many creative ways to wrap experiences, a massage certificate could be presented with a lotion. Gift certificates for personal services like a pedicure or a shave and haircut can be perfect for the person who never treats themselves. For gifts that keep on giving, many service providers offer discounts on packages. For the history buff, art lover or nature enthusiast, perhaps an annual pass to state/national parks or membership to a museum. For the performing arts lover, there are tickets for concerts, plays and musicals. A day at the ice rink is a great family experience, or ice-skating lessons for the kid who wants to play hockey.

Club memberships, restaurant gift cards, Escape Rooms and Sip & Paint Nights can be great for groups of friends.

Many of these types of gifts may be purchased online or with a quick visit to a ticket counter. No hassles of crowded stores or worries that packages won't be delivered on time. And the service-oriented, brick and mortar shops who were long impacted by shutdowns and occupancy restrictions will certainly benefit from your business.

Meaghan Maillet, LMT, is the owner of Connective Touch Therapeutic Massage. Meaghan relocated from the suburbs of Washington, DC. Meaghan has over 20 years of experience as a licensed massage therapist. She works with all ages and specializes in Sports Massage, Prenatal Massage and Traditional Thai Massage. To learn more, email meaghan@connectivetouchmassage.com or visit www.connectivetouchmassage.com.



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Holiday, Hounds and Hooch rings in the holidays

By Lori Dotterweich and Rob Burks

Hounds will mingle and jingle at Natural Paws for the Holidays. The holistic pet store is hosting their 'Holiday, Hounds & Hooch' on Saturday afternoon, December 18th from 3-5pm. Dress in your favorite ugly holiday sweaters as the merriments will be held exclusively outside with carolers singing tunes like Jingle Dogs and Santa Doggy.

Dogs will be served holiday pumpkin lattes while the owners enjoy their hooch with their pooch from Mutt Lynch Winery and Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits. You can take home a commemorative wine glass with a \$10 suggested donation to Nevada Humane Society.

Natural Paws is doggedly committed to pet rescue



and will be collecting monetary donations (cash or checks only) for Nevada Humane Society during the

festivities. Attendees can take their own Santa Selfie with a pet-loving Hipster Santa mingling with the crowd. Natural Paws will also be raffling off a huge pet gift basket with \$200 of fun dog and cat goodies. All proceeds are benefiting the NHS.

This memorable event will also feature numerous dogs and cats available for adoption from Nevada Humane Society if you are looking for a new addition to your home...come by and fall in love. Each adoptee will receive a five-pound bag of dog food to start the new family member off with excellent nutrition and health.

Lori Dotterweich and Rob Burks own Natural Paws. For more information visit www.naturalpawsreno.com, [Facebook.com/NaturalPawsReno](https://www.facebook.com/NaturalPawsReno), email naturalpawslori@yahoo.com, or call (775) 853-3533.

Prioritize self-care to avoid burnout

Submitted to the Galena Times

Time for a quick check-in. How's your breathing? Are you taking quick breaths or breathing deep into your chest? Are your shoulders or neck tense? Are you sleeping?

Now that your body has your attention, it's time for the hard work: listen to it. What is it trying to tell you? Does it need a moment of intentional breathing or a quick stroll around the neighborhood? Maybe you need to drop your shoulders and shake your hands? How about a meditation break?

Our bodies - and mind and spirit - are always talking to us. If you pause a moment to listen, you will learn that it's always communicating its needs. Quite often we ignore it.

Many of our jobs, whether at home or work, are high stress, fast-paced, and

demanding. An urgent project surfaces that needs immediate attention, the phone won't stop ringing, or a child is sick and in need of your full attention. Day-in and day-out, we put our personal needs on the backburner and in time, begin to feel the grips of burnout.

Mental exhaustion, or burnout, affects how we function, how we interact with others and can be a very difficult experience.

"Burnout is real and occurs when one feels worn-out mentally and physically due to accumulated stress in their personal life," said Christina Sapien, MSW, LCSW, and Director of Behavioral Health Services at Carson Tahoe Health. "It could be work-related, school-related, relationship related or related to any other aspect of your life."

Learning to navigate times of

emotional exhaustion and fatigue is vital to maintaining your physical and mental health. So, when struggling with burnout, remember that the most important person to listen to is ... you. Ask yourself: What are you doing for yourself today? Did you make 'you' a priority?

"It's human nature to nurture others," says Sapien. "But you can't forget to take time to nurture yourself. It's a proven fact that you can't pour yourself into others if you are an empty cup."

Self-care and self-preservation are keys to thriving during difficult times.

"Most of us are doing the best we can, so please remember to both extend and receive grace," advises Sapien.

When feeling downhearted, exhausted, and absolutely spent, don't forget, the human body is incredibly resilient. Sometimes we have to learn to

say 'no' to tempting invitations. Other times we have to ask ourselves if taking on an additional task is really necessary. Can it wait?

Be honest with yourself. It's not selfish to acknowledge your limitations. But it is essential to know how to deal with emotional burnout when it presents. A helpful acronym to remember in helping to regain control is "DEER:" Drink water. Eat. Exercise. Rest. Next time you see a deer roaming, let nature be a good reminder to connect to yourself.

Carson Tahoe Behavioral Health Services, a department of Carson Tahoe Regional Healthcare, provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient mental health services. To reach outpatient services, call (775) 445-7756. For the Mallory Behavioral Health Crisis Center, call (775) 445-8889.

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Healthy body, healthy mind



Kerstin Tracy

By Kerstin Tracy

'In a healthy body lives a healthy mind.' I always thought this saying to be interesting and intriguing. Of course, by now, I understand that a 'healthy mind' leads to a healthy body. My favorite way to approach overall health is to combine Feng Shui and Craniosacral Therapy.

With each avenue, I can help change the nervous system from an upregulated state to a calmer state, so that the body can self-correct. Good Feng Shui has the power to change the brain waves of those who live in or visit your home from a Beta state to a much calmer Alpha state.

In Feng Shui, a general health direction works for all of us, the East. What do you see in the eastern direction of your home in general? What do you see in the eastern direction of your living room, office, and bedroom? These are the areas of our home where we spend most

of our time for leisure, work, or rest.

East represents tall wood, like big trees. The element wood represents growth, health, and family. Make sure those areas include the wood element like lush plants, furniture, or the color green. The East direction of your living room is a great place to hang family pictures.

To increase your health, wear the color green, play soft music in the background, and place a white quartz crystal on your coffee table in the living room.

Now that you are receiving more support from your environment, how can you boost your health physically during the holidays and beyond?

Moving your body, and more specifically, moving your cerebrospinal fluid, is super healthy. Moving your body has positive effects that you already know from strength and flexibility to cardiovascular benefits and increased happiness thanks to released endorphins. How about increasing the flow of cerebrospinal fluid within and around your nervous system, your brain, and spinal cord?

That's what Craniosacral Therapy does. It is a brilliant way to boost chelation, detoxification, and nourishment of the most critical structures in your body.

Research studies have shown that decreased flow of this nourishing fluid contributes to degenerative diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer's. It may create a sense of sluggishness and fatigue and may be involved in hormonal imbalances.

If you can practice yoga, choose movements like Upward and Downward Dog, use a big or a mini trampoline, or find ways to invert for a moment.

Be safe and have fun creating a healthy mind and a healthy body through Feng Shui and conscious movement.

Kerstin Tracy is the owner of Ready2Heal. She helps humans and horses suffering from complex structural and neurological problems regain their optimal health. Visit www.kerstintracy.com for more information on FengShui and for updated Covid-19 safety guidelines and general services like CranioSacral Therapy. You can email any questions to kerstin@kerstintracy.com.

Balancing life with dizziness

By Justine Anderson

We can all agree that life is a balancing act, but those who're affected by dizziness and poor balance can face even greater challenges throughout their daily lives. Thankfully, there's good news. Sierra Nevada Ear Nose & Throat is opening a new Balance Center, a specialized physical therapy clinic of highly trained clinicians focusing on the treatment of dizziness and balance disorders by using a holistic approach of evidence-based techniques and state-of-the-art equipment.

Our bodies use three main systems, each one essential in keeping us upright. The vestibular system, the visual system, and the somatosensory system. Each signals information to our brain to determine the space we're in and sends outputs to our muscles and joints so we can move safely and efficiently. When either of these systems isn't giving reliable feedback, it can create dizziness, motion

sensitivity, nausea and/or imbalance.

The experts at Sierra Nevada Ear Nose and Throat Balance Center are dedicated to helping their patients' brains re-calibrate imbalances through individualized and specialized exercises. Solving balance and dizziness problems with vestibular rehabilitation can be more effective than medication alone. It reduces the risk of falls and ultimately lowers medical expenses and improves quality of life.

This type of physical therapy benefits a variety of patients experiencing dizziness from conditions like Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, and several types of vertigo. As well as patients who are post-stroke or post-brain injury, and those with loss of balance and/or dizziness due to aging.

As a new patient at the Balance Center, you will undergo a detailed evaluation with an in-depth discussion regarding your symptoms. Then, you will receive a

customized program that includes various exercises to improve gaze stability, dynamic and static balance, and overall strength and proprioception. Sometimes these programs include eye and desensitization exercises to reduce the dizzy response that happens in the brain, depending on the patient's specific needs.

If you or a loved one are experiencing difficulties with dizziness and balance, a visit to an ear nose and throat specialist can help.

Dr. Justine Anderson is a physical therapist at Sierra Nevada Ear, Nose & Throat. She received her undergraduate degree in kinesiology with a minor in psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and she earned her doctorate in physical therapy at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professional in Provo, Utah. Dr. Anderson specializes in vestibular rehabilitation and helps patients experiencing dizziness, vertigo and imbalance. For more information, visit sierranevadaent.com.

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Sarah Herbert, APRN



Renown
HEALTH

Need for speed at any age



Ryan Golec

By Ryan Golec

It has been suggested that anyone should have the full capacity sprint. Now some of you may scoff at this thought. You may even say that you are too old, too injured, or have no need for this skill, but give me a minute of your time. Just because you have no desire to sprint, run, or jog, I am simply talking about having the availability.

As we age, the first thing we begin to lose is our Type 2 fast-twitch muscle fibers. Even regular weightlifters in the gym may find that the control of weights versus movement speed represents very different aspects of muscle recruitment. What is important for everyone is the ability to react and move quickly...the brain would interpret this as a fight or flight response.

Let me propose three real-world scenarios: 1) You

are crossing the street and a car is not paying attention. You find that you must either jump out of the way or get hit. 2) You are walking your dog and they see a squirrel. They break free of your grip and sprint away. You are the only one around and must retrieve your dog. 3) You trip on a piece of concrete that is broken and you either right yourself or fall on your face.

Type II muscle fibers and your brain's ability to respond quickly to stimuli are responsible for these reactions. I am not telling you to jump out there and sprint up the street, but the ability to move and react quickly should not be neglected at any age. If you believe me, then you are wondering where to start. Depending on your current fitness level, it can be as easy as speeding up your walk.

I like these three simple drills: 1) In 30 seconds, sit down and stand up from a chair as many times as you can. This is a safe and controlled introduction to fast-twitch activation. 2) Standing in one place, take one step

left and then one step right as many times as you can for another 30 seconds. 3) Walk as fast as you can for 1 minute. Measure the distance you covered.

These drills start to get your brain reacting to quick and basic stimuli. Do these 3 to 4 times per session and each session 2-3 days per week. Each session you should try to achieve more squats, side steps, and walking distance. I recommend scaling this up. Start with 1 or 2 rounds of moderate speed to warm up the body. Remember that Rome wasn't built in a day. Once you have completed a few weeks of this, you are well on your way to being an athlete at any age. And you will start to feel those Type 2 muscle fibers returning. Train smart, move often, rest hard.

Ryan Golec is director of movement and education at Performance EDU in Reno. He has been in the fitness world for over 20 years and has a passion for correcting and enhancing movement patterns to help people achieve their ultimate goals. He is also a licensed massage therapist and uses manual therapy as a part of his system to improve his clients' function and fitness. Contact him at (775) 846-2894 or Ryan@fitubuilt.com.

Don't put holes in your holidays



Gilbert A. Trujillo, DDS

By Gilbert Trujillo

The holiday season is here and with that there are lots of treats and fun things to eat. This is a good time to remember helping your little ones brush and floss their teeth. Especially with the potential extra snacking that we all do during these holiday and winter months because all simple carbohydrates have the potential to produce tooth decay.

Cavities are caused by the natural bacteria in our mouths. We all have bacteria in our mouths. These bacteria need three things to cause a hole in our teeth.

First, they need food. Simple carbohydrates are the perfect food for the bacteria to eat. Bacteria have a hard time with proteins and fats but love carbs. Keep in mind that

carbohydrates in vegetables are complex carbohydrates which are not the problem.

Second, the bacteria need these simple carbs frequently. This is where frequent snacking comes into play in causing cavities. The more often you eat carbs, the more the bacteria eat the carbs.

Third, the bacteria need these carbs to stick around for a while. The longer the carbs stay on the teeth, the more time the bacteria have to cause a cavity.

To keep it simple, the bacteria eat the food and as a waste product secrete acid. While tooth enamel is the hardest substance in the human body, this acid erodes the enamel and eventually creates a cavity. You can't put back enamel, so a dentist must remove the cavity and put in a filling or a crown to fix this hole.

We all have three things we can do to prevent cavities. First is brushing. This removes the food and plaque off

the teeth. Second is flossing which removes the food and plaque from the places the toothbrush cannot reach. Third, be aware of how often your child is eating foods that can cause a cavity. Pick snacks that are less likely to cause tooth decay, such as cheese and veggies.

Young children should have an adult brushing and flossing for them until the parent is confident that the child can do a good job. Other things, such as sealants and fluoride treatments from your child's dentist can greatly help prevent cavities.

Dr. Gilbert Trujillo, a Reno native, received his D.D.S. from the University of the Pacific and his Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry from Baylor College of Dentistry, Texas A&M. He received his Certificate of Resident of Pediatric Dentistry from Children's Medical Center, Dallas. Dr. Trujillo belongs to many dental organizations and is active in organized dentistry on the local level. He can be reached at Growing Smiles Pediatric Dentistry at (775) 824-2323 and RenoKidsDentist.com.

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Discover, develop, deepen wellbeing at new sanctuary

By Jen Hutter

It has been twenty months since the world took a giant pause and twelve months since we have collectively decided to make up for lost time. Are we moving at 150 mph now or does it just seem so because we had slowed down for a time? The pandemic certainly allowed me to reexamine how I was living my life, often too fast and too unintentionally, saying yes to every invitation instead of pausing to ask, “Do I really want to do this today?”

I spent the first twenty years of my career in investment banking, working 60-plus-hour-weeks, making my way up the mountain I believed I was supposed to climb. In 2016, I found myself exhausted, sleeping poorly, dealing with constant colds and inflammation while also raising a family. I had heard about meditation. Like most of us, I found myself saying, “There is no way I can sit still for 20 minutes. My mind is too busy. I am way too busy for that.” But, after countless tests and medicines that yielded no results, I decided to give it a try.

What I learned was that meditation doesn’t bring you instant relief. It is not a fix-all Band-Aid. It is much more than that. Meditation allowed me to start to examine my daily choices and to slow down. By 2019, this practice grew to include qigong, the root of the tai chi practice, which combines breath, movement, and intention. Through daily engagement with these practices, I



Health, wellbeing, and community are the cornerstones of the recently opened, South Reno Center Foundation, offering mindful movement, meditation, yoga, and therapeutic writing.

am now able to live my life in deeper awareness, sleep without illness, and truly experience all my emotions rather than just mindlessly running on life’s treadmill as I did before.

Earlier this year, it became clear that our community needed a welcoming space, where each of us could show up, just as we are, to practice and support one another on our life journeys. The Center Foundation was created to be this resource. What you will find when you walk through our doors are heart-centered teachers who welcome you with open arms and share with you their embodied practices.

Bring your curiosity and discover which practices

speak to you – meditation, qigong, yoga, tai chi, dance, or life writing. Come to a sanctuary that brings light and color to real life issues like grief, purpose, trauma, sleep, and nutrition. Come to a space that welcomes humans of all ages – yes, kids too – novices or advanced practitioners, individuals, or organizations. All are welcome here.

Jen Hutter is co-founder of The Center Foundation. Find her at SouthCreek Plaza, 55 Foothill Rd #2 to be in community, to practice, or to simply browse the gifts-with-a-purpose retail gallery. Readers of the Galena Times can practice for free through December 31, 2021, by using the code GALENA. To learn more, visit: www.thecenterofwellbeing.org.

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At the foot of the Sierras in Washoe Valley awaits an equestrian property that will make your equine dream come true. This 8.87-acre property features 2 homes, 2 barns & 2 arenas. Main home is 3bd, 3 bath, 1992 Sq Ft & was fully renovated in 2017. This home has top end finishes such as engineered hardwood, leather granite counter tops. **\$2,100,000.**



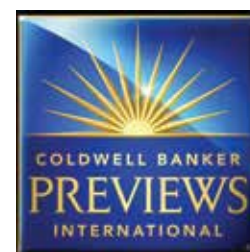
Excellent location, near schools, parks, shopping and restaurants. 2 BR, plus bonus room space and 1 BA. Large back yard with a storage shed and patio. A cozy fireplace in the living room. Low maintenance landscaping. **\$420,000.**



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All Area Home Sales August 26 - December 1, 2021

GALENA/MONTREUX/ST. JAMES	Asking Price	Sold Price	Price/SF	Sold Price/SF	SF	Acreage	Off Market
355 Black Pine Ct	\$850,000	489.91	\$850,000	482.68	1761	0.44	10/26/2021
11000 Blue Spruce	\$950,000	424.68	\$990,000	442.56	2237	0.57	8/30/2021
1855 Blue Spruce Road	\$1,199,000	378.95	\$1,125,000	355.56	3164	0.48	11/17/2021
3150 Joy Lake RD	\$1,275,000	392.43	\$1,200,000	369.34	3249	0.59	11/5/2021
505 BLUE SPRUCE RD	\$1,250,000	364.86	\$1,250,000	364.86	3426	1	10/29/2021
1105 Douglas Fir Dr.	\$1,285,000	424.09	\$1,285,000	424.09	3030	1.11	9/15/2021
400 Piney Creek Rd.	\$1,450,000	533.09	\$1,320,000	485.29	2720	0.5	11/4/2021
16750 Evergreen Hills	\$1,395,000	300.65	\$1,325,000	285.56	4640	1.04	11/24/2021
20600 Chanson Way	\$1,580,000	443.2	\$1,740,691	488.27	3565	0.33	10/18/2021
189 Carleton Court	\$1,695,000	340.98	\$1,800,000	362.1	4971	1	8/31/2021
16925 Rue du Parc	\$1,999,000	555.12	\$1,850,000	513.75	3601	0.67	10/28/2021
5036 Bordeaux Court	\$1,665,000	505	\$1,869,779	567.12	3297	0.49	9/21/2021
6584 Champetre Court	\$2,000,000	646.62	\$2,000,000	646.62	3093	0.28	9/7/2021
20520 Margaux	\$1,765,000	436.34	\$2,004,798	495.62	4045	0.44	10/26/2021
6000 Cartier Drive	\$2,026,000	585.38	\$2,026,000	585.38	3461	0.76	10/7/2021
1005 Yellow Pine	\$2,099,000	527.52	\$2,099,000	527.52	3979	1.06	11/24/2021
175 W JEFFREY PINE	\$2,250,000	553.91	\$2,150,000	529.3	4062	1.02	10/27/2021
201 N Big Sage Lane	\$2,298,000	704.26	\$2,298,000	704.26	3263	1.01	10/1/2021
210 N Big Sage Lane	\$2,400,000	575.13	\$2,400,000	575.13	4173	1.01	10/6/2021
CALLAHAN RANCH							
15930 Coyote Rose Lane	\$850,000	485.16	\$780,000	445.21	1752	1	11/30/2021
15310 Cherrywood Drive	\$1,370,000	353.27	\$1,370,000	353.27	3878	1	12/1/2021
15795 Callahan Rd	\$1,599,000	404.81	\$1,800,000	455.7	3950	1.58	9/1/2021
15105 Goldenrod Dr.	\$1,800,000	463.44	\$1,850,000	476.31	3884	1.3	10/15/2021
5365 Mountain Creek Ct.	\$2,540,000	629.4	\$2,540,000	617.25	4115	1.05	9/7/2021
ROLLING HILLS/GALENA COUNTRY ESTATES							
2000 Honey Ridge Dr	\$736,500	300.12	\$736,500	300.12	2454	0.2	10/15/2021
14320 Ghost Rider	\$750,000	305.62	\$765,000	311.74	2454	0.34	10/22/2021
2220 Solitude Drive	\$779,000	300.19	\$770,000	296.72	2595	0.38	10/15/2021
2480 Deer Valley Drive	\$799,900	276.97	\$810,000	280.47	2888	0.48	10/14/2021
491 Missoula	\$869,900	336.78	\$845,000	327.14	2583	0.28	11/24/2021
SADDLEHORN/MONTE VISTA							
14420 E Windriver	\$1,100,000	311.97	\$1,175,000	333.24	3526	0.43	11/8/2021
14240 Black Eagle Court	\$1,195,000	385.73	\$1,200,000	387.35	3098	0.87	9/14/2021
14240 Bandler Ct	\$1,250,000	401.03	\$1,250,000	401.03	3117	0.47	9/30/2021
13145 W Saddlebow Dr	\$1,399,900	422.17	\$1,399,000	421.89	3316	0.98	10/25/2021
14535 S Quiet Meadow	\$1,595,000	389.69	\$1,595,000	389.69	4093	0.4	10/19/2021
14309 Quail Ravine Ct.	\$1,795,000	485.14	\$1,700,000	459.46	3700	0.8	9/10/2021
14210 Powder River Ct.	\$1,850,000	554.72	\$1,825,000	547.23	3335	1.22	11/10/2021
14285 Black Eagle	\$1,350,000	416.67	\$2,058,981	635.49	3240	0.78	11/16/2021
3845 Boulder Patch	\$1,950,000	484.11	\$2,250,000	558.59	4028	0.45	8/27/2021
ARROWCREEK							
2767 Sky Horse Trl	\$1,258,000	499.21	\$1,350,000	535.71	2520	0.8	9/13/2021
6165 Sierra Mesa Drive	\$1,349,000	372.34	\$1,390,000	383.66	3623	0.3	9/14/2021
3364 White Mountain	\$1,495,000	475.51	\$1,400,000	445.29	3144	0.28	10/6/2021
1039 Mountain Air Court	\$1,295,000	408.9	\$1,410,000	445.22	3167	0.5	9/28/2021
3457 White Mountain	\$1,450,000	460.03	\$1,420,000	450.51	3152	0.33	11/17/2021
2982 Granite Pointe	\$1,450,000	481.09	\$1,422,000	471.8	3014	0.55	11/1/2021
6725 Salt Brush	\$1,549,000	548.32	\$1,549,000	548.32	2825	0.5	11/12/2021
3656 Spirit Bluff Court	\$1,450,000	440.46	\$1,600,000	486.03	3292	1.03	10/1/2021
4055 Red Fox Court	\$1,595,000	478.12	\$1,620,000	485.61	3336	0.49	10/27/2021
6325 Elk Ivory Dr	\$1,749,000	391.1	\$1,725,000	385.73	4472	0.31	11/30/2021
3145 Cobble Ridge	\$1,895,000	432.25	\$1,850,000	421.99	4384	0.82	9/2/2021
603 Rose Peak Ct	\$2,500,000	578.84	\$2,300,000	532.53	4319	1.57	9/3/2021
WEST WASHOE VALLEY							
7195 Franktown Rd	\$4,200,000	617.83	\$4,200,000	617.83	6798	30.02	9/10/2021
6755 Franktown Road	\$8,950,000	1,952.44	\$7,000,000	1,527.05	4584	84.67	10/12/2021
OTHER AREAS OF SOUTH RENO							
4205 Slide Mountain Drive	\$1,099,000	588.96	\$1,050,000	562.7	1866	1	10/15/2021
543 Elk River Ct.	\$1,099,900	381.25	\$1,080,000	374.35	2885	0.38	9/10/2021
6109 Mesa Road	\$1,275,000	349.6	\$1,150,000	315.33	3647	0.81	11/23/2021
12585 Oak Glen Drive	\$1,290,000	357.84	\$1,170,000	324.55	3605	1	11/17/2021
2045 N Tesuque	\$1,200,000	472.44	\$1,175,000	462.6	2540	0.37	11/17/2021
3850 Bowers Drive	\$1,200,000	421.79	\$1,210,000	425.31	2845	1.14	10/28/2021
45 Fox Glove Ct	\$1,200,000	349.85	\$1,225,000	357.14	3430	0.68	12/1/2021
5516 New Mexico Ct	\$1,299,000	495.61	\$1,245,000	475.01	2621	0.59	11/19/2021
16111 Edmands Court	\$1,500,000	427.35	\$1,399,000	398.58	3510	1.38	9/13/2021
11330 Maverick Lane	\$2,200,000	899.43	\$1,975,000	807.44	2446	2.6	8/31/2021
3820 Frost Lane	\$5,495,000	533.13	\$5,300,000	514.21	10307	2.62	9/1/2021

What you need to know about breast cancer



Dr. Max Coppes

By Max Coppes

As the words imply, breast cancer is cancer that originates in the tissues of the breast. However, there are several types of breast cancer, depending on the specific cells that are growing out of control. Cancer in the breast can develop in the milk ducts, breast lobules, or in

some cases the tissue in between. The most common breast cancers are the ones developing in the milk ducts, called ductal carcinoma (70-80% of all breast cancers), and the breast lobules, called lobular carcinoma (5-10%). Both may be diagnosed very early on when the cancer is confined within the breast duct or lobe and does not have the ability to spread. In those circumstances they are called ductal carcinoma in situ and lobular carcinoma in situ respectively. Finally, it is important to point out that men, too, develop breast cancer, although this is uncommon, about 1% of all breast cancers.

Overall, breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women in the USA, second to skin cancer. In Washoe County, nearly 300 women are diagnosed with it each year. Known risk factors include a family history of breast cancer, inherited genetic predisposition, elevated lifetime exposure to estrogens, including early onset menstruation, late onset menopause, and taking estrogens after menopause, having dense breast tissue, obesity, consuming excessive alcohol (more than 2 drinks per day), and older age.

All of these and others are well known to your primary care provider, your family physician, with whom you should develop a prevention and screening plan tailored to your specific circumstances. Screening has been a very important tool in improving outcomes, because the earlier breast cancer is diagnosed, the better

the outcome. Aside from an annual physical exam by your provider, routine mammography, an X-ray of the breast, has greatly increased the number of women diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer and consequently drastically improved overall survival. When to start and stop screening and how often to screen really depends on a woman's personal circumstances and can best be discussed with your primary care provider.

If there is a suspicion for breast cancer, you will usually be referred for an outpatient biopsy to make a diagnosis and to obtain detailed information about the cancer. This not only includes thorough examination of the tumor by a pathologist but also more advanced laboratory tests, including tests that aim to learn more about the genetic makeup of the breast cancer cells. In today's treatment approaches, the genetic makeup will affect the actual optimal treatment.

All patients require surgery to remove the tumor and sample the lymph nodes. Today, most women are candidates for breast conserving surgery and limited sampling of the lymph nodes under the arm called sentinel lymph node biopsy. This reduces long-term problems associated with more invasive surgery. When total mastectomy is indicated, breast reconstruction by a plastic surgeon may be performed. Most patients who undergo breast-conserving surgery, known as lumpectomy, are candidates for radiation therapy in addition to surgery. However, in the end it depends on many factors that are considered by your team of cancer specialists, the surgeon, radiation oncologist, and medical oncologist.

The cancer care team will review each patient's specific circumstances and findings and based on these recommend additional treatment. Radiation is painless but may cause skin discomfort during and immediately after treatment. The radiation treatment area includes the breast and may include the lymph nodes in the

armpit if the cancer was found to have spread there.

Some patients benefit from chemotherapy after surgery, but almost all women receive some sort of preventive treatment after surgery. Chemotherapy treatments are used to eradicate any cancers cells that may have been left behind and consequently reduce the risk of recurrence. The medicines used are tailored specifically for each patient's unique situation. A medical oncologist will suggest which treatments are best, based on pathology, tumor spread and specific characteristics, including hormone receptor status, genomic profile, and menopausal status. Some medicines are chemicals that destroy dividing cells, some are hormone blocking medications, others are medicines that activate your own immune system to attack cancers cells. The goal of these treatments is to markedly reduce the chance of the cancer coming back somewhere else in your body.

There is much more to say about breast cancer, the role of nutrition, exercise, living and coping with cancer, survivorship, support, and risk for family members. I hope to address some of those in the future. We end with outcome: the National Institute for Cancer reports that more than 90% of women with early stage breast cancer survive 5 years after diagnosis. This is drastically better than several years ago, but for some women, particularly if the cancer spreads to other parts of the body, outcome is not good. Because of that, we at the Renown Institute for Cancer are committed to research to help address areas in need of survival improvement. We are by the way also committed to research how we can reduce the side effects associated with treatment so we can improve the lives of women who are cured of their cancer.

Dr. Max J Coppes, MD, PhD, MBA, Professor of Pediatrics and Clinical Internal Medicine at the University of Nevada Reno School of Medicine and the Cancer Center Director of the Renown Institute for Cancer.

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Beating cancer paradigms with pearly bikinis



Forever stronger, Dana Kilroy (far right) and nine other breast cancer survivors redefined their scars. Fiercely coached by Stephanie Leff (standing second from left), they found a fresh start while preparing for the Breast Cancer 2 Bikini figure competition in Reno.



By Dagmar Bohlmann

Ten women turned their cancer diagnosis from verdict to victory when they entered the Breast Cancer 2 Bikini program. Compassion and determination glued them together during their 24-week fitness training that ended in a teeny bikini on a big stage. Tough work, tougher workouts, and a shared concern for each other's scars, sacrifices, and successes transformed them from surviving to thriving.

Dana Kilroy, a Reno journalist and mother of three kids, now age 24, 22 and 17, was diagnosed with breast cancer two years ago when she was 55. Surgery and five weeks of radiation treatments took the wind out of her sails and so she drifted right into the pandemic lethargic and exhausted.

"Between cancer and Covid, I had gained 25 pounds," she says. "I just wanted to be fit again."

While Kilroy had no choice in choosing cancer, she chose to apply for the Breast Cancer 2 Bikini program that her friend Wendy Damonte, founder of breast tissue awareness organization Each One. Teach One. had recommended.

"I love setting goals and a challenge," Kilroy says and embarked on a fierce, six-month training regimen of exercising at least four times a week at 6am or 6pm, following a nutritional plan, and learning how to pose in five-inch heels.

"Toward the end when I was down to 1300 calories a day, working out an average of 90 minutes to two hours, I was very tired and very cranky," she says. "But I'm not a quitter."

Stepping on stage at the National Physique Committee's state championships and participating in a bikini division especially designed for breast cancer survivors isn't about vanity or being the biggest loser.

"It gave me confidence in my ability to accomplish things I set my mind to," Kilroy says. "I am very proud of my commitment and that my body didn't let me down."

Body image and self-esteem issues are a side-effect not many cancer patients openly discuss. Physical changes, especially after breast surgery, can make some women less comfortable with their bodies. After surgery there may be a loss of sensation in the affected breast, a perceived loss of femininity and intimacy, feelings of shame, embarrassment, or loss of trust in the body, according to B2B founder Heather Reimer. Regaining faith in her body's ability took a lot of work for Kilroy.

"The level of commitment, the exercise, food prep, counting calories and macros, was hard," she says. "But I never thought about quitting, not one instant."

And neither she nor the other nine participants left early. "We start together, we finish together," was one of their trainer's mottos. Kilroy credits Stephanie Leff, both coach and participant, for everyone's success. B2B is in its sixth year, and this is the first time everyone finished.

Leff was a weight loss coach at a medical spa when she was diagnosed with breast cancer at 43. Like Kilroy, she had surgery, radiation, and no reconstruction. She became a personal trainer, certified cancer exercise specialist and medical exercise supervisor at St. Mary's Fitness Center.

"It feels like a calling after all that I had gone through," she says. Her advice as a coach and participant?

"Focus the energy that you put into illness – going to doctor appointments and treatments – and put it into fighting for your wellness," she says.

In B2B, women support, inspire, and motivate each other.

"You can see the transformation not only in their bodies but in their faces, their smiles and their confidence," Leff says. "It's a community built around positive peer pressure."

Just like the women she trained, Leff faced her own body image issues.

"I have always been self-conscious about my body," she says. "I've never been comfortable with how it looked. I thought I was going to puke and that someone would have to push me onto the stage. I was really outside my comfort zone."

Yet, that's where change really happens.

"I was a life changing moment," she says. "First a video played about my cancer journey, then I walked out, and the crowd stood up and cheered. I felt the most supported and loved I felt in my whole life. They cheered not because of my looks but because of the badass breast cancer thriver I am."

"It made me feel confident, proud, and supported and that I am part of something. It felt like an ending of my cancer story. I felt restored," she says. "I was surprised myself how my body transformed. Most of it came from the kitchen. I had a sense of control of what I put into my body and how I moved."

Leff says that if she can do it, anybody can take charge of their health and feel better.

"Trust the process. It's something they say in bikini contests," she says. "These ten women of this group have been through horrific losses – divorce, custody battles – despite all, we changed not just on the outside but on the inside."

While blood panels and body fat ratios showed the physiological change, proud smiles measured the increase in confidence.

Just like Leff, Kilroy sees the other women like sisters and knows she couldn't have done it alone. In addition to her B2B soul sisters, husband Robert helped with daily food preparation and packing her lunch.

"His help was instrumental," Kilroy says.

But the steps onto stage, she had to take alone. Dehydrated from not drinking any water, self-conscious about a fresh film of spray tan and the bedazzled hint of a bikini, all she could think of was not to fall off her five-inch heels. She called her state of apprehension

"adrenaline-fueled nervousness." And perhaps that's what it took for her to trust, "If I can do this, I can do anything."

The end of B2B is also a new beginning. Kilroy will add weightlifting to her regular yoga and barre routines and is committed to maintaining a healthy weight as it decreases the risk for a recurrence.

"I can't imagine I'd ever compete again," she says, "but I'm determined to keep lifting weights."

Her journey from uncomfortable and awkward to comfortable and confident is illustrated in the Beyond the Ribbon photography exhibit that followed, a step into empowerment with which B2B founder Heather Reimer wants to create a paradigm shift.

Reimer had trained for a physique competition in 2013 because she had been suffering from severe depression after her own cancer therapy that included a double mastectomy. She realized that cancer didn't only take from her but also gave something to her. In 2016, she turned her experience into a Reno-based program to help others build a new road to survivorship.

"You cannot hide from anything here, everything will be revealed," she says about the rigors of the B2B training. "The bikini is the smallest piece of the program, the biggest is the beautiful bond that is formed between the women – it's where we heal together."

Adding the Beyond the Ribbon photography experience was Reimer's answer to changing the invisibility of cancer. Featuring tiny scars and barren chests, the pictures are at the same time intimate and exposed, vulnerable and empowering.

"When we walk on the street, no one would know that we had cancer," she says. "I wanted to turn the scars from a source of embarrassment into a powerful reminder that our intimacy and confidence had changed. I wanted to show the other side, beyond the hype of the Pink Ribbon, the part that has been missing."

After the B2B program and the photography, the relationship to your body and your breasts changes. Reimer says, it can help you redefine who you want to be.

"You cannot 'overcome' cancer, it will always be a part of you," she says. "Now you are a 'survivor' – that term signifies an ending. But we need a new beginning. For me that was Breast Cancer 2 Bikini. It changed my brain and my body."

Every emotional journey through cancer is different but Reno photographer Amber Ezell's black and white pictures of ten strong survivors illustrate that remission is not the end but a new beginning, that the antidote to shame and doubt is pride and self-love, that there is fierceness in fitness and hope in intentional living.

For more information, learn about your breast tissue density, or to donate, visit <https://eachonetellone.org/about-us/breast-cancer-2-bikini> or find @breastcancer2bikini on Facebook.

Sleep safely, baby

By Kristina Deeter

We do everything in our power to keep our children safe. We research their car seats, we buckle them up, we size their helmets, we test their food, we avoid grapes and carrots, we hold their hands, we track their phones, we meet their teachers, we screen their friends. We are good parents. Actually, we are fantastic parents!

Every year, however, around 7000 parents across the country never get the opportunity to do all of these things. Because, every year, we lose about 3500 babies in their first months of life due to unsafe sleep practices. These parents are not bad parents. These are often fantastic parents. But in those first months, when we are exhausted, when we are doing our best, sometimes, mistakes are made.

SIDS, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, has been blamed for the deaths of thousands of babies every decade. When I was a baby, there was minimal understanding of “crib death”, and the numbers were high. Infant mortality is any death of an infant under 1 year of age.

In the 1950s, this rate was as high as 29 per 1,000 live births. By the 1990s, when “back to sleep” campaigns were introduced, this rate dropped to around 7 deaths per 1,000 births per year.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and other public health agencies began to recognize and educate the public about unsafe sleep practices. Despite all of the work done and education, however, the United States continues to have one of the highest infant mortality rates among

developed countries.

In 2018, the US infant mortality rate was 5.9 deaths for every 1,000 births placing us 33 out of 36 nations belonging to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. That equates to 21,000 infants every year dying before 1 year of age, mostly due to prematurity, congenital disease, and injuries. In most European countries, the rate is around 3 per 1,000.

Unsafe sleep practices contribute to this mortality and are now recognized as a leading cause of SIDS. What are unsafe sleep practices? Everything that your labor and delivery nurse and pediatrician tell you not to do:

- Don't fall asleep with a baby in your bed
- Don't put anything in the crib with the baby like blankets, stuffed animals, and toys
- Don't fall asleep in a chair with the baby on your chest
- Don't put baby to sleep on their belly or side
- Don't let baby fall asleep holding their own bottle
- Don't smoke around your baby

It sounds simple, but when you are a tired new mom or dad, it is sometimes hard to follow the rules. I remember, twenty years ago, feeling terrified when I woke up next to my first baby girl after falling asleep while breastfeeding. I was a pediatrician. I knew better. But I was exhausted.

In Washoe County, we have lost 23 babies in the last few years due to unsafe

sleep practices. I encourage you to talk to new moms, offer support, and educate, if appropriate. And if you are that exhausted mom, rocking and feeding their baby at 3am while the rest of us sleep, please take that few extra minutes to settle baby back into their boring safe crib, on their back, as they are falling asleep and before you do.

This will be the first of so many things that you will do to keep them safe. Make sure you have the opportunity to build that list. If possible, lean on your spouse, your partner, your parents, siblings, or friends to help get you through the first few months of your baby's life. This is the right time for ask for help.

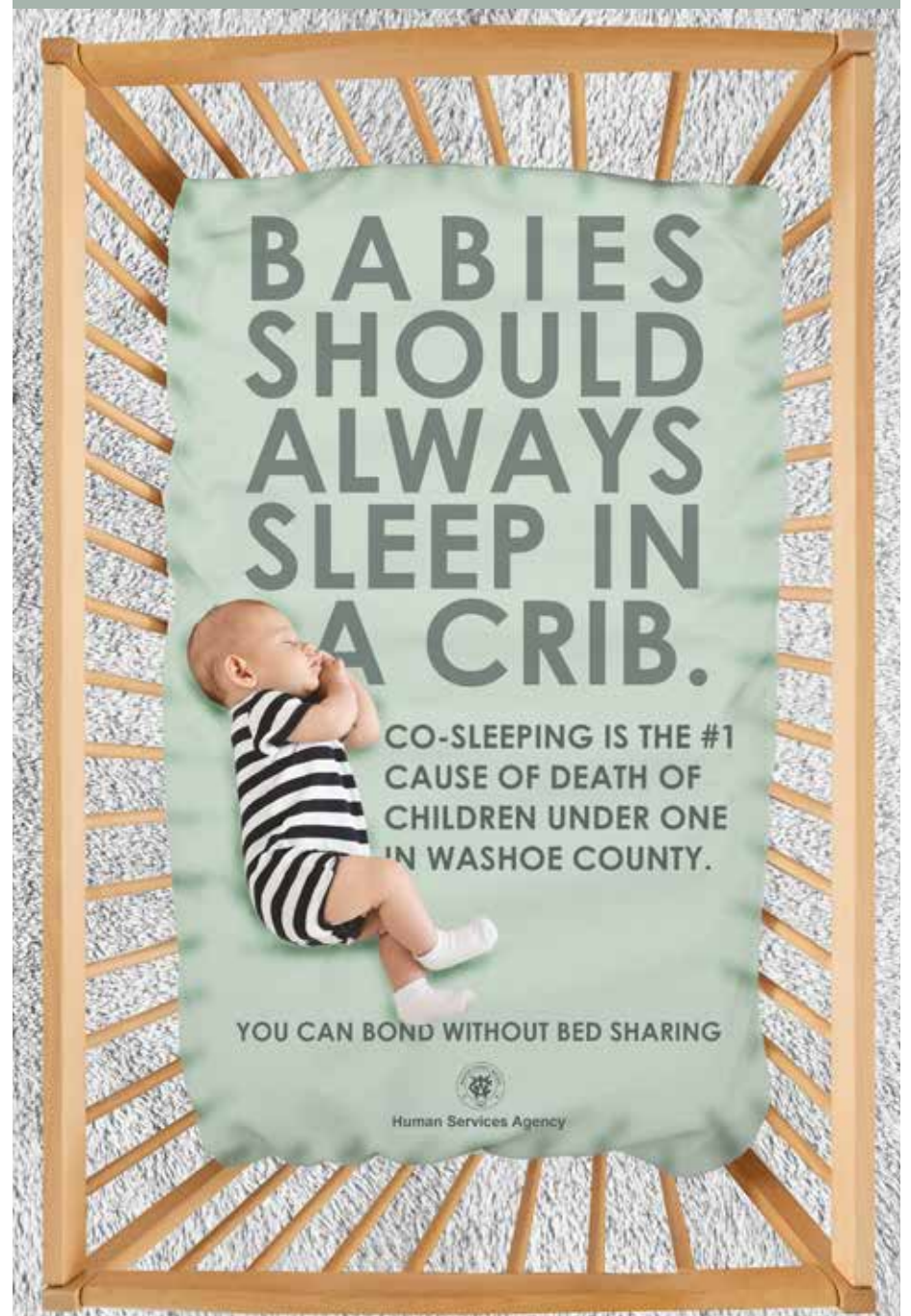
A couple more tips: sharing a room with your baby decreases the rate of SIDS, but your baby must have their own safe sleep space – a crib or bassinet. Babies can get caught in couches and armchairs – these are not safe spaces for them. If you do bring the baby into bed with you for a feeding, set an alarm or have

someone check on you to make sure that you have moved baby back to their safe space. Even though they are cute, get rid of the crib bumpers. They have not been proven to decrease crib injury and your child can get stuck against them. Pacifiers have been shown to decrease the rate of SIDS, but for breastfed babies, should not be introduced for the first three or four weeks while they master feedings. The pacifier should not be forced and should not be secured in any way or by any strings to the baby's mouth or clothes. If it falls out, don't replace it.

Kristina Deeter, M.D., MBA, FAAP is Vice Chair of Pediatrics at University of Nevada School of Medicine and Associate Physician-in-Chief at Renown Children's Hospital. The board-certified pediatric intensivist graduated from University of California, Berkeley, and New York Medical College. Her residency in Pediatrics and Pediatric Critical Care took her to the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES

Resources available for new moms to learn about Safe Sleep practices include your pediatrician, family practice doctor or nurse practitioner, Washoe County health, the NIH Safe to Sleep campaign, and the CDC.



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Travel Switzerland by train

By Alexis Tillman

When you picture Switzerland in your mind, the first things you might think about are its beautiful mountains; specifically skiing the Swiss Alps. Maybe you envision a crystal-clear lake - Switzerland has over 7,000 of them. You probably don't image palm trees... right? Well, you might be surprised to find out that for a country with no coastline or tropical climate, Switzerland has several microclimates as a result of its diverse geography. Tropical plants are most commonly seen in the southern canton of Ticino where there are actually so many of them, they are now classified as a native species according to swissinfo.ch, the international unit of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation.

If you want to be able to explore the different regions of Switzerland, and possibly see some Swiss palm trees, one of the best ways to get around is by train. The Swiss rail system is known around the world for being incredibly efficient and one of the most heavily trafficked rail systems in Europe. The country's train routes are also some of the most scenic in the world making the journey an unforgettable experience.

The ride is an activity in itself as you venture from destination to destination exploring all the country has to offer. Here are a few routes that you definitely won't want to miss:

The journey to Jungfrauoch via the Jungfrau Railway takes you up to the

highest station in Europe; at an elevation of 3,454 meters above sea level, you'll experience amazing views. A popular observatory at the peak is worth a stop along with plenty of mountain activities in both the summer and winter.

The Glacier Express travels between world-renown ski resorts Zermatt and St. Moritz and makes many stops in between. The last stretch of the journey passes through the Domleschg valley which is known for its spectacular ruins and castles. During this stretch, you also venture towards the Landwasser viaduct on the way to Filisur. Afterwards, several spiral loops bring you to a higher elevation and the entrance of the Albula tunnel, one of the highest tunnels in the Alps.

Unlike other train routes, the GoldenPass is not one train. It's a very scenic route serviced by special trains and there are stretches which require transferring. The stretch between Zweisimmen and Montreux offers two train choices based on the experience you would like to have. The Belle Epoque train has a historical feel with its old-timey, sophisticated atmosphere. The panoramic trains offer an opposite, modern experience with windows that make you feel immersed in your surroundings. The GoldenPass is beautiful during all seasons with snow covered mountains in the winter and beautiful lakes and greenery in the spring and summer, but is best experienced on a

day with clear weather.

As you explore different regions, don't forget to indulge in some of the delicacies Switzerland is known for, including chocolate, cheese (raclette - yum!), and wine. For cheese and chocolate lovers there is a special train experience - the Chocolate Train. This train runs between Montreux and the Cailier-Nestlé chocolate factory. As part of the experience, you'll also go on an excursion to the cheese factory La Maison du Gruyère.

MacLean Adventures hosts an annual trip to Switzerland and we hope you'll join us as we venture beyond popular cities and adventure through San Moritz, Zermatt, Wengen, Montreux, Lausanne, and Geneva, to name a few. And, of course, we will travel



(Photo: A. Stutz
https://unsplash.com/photos/WFw303fx_dY)

The Bernina Express links the Swiss spa resort St. Moritz with Tirano in Italy and passes through spectacular scenery, including the Morteratsch Glacier.

by train, have amazing meals, and experience adventurous activities along the way so you can truly get a taste of Switzerland. More info at www.macleandventures.com.

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Pasta with fresh mushrooms and chicken broth



By Beth Carbone

This is presently my preferred pasta recipe. My husband Miguel developed this recipe last Fall, when our local supermarket started selling exotic mixes of fresh mushrooms. Now that it's Fall again, I love the packages of gourmet medleys that are offered at grocery stores, as well as the ability to choose from bins of the Chantarelle, Oyster, and Trumpet varieties that can be selected at some markets.

Have you ever had a pasta made in the same way that you prepare a risotto? This recipe uses the technique of cooking the pasta in chicken broth instead of in a pot of boiling water. By stirring the hot broth into the pasta as you cook, the pasta has a more intense flavor. As for the pasta, I suggest a short pasta shape, such as rigatoni or penne.

Ingredients

- 1 box of rigatoni or penne, which serves 4-5 people
- about 3 cups of fresh mushrooms, for example 1 box of Mycopia's "Chef Sampler" mushroom mix
- 6 ½ cups of chicken broth, preferably homemade (see my recipe)



- 3 cloves of garlic, smashed
- a handful of fresh Italian parsley, chopped finely
- 2-3 fresh red peppers (optional)
- 1 cup white wine
- 1/3 cup of a cup of freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano
- 2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Preparation

- Bring chicken broth to boil, lower heat and keep covered so it stays very hot and does not evaporate.

• Chop mushrooms, mince the parsley and hot peppers. Mix them all together on the cutting board.

• Pour olive oil in a 10 or 12 inches diameter pot (Le Creuset and similar brands are the best). Heat olive oil, add garlic cloves, and turn down the heat.

• As soon as the garlic is golden, remove it from the pan with a fork or slotted spoon. Add mushrooms/parsley/hot pepper mix, turn heat to medium/medium-high, and mix continuously for a minute. (If you have a professional cooktop, the heat should be medium-high; for an electric or non-professional cooktop, the heat should be set to high).

• Add the dry pasta and mix constantly for 2 minutes.

• Add white wine to the pan and mix well. It will incorporate/evaporate in about 1 minute.

• Start adding broth one "mestolo" (ladle) at the time until it's ready—it usually takes about 20 minutes from the time you start adding the broth. Don't mix it too much – stir it about every minute or two, just enough so it doesn't stick to the pan.

• When ready—taste it to know if it is ready—add 1/3 cup of a cup of freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano, salt to taste and enjoy.

• Serve immediately—and buon appetito!

For more recipes, see www.michelecarbhone.org/blog/

Bring nature's happy colors inside this winter

By David Ruf

Winter in Northern Nevada has its benefits. Sunny days allow you to be outside six out of seven days a week. Without much snow or rain, it is easy to stay dry and comfortable, often without a heavy jacket, enjoying the beautiful view of the Sierras when the snow piles up and beckons the snow bunnies to come out and play. On the downside, we have a rather dull palate of colors in the valley: browns and greys are the most prevalent. Let's say we add color and fragrance to the inside of our homes and chase away the winter doldrums.

Everybody I know loves amaryllis. This large to giant-sized bulb comes from South Africa or from Europe. They are very similar in most ways with the exception that the South African type blooms earlier, sometimes without a pot or soil. These will bloom by Christmas if planted before Thanksgiving. The Dutch varieties, as they are called, will take longer to get the flower stalk moving – usually two months from planting; they bloom in February or March. Having both types will give you months of enjoyment, so pick a color or two that calls to you and a pretty pot.

Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving or Valentine's cactus are another easy-to-grow delight. A myriad of colors in different seasons makes this succulent-type houseplant a gift that can last for years. And they can often be passed down for generations. Reds, white, pinks, purple, and yellows with

combinations are sure to please. Low water requirements and average light will excite most generation X, Y, Z and beyond. Include yourself and be hip and trendy.

Some individuals enjoy heady fragrances that you can smell coming and going. Some paperwhites are like that and some others go lighter on the abundance. 'Ziva' is the diva of fragrance while Sacred Lily is light and delicate. Paperwhites are usually disposed of after they are finished blooming.

Are you patient? If so, then try hyacinths. Perhaps the best in delightful aroma, they usually need six weeks of resting in the crisper drawer in the fridge before they can be brought out and successfully grown. Buy six to nine bulbs and plant them in pots in groups of three. Pull a few out of the drawer every other week so you are continuously enveloped in their sensory delight to both the eyes and the nose. While they also are usually disposed of when done blooming, you can try planting them in your flower bed for blooms the next year's Spring season. Patience!

These winter four will be sure to appease you until those wonderful February blooming hellebores, commonly called Lenten rose, start popping up outside for a winter delight, blooming over a six-week period. Until then, find some happiness with one of these colorful stalwarts of winter cheer and give some to a friend, loved one, or a neighbor.

David Ruf is the owner and manager

of Greenhouse Garden Center. Subscribe to the Greenhouse Garden Center's monthly email newsletter which has current To-Do gardening tips. You can

sign up on www.greenhousegardencenters.com, by calling (775) 882-8600 or by visiting Greenhouse Garden Center at 2450 S Curry Street in Carson City.

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Extended Studies adds four Cannabis Education certificates

By Extended Studies staff

Extended Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno has partnered with Green Flower to offer four noncredit certificates in cannabis education. Each certificate program includes three, eight-week online courses. Programs cover the business of cannabis, agriculture and horticulture, law and policy, and healthcare and medicine.

“The University of Nevada, Reno is proud to partner with Green Flower to offer four, new online cannabis certificate programs,” said Jodi Herzik, interim vice provost for Extended Studies. “Nevada was the third state to approve cannabis for medical use with the adoption of the Nevada Medical Marijuana Act in 1998. We were once again trailblazers when Nevadans voted to legalize cannabis for adult recreational use in 2016.”

The expanding cannabis industry is creating a demand for qualified workers with a broad range of skills. According to Business Wire, cannabis is the fastest growing industry in America. Leafy 2021



Jobs Reports states that in 2021, legal cannabis supports 321,000 full-time jobs, growing faster than any other industry.

“With the legalization of medical and recreational cannabis in two-thirds of the country, the University of Nevada, Reno Extended Studies team naturally wants to ensure Nevada also is at the forefront of cannabis education,” Herzik said.

“Since 2016 when voters in Nevada voted for legal adult use cannabis and then-Governor

Sandoval signed the law into effect, the cannabis industry in the state has seen unprecedented growth and continues to show no signs of slowing down,” said Daniel Kalef, Green Flower’s vice president of Higher Education. “Such growth has created a large and growing job market, and a tremendous opportunity for people in Nevada to find rewarding careers.”

Courses are designed using online learning best practices and are scheduled to accommodate working professionals. Students will develop a portfolio of case studies and projects that can be used to demonstrate sector-specific cannabis knowledge. Upon successful completion of the program, students will earn a certificate of completion from the University of Nevada, Reno.

There are six program start dates a year with the next cohort starting Jan. 10, 2022. The cost is \$2,950 per certificate, with discounts offered to veterans. Payment plans are available. Find more information at cannabiseducation.unr.edu. Questions about the new online certificates can be emailed to cannabiseducation@lists.unr.edu.

Extra sleep unlocks academic performance, reduces accidents



By Kathryn Kelly

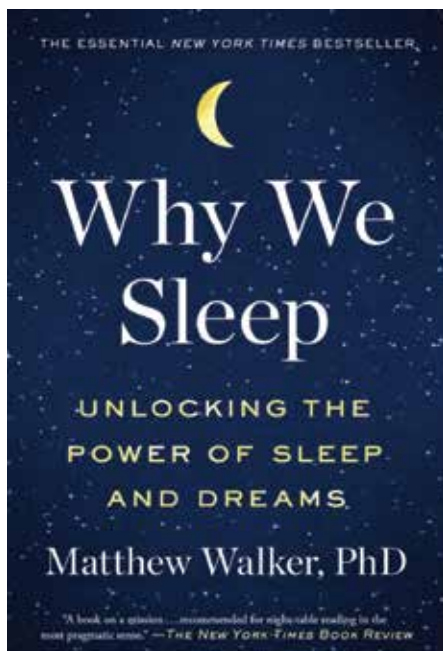
Want to help increase your teen’s SAT score, lower their risk of traffic accidents, and improve their intellect? Let them get

more sleep, says scientist Matthew Walker in his fascinating book *Why We Sleep*. Walker is Director of the University of California, Berkeley Sleep and Neuroimaging Lab.

Telling teens to go to bed earlier doesn’t work, he says, because teens’ circadian rhythms that dictate natural daily cycles of sleep and productivity are up to three full hours later than for adults. When teens wake up at 6.30am five days a week, they are functioning like adults would if they were forced to get up at 3.30am each day. It’s possible, but it’s not optimal.

A century ago, things were different. School started at 9am and kids got an average of two more hours of sleep than today. Scientists monitoring these changed sleeping patterns among twins have documented that longer sleep leads to “superior intellectual and educational abilities.”

That includes academic performance such as SAT scores. The same group of top-performing students in a Minnesota high school improved their SAT scores by 212 points, just by starting school an



“When sleep is abundant, minds flourish. When it is deficient, they don’t.”
Matthew Walker, *Why We Sleep*

hour later. Significant improvements in academic performance have been documented in many other schools since.

In addition to improved SAT scores and GPAs, schools have also documented increased class attendance, reduced behavioral problems, decreased substance and alcohol use, and dramatic - 60-70% - reductions in traffic accidents by moving school start time by as little as 30 minutes. Walker also points out that a later start time means school is out later, and which reduces the well-documented “danger window” from 3-6 pm when kids are out but parents are not home yet.

Intriguingly, Walker documents the overlap in symptoms between

ADHD and sleep deficiency, estimating that an estimated 50% of students diagnosed with ADHD actually have a sleep disorder.

One of the few silver linings of the COVID era is that many teens have been able to get extra needed sleep. As we start to get back to new school calendars, perhaps school boards can

benefit from positive experience in schools elsewhere and consider later starting times.

Kathryn Kelly, DrPH MEd, is Executive Director of I-School, an accredited, private K-12 school located in Carson City that starts its school day at 9am. She may be reached at kkelly@ischools.us.

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Sierra Nevada Journeys celebrates new permanent home for STEM education



By Lisa Blauth

Kids from diverse backgrounds have been creating life-long memories through overnight summer camps at Grizzly Creek Ranch. While traditional camp activities like kayaking, archery or scaling heights on the high-ropes course are camp favorites, they also have had opportunities to explore the natural world around them in a safe and fun setting.

The beautiful, 515-acre Grizzly Creek Ranch is located 50 minutes north of Reno in Portola, California, and now the permanent home for Sierra Nevada Journeys. Sierra Nevada Journeys recently celebrated the completion of a capital campaign and purchased Grizzly Creek Ranch – where they have been hosting camps and outdoor school for more than a decade – raising \$5.57 million with the support of 56 dedicated donors.

“Students are taught less than three hours a week of science on average at the elementary school level,” says CEO of Sierra Nevada Journeys Eaton Dunkelberger. “They’re also spending 15 times more on screens, phones, computers, tablets, than the time spent in the



Reno fifth graders become engineers and work together to build a geodesic dome at Overnight Outdoor Learning with Sierra Nevada Journeys in Portola, CA.

outdoors. And that figure only increased this past year due to distance learning.”

For the past 13 years, Sierra Nevada Journeys, an outdoor, science education nonprofit, has helped more than 200,000 youth immerse themselves in nature through science to fuel their own unique connections and discoveries. Most importantly, many of the students who participate in Sierra Nevada Journeys’ programs come from underrepresented communities across

Northern Nevada and California. Two-thirds of the children who participate in our programs are from low-income households, 63 percent are students of color, and 14 percent are individuals living with a disability.

“Programs like ours where fifth and sixth grade students attend overnight outdoor learning during three-to-five days at Grizzly Creek Ranch, give them an edge not only academically, but also on building their confidence, creating collaboration among peers, and developing leadership skills,” he says.

“Being away at camp and from distractions, a higher level of learning can be achieved. The students work their way through our social-emotional learning program on the challenge course along with our science curriculum, which is based on Next Generation Science Standards. Grizzly Creek Ranch has a unique ecosystem creating the ideal setting for using the outdoors as the classroom,” Dunkelberger says.

Lisa Blauth is the marketing director with Sierra Nevada Journeys and professional juggler of life. When she's not helping organizations share their stories, you'll find her walking the dog on the ditch trail, hitching up the trailer to go camping, remodeling her beloved money pit in the Old Southwest, or parenting a teenager. To learn more about Sierra Nevada Journeys or its programs, visit sierranevadajourneys.org.

Gifts that keep on giving

By Maren Schmidt

Do you ever worry about selecting the right gift for the special people in your life? Let's take a few minutes to consider gifts that are free, yet continue to give. Here are some gifts we can give

our children, and anyone we care about, that can only come from the heart.

The Present of Listening.

How do we really listen to those around us? Do we turn off our cell phones, the television, and the

computer? Do we give our complete attention to the person talking to us? Are we thinking in terms of the other person's interests, dreams, and disappointments? Can we refrain from judging the other person? Do we ask questions to help us understand? Do we stop ourselves from telling a story about what happened to us? Do we sincerely try to understand the other person's point of view? When we can, that's the present of listening.

The Present of Good Humor.

Laugh, and the world laughs with you. Clip the comics. Learn to share a joke or two. Tell a few funny stories on yourself. Smile to light up a room. Spread laughter because laughter is the theme of a heavenly chorus.

The Present of Tenderness.

It is with small actions that we are remembered. The touch of tenderness comes from the heart and can express what perhaps a thousand words cannot. A hug, a kiss, a pat on the back, a touch of the hand. A cup of coffee. Cookies and milk. These tiny gestures show the love we have for family and friends.

The Present of Appreciation.

Being able to offer sincere gratitude is a gift. Give a compliment to someone for the work they have done. A few words such as what a great meal, thanks for setting the table, I appreciate your kindness, can brighten anyone's day.

The Present of Sharing.

Do something that lets others know that you are thinking of them. Growing up, my mom would ask me if I would like to split a stick of chewing gum with her. To me, that simple

gesture of offering to share a stick of gum communicated a lot of love and thoughtfulness.

The Present of a Handwritten Note.

In today's world of e-mails, texts and more, the handwritten note becomes deeply personal. Your handwriting reflects your personality and sends a non-verbal message that is difficult to duplicate. Seeing my dad's handwritten notes in the books he left me is a gift that continues to give every time I read his script or doodles.

The Present of Being Alone.

As much as we like to be with other people, at times being by ourselves is a wonderful gift, a true care package. Be aware that an incredible gift for family and friends might simply be to let them have some time alone to rest and rejuvenate. Time alone helps us recharge and refill our love buckets.

The Present of a Positive Attitude.

There's enough doom and gloom in the world. We don't need to bring a rain cloud to the party. Help those around you see the beautiful, the hopeful and the wonderful in the world around them.

These acts become the jewels that shine throughout our lives, held in the velvet boxes of our memories. Our loving presence is our priceless present.

Maren Schmidt has over thirty years of experience working with children, and their families, as a parent, Montessori teacher, Girl Scout leader, Sunday School teacher, Montessori school owner and administrator, parenting coach and workshop leader. This blog post was published with her permission. Sign up for her newsletter at www.marenschmidt.com.

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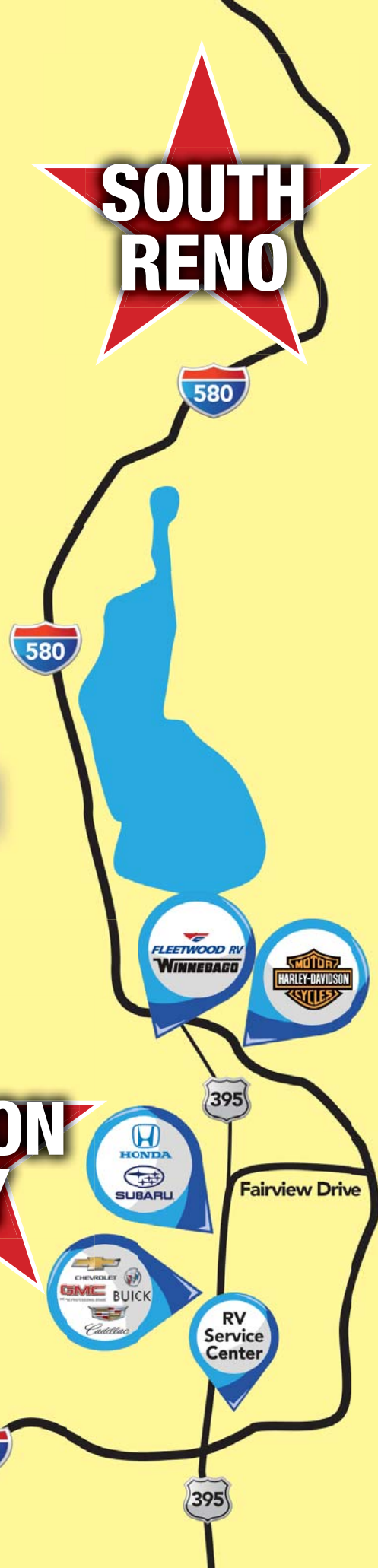
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