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According to new research, summer is the best time to enjoy life's simple pleasures

And Lake Berryessa is one of the best places to do so!

Floating in Lake Berryessa with your family and friends, walking on the beach, sitting in a pool with a swim-up bar – it's no surprise nearly three in five Americans say summer is the best season to enjoy.

A study asked 2,000 Americans about life's simple pleasures and found that 27% appreciate the little things better during the summertime such as barbecues (42%), relaxing (39%) and enjoying fresh air (38%). More than half (58%) of respondents agree this time of year is the best season to enjoy life's simple pleasures. Favorite seasonal experiences include going to the beach (38%) and having more sunlight throughout the day (37%).

The survey revealed just how important the role of food and drinks are for people to enjoy summer moments. Respondents answered that some food and drinks in the summertime bring them joy

because it reminds them of their childhood, it brings them comfort or because they simply love food.

While respondents' love for food is timeless, their preferences don't always stay the same – at least not for six in 10 (62%) of respondents who have noticed drastic differences in what they like to eat. However, some food favorites just can't be beat; the top foods people can't live without are pizza (43%), French fries (38%) and ice cream (37%). Twenty-two percent agreed the sound of the ice cream truck still sends them running.

Simple Pleasures That Bring People Joy

- Listening to music (59%)
- Watching a good TV show/movie (50%)
- Eating my favorite food (52%)
- Laughing at jokes (48%)
- Getting a good night's sleep (49%)
- Making someone smile (48%)
- Getting good news (48%)
- Holding hands with someone I love (42%)
- A breath of fresh air (41%)
- The smell/sound of rain (41%)

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The Lake Berryessa News

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August 2023

Summer at Lake Berryessa: Good Clean Fun In Good Clean Water

Last week I celebrated my 79th birthday with a patio boat ride on beautiful Lake Berryessa with a couple of my "kids" - youngest is 39!

I enjoyed one of my all-time favorite recreational activities - floating in a life jacket in 83 degree water attached by a long rope to the patio boat drinking a margarita in a cold cup and talking to family and friends with our dog swimming with us in his own life vest. Our dog, Koda, has been gone to doggie heaven for several years, but he's still out there with me in spirit.

The water was flat, the air was at 95 degrees, and there was a light breeze. Another day in paradise as Evan (who actually turns 40! in August) always says. I looked down at my feet and wiggled my toes in the light green water - "toe-depth viz".

As a long-time scuba diver, I'm more used to clear 80 foot visibility ocean water at 50 to 100 feet down. That's a short way to point out that you really don't want to scuba dive in Lake Berryessa. But "toe depth viz" is fine here since it indicates water-borne life is plentiful. A basic ecological principle states, "A clear lake is a dead lake."

Biological productivity is often defined as the percentage of sunlight (the primary source of life) that falls on the earth that is turned into biomass. For example, the biological productivity of a forest is only about 8%. The rest of that immense energy is "wasted" as heat.

My "toe-depth viz" observation reminded me of my 25 year crusade to keep Napa County and the Bureau of Reclamation from destroying family recreation at the lake for a generation. Part of "The Big Lie" documented in my

book "Policy and Politics Betray the People: The Lake Berryessa Saga: 1958 - 2020" was an attack on Lake Berryessa's water quality.

The Big Lie: "The Lake Berryessa resorts, especially the mobile homes in the resorts, discouraged the general public from accessing the lake, prevented the public from using the best parts of the shoreline, and also polluted the lake." No matter how hard we fought back with facts and data, the proponents of demolishing the resorts simply kept lying.

Many of you may still remember the mean-spirited people who always found the truth too confining and embodied the cliché, "You know they are lying because their lips are moving." You can read these environmental exclusionists' letters to the Napa Register in my book. There are simply some folks who don't like to see other people have fun. I was outraged then and am still deeply saddened every time I look at the barren shoreline of Lake Berryessa.

Unfortunately, during the controversial Bureau of Reclamation Visitor Services Plan process, which led to the present multi-year shutdown of Lake Berryessa, it appears that some folks consciously tried to promote the concept that the resorts had polluted the lake.

They were so successful, with the help of local exclusionist environmental groups, local media, and others that people would call the Bureau of Reclamation headquarters at Lake Berryessa and ask if it were safe for their children to swim in the lake!

So, what was, and still is, the true story of water quality at Lake Berryessa?

Lake Berryessa supplies water to

Benicia, Fairfield, Vacaville, Vallejo, Rio Vista, Suisun City, and Travis Air Force Base. The United States Bureau of Reclamation is the owner of the Solano Project which includes Lake Berryessa, Monticello Dam, Lake Solano, Putah Diversion Dam, Putah South Canal, and Terminal Reservoir.

The Solano Project was built and funded by Reclamation (federal government), but the original loan has been fully paid off by the Solano County Water Agency (SCWA, www.scwa2.com/).

The Solano Project is a locally managed project, but Reclamation has the ultimate oversight responsibility, and conducts periodic inspections of all the facilities. SCWA holds the master contract with Reclamation for the operation of the Project. SCWA then contracts the Solano Irrigation District (SID, www.sidwater.org/) to assist with the daily operations.

Lake Berryessa has always been, and is still now, one of the cleanest lakes in California. There has never been any significant measurable "pollution" of lake water. Water Quality at Lake Berryessa has always been good.

From a 2001 Sanitary Survey, "Generally speaking, untreated (raw) Lake Berryessa water meets primary and secondary public health drinking water standards (F. Morris, Lake Berryessa/Solano Project Watershed Sanitary Survey 2001 Update)." Translation: If you swallow Lake Berryessa water while your swimming or boating, you won't get sick.

The City of Fairfield released its 2022 Consumer Confidence Report, detailing the quality of tap water. Fairfield's drinking water is sourced from Lake

Berryessa and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Based on a series of tests, the quality of Fairfield's drinking water exceeds almost all industry standards.

(Continued on Page 2)

Napa County Opens Monticello Shores Recreation Area For Bid!

Napa County Executive Office is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) in order to identify a potential concessionaire for Monticello Shores, a developable resort site at Lake Berryessa.

The full RFP is available at:

<https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/resources/Monticello-Shores-RFP-080123.pdf>

Proposed 2023 Schedule (Pacific Time)

- August 1: RFP Released
- August 16: Site Visit
- August 21: Questions due by 5:00 PM
- August 24: Responses to Questions
- September 8: RFP Submittals Due by 12:00 PM (Pacific)
- September 22: Concessionaire Selection
- October 10: County and USBR Approval of Concession Award

Monticello Shores Recreation Area (previously Rancho Monticello Resort) is a self-contained and prime waterfront property on the west side of the Lake. The concession site contains 2.8 miles of shoreline and nearly 150 total acres.

The Bureau of Reclamation has completed a detailed, but preliminary, development plan for the concession area. Environmental assessment has been completed to a "60 percent design". The required environmental impact plans may be accelerated.

The water quality has always been closely monitored by Solano County water users and found to meet the highest standards. That's one reason Budweiser chose their brewing plant in Fairfield. Anheuser Busch – Fairfield Brewery wrote a letter during that period supporting their long-standing scientific analysis that Lake Berryessa water was pure - contradicting the pollution story. For those reader interested in the raw data, I've posted the 2022 Fairfield Water Quality report on the Lkaè Berryessa website at:

<https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/resources/References-PDFs/Fairfield-Water-Quality-Report.pdf>

Scientific data from other sources, including local water agencies and the Lake Berryessa Watershed Partnership also corroborated this assessment. There has never been any documented evidence – ever – that Lake Berryessa water purity has been compromised, not by the resorts, human visitors, east side cattle ranches, or the thousands of animals roving the Lake Berryessa watershed.

I recently attended a meeting of all the Solano County water quality managers who again confirmed the fact that Lake Berryessa water meets all drinking water quality standards. There had been an alert after the Markley Cove fire last year when 23 boats and jet skis burned and sank, releasing gasoline and oil into Markley Cove. Measuring stations downstream of Monticello Dam sampled the water from the lake for several months during which no contamination from the fire were found in the water.

One reason is the old saying, "The solution to pollution is dilution." Another is the fact that most components of gasoline and motor oil are "volatile organic compounds" which means those components evaporate into the air and do not dissolve into the water. That' why the rainbow oil slick you see if you spill a little gas in the water soon evaporates into the air.

Much good work has been done to protect the lake water quality over the decades by various organizations such as the Lake Berryessa Watershed Partnership (LBWP) of which the Lake Berryessa News has been a member and supporter. They originally focused on preventing oil and gasoline spills from the thousands of boats using the lake. Recently they have transitioned to the Lake Berryessa Boater Outreach (LBBO) Program responsible for preventing the introduction of invasive mussels into the lake as well as continuing their educational efforts to prevent oil and gasoline contamination. Visitors may have seen the interns inspecting boats at the various launch ramps, including their Bilgee the Bilge Pad mascot.

Here's an excerpt from a recent LBBO report:

"The 4th of July weekend was just as hot as it was busy. Both the weather and our inspectors were on fire with temperatures exceeding 105°F and a total of 1,631 inspections! So far it has been a busy boating season with the lake being nearly full and our inspection team had already surpassed the total number of boats inspected in all of 2022.

One boat decontamination was scheduled and performed on 6/27/2023 by a boat owner who had recently purchased their boat in Arizona and used it in a Southern California lake that is infested with quagga mussels. We sincerely want to thank all boat owners in the area who are proactive about keeping Lake Berryessa mussel free and reach out to us ahead of time to schedule decontaminations!"

2023 Lake Berryessa Boater Outreach Program

Summary: 7/29-7/30 (Weekly & Season Totals)

# of Boater Surveys:	54	449
# of Recreator Surveys:	0	44
# of People Educated	119	1179
# of Bilge Pads Installed	15	111

Property Tax Rolls Increase: Good News For Napa County, Not So Much For People Paying Those High Property Taxes

Napa County Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk John Tuteur presented an assessment roll of \$52.8 Billion for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to Auditor Controller Tracy Schulze based on the value of all local property as of January 1, 2023. The roll grew by \$3.98 Billion (8.16 percent).

“The \$3.98 Billion record assessment roll increase for the second year in a row is greater than the assessed value of all local property in Napa County just 38 years ago in 1985,” Tuteur commented. “Our local assessment roll is the fourth highest per capita assessed value of California’s counties with more than 10,000 population just behind San

Mateo, Marin, San Francisco and just ahead of Santa Clara.“

All of the municipalities showed an increase in their assessed value: American Canyon 11.02 percent, Calistoga 3.94 percent, the City of Napa 7.66 percent, Saint Helena 6.60 percent and Yountville 6.23 percent.

Approximately \$1 Billion of the \$3.98 Billion increase (25 percent) comes from the Proposition 13 required 2 percent inflationary adjustment which applies to those properties that did not change ownership, had no new construction and were not in a decline in value status. Non-residential new construction added \$126.1 million (3 percent). The balance of the 8.16 percent increase comes from changes of ownership of properties with older Proposition 13 base year values and residential new construction.

“In spite of rising interest rates Napa County’s real estate market remained strong with a number of major winery and industrial transactions and healthy new construction,” Tuteur added.

1,120 properties have values lower than their Proposition 13 factored base year values - the lowest number of decline in value properties since the Great Recession of 2007.

For those of you who don't like it too hot, here's a reminder of Lake Berryessa on February 24, 2023 - a short five months ago!



Artificial Intelligence, Lake Berryessa, Ukraine, Fashion, and Adventure: Everything is Connected

by Peter Kilkus

My sons, Chris and Evan, and I have been fortunate to travel extensively internationally, mostly scuba diving adventures. Chris, an internationally recognized fashion photographer and videographer, has outdone me and Evan in the last few years working in Mexico, the Middle East, Russia, Dubai, Portugal, Eastern Europe, Chernobyl and other exotic locations. When Covid hit, he was almost trapped in Cyprus, but was able to make it back to Ukraine before the world's borders were closed.

He and his Russian girlfriend continued to work out of an AirBNB in Kyiv (the world is more connected technologically than most Americans realize). His work allowed him to make connections with many influential Russian and Ukrainian businesspeople. He was warned by his friends to leave Ukraine the day before the Russian invasion. He and Maria made their way by train to beautiful Budapest Hungary which has been their main base, allowing them to work and travel throughout Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East for that last two years.

Maria can't go back to Russia because she is an outspoken anti-Putin opponent. There are many expatriate Russians in Eastern Europe. One sad thing about the Russian war against Ukraine is the power of Russian propaganda. When Maria and her other Russian friends call their relatives and friends inside Russia, the people they talk to simply do not believe anything they say about the war in Ukraine and the devastation the Russians are causing.

But Chris just started experimenting with AI (in Budapest) - Chat GPT to be precise. In his video production and fashion photography work he does a lot of writing too.

He recently wrote to me: "You should play around with the new ChatAI... I use it a lot now as an editor. If I can't figure out the best way to word something for a presentation, I will run the ideas through the AI to get some ideas. You can't always use exactly what it spits out, but it always will lead to better writing than what normal people can do on their own.

But the funny thing is that as you use it you realize how limited AI really is... it's not actually coming up with its own ideas, it's just regurgitating what it's vacuumed up from the web. You recognize how it constantly repeats the same ideas and phrasing in the style of writing on the web... like marketing speak, click bait, or programming and technical documents.

But the people that are freaked out because they think it's giving responses as if it's self-aware...that's hilarious because it's not original thought at all. The AI answers are just copy and pasted from what was already written and available on the internet about AI - and even science fiction. Although I guess if you think about it just in the terms of writing, it's

more an issue that humans are rather limited in their ideas....So I asked Chat AI what it thinks about what I wrote above and here is it's response:

"It seems like you have a good understanding of the benefits and limitations of AI as a writing tool. It is true that AI can be helpful in generating ideas and improving writing, but it has its limitations as it is not capable of coming up with completely original ideas. Instead, it relies on pre-existing information on the internet to generate responses.

It is important to recognize that while AI can be a useful tool, it should not be relied on completely. It is still necessary to use critical thinking and human judgment to evaluate and edit the output generated by AI. Overall, your message provides a balanced perspective on the use of AI in writing and highlights both its potential benefits and limitations."

So, I (Peter) downloaded the latest Chat GPT app and played around with it. Since I dislike the deadlines I have to meet in publishing the Lake Berryessa News, I fantasized about letting the AI write stories for me. The first thing I learned was that the AI is very limited in its knowledge, including about one of the premier news outlets in the world. I asked it to write a review of The Lake Berryessa News and it responded:

"As an AI language model, I don't have access to real-time data or specific publications past my knowledge cutoff date of September 2021. Therefore, I cannot provide a review of the Lake Berryessa News as it might exist after that date.

To find the most recent reviews and information about the Lake Berryessa News, I recommend checking online sources, local news websites, or community forums where residents might share their experiences and opinions about the publication. Additionally, you can explore social media platforms for insights from people who have interacted with the Lake Berryessa News recently. Always remember to consider multiple sources to get a well-rounded view of the publication's credibility and content quality."

Very disappointing result after eighteen years of publishing this premier news source - and no help in meeting my deadlines!

If you've been reading science fiction since childhood, as I have, you are familiar with the dozens of plots regarding artificial intelligence entities - robots and super computers - taking over the world and destroying humanity, the present hysteria in the international news about the threat of artificial intelligence will seem quite naive and amusing. The best review I've seen of the present state of AI and its possible future, was from John Oliver in a funny, but highly educational, episode of his television show, Last Week Tonight with John Oliver - Artificial Intelligence. (<https://www.ganjing.com/s/QEQolOnByW>) You should watch it if you want to know the real story of AI as it now exists.

Onion Headlines

- Poll Finds Majority Of Americans Would Prefer Tiny Little President Who Taps Dances On Podium
- Red Sox Trade Aging Fenway Park To Yankees For Several Highly Touted Blueprints
- Congress Warns Shrimp Imported From China Could Be Spying On Americans
- Financial Problems Force Ron DeSantis Campaign To Fire Wife
- Parents Group Demands School Acknowledge That They're Angry And Not Very Smart
- Family Attaches Few Pieces Of Ribbon To Grandma's Nose To Make Sure Air Coming Out
- Guy With Huge Head Not Even Smart
- Depressed Man Wishes Friends Would Check On Him So He Could Insist He's Fine
- Amazed Woman Sees Face Of Jesus On Crucifix
- Woman Figures It Easier To Just Get New One After Forgetting Boyfriend In Uber
- Bride Requiring All Bridesmaids To Get Matching Plastic Surgery For Wedding Day
- Man With No Friends Tells It Like It Is
- Loving Mother Only Wants Daughter To Be Different In Every Possible Way
- Senators Defend Having Dementia In Office
- Netflix Limits Users To One Eye Per Screen
- Congressman surprised that retired people's only source of income is pension
- Gay Baker Relieved He Can Finally Deny Service to Heterosexual Customers

August Horoscopes

Aries (3/21-4/19): Everything you are thinking about will end up getting lost in some sort of fuzzy logic.

Taurus (4/20 – 5/20): See how clever you can be today by attempting to count your lose change inside your pocket WITHOUT taking your hand or the money out.

Gemini (5/21 – 6/21): Shallow puddles may deceive you today.

Cancer (6/22-7/22): Day time television can motivate you to rethink the monotony of your life. You may decide to pep up your life by going on a short cookery course.

Leo (7/23-8/22): You may be feeling sporty today but don't spend all that money on new sports gear and equipment. You are likely to lose interest in this new found "passion" within 20 days.

Virgo (8/23-9/22): All the things you're unsure of will almost certainly remain enigmatic by the end of the day.

Libra (9/23-10/22): Thinking and driving at the same time can be hazardous for you today.

Scorpio (10/23-11/21): Today is going to be like most days, certainly in terms of its length and the frequency of sun-rises to sun-sets.

Sagittarius (11/22-12/21): Login to every site you can and you'll soon understand what the meaning of the internet is.

Capricorn (12/22-1/19): Your appetites may increase today as the doctors finally remove the scissors they left inside you during your last operation.

Aquarius (1/20-2/18): his week is going to be a series of ups and downs. Mostly downs, but also mostly ups. You are not registered to view this horoscope, and yet you still are. Perhaps this is your calling.

Pisces (2/19-3/20): Much of your body weight tends to be distributed in a specific place - but that may start shifting today

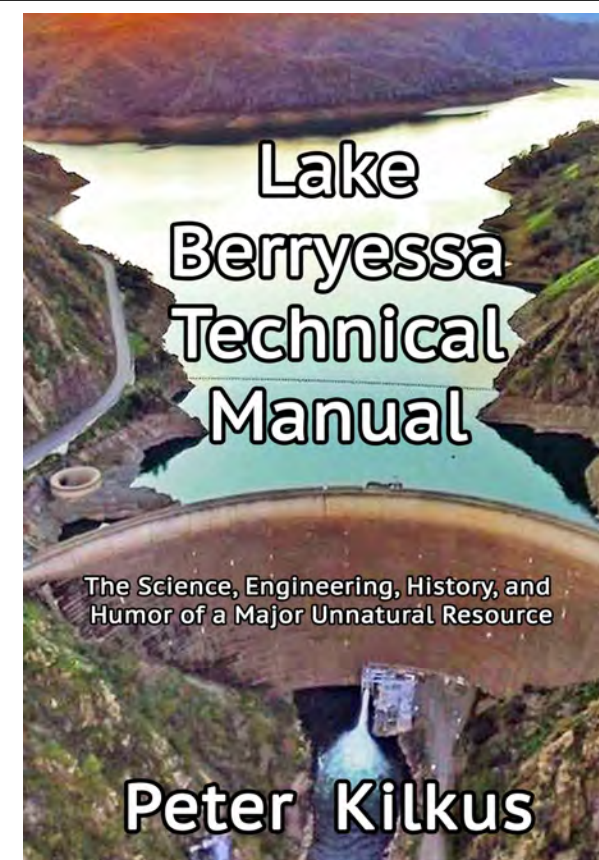
Lake Berryessa Technical Manual The Science, Engineering, History, and Humor of a Major Unnatural Resource

Almost everything you ever wanted to know about Lake Berryessa will now be available at your fingertips.

Available on Amazon

Lake Berryessa is almost a living creature. It breathes in and out, grows and shrinks. But it breathes water not air. It is always breathing in through rainfall and runoff - mostly during the winter season. And it is always breathing out all year through evaporation and outflows through Monticello Dam. Unnatural is when humans change the environment in ways that benefit them.

This technical manual is designed to answer questions people might have about the design and operation of the lake and its facilities. I constantly answer questions from readers about the lake. During the last twenty-five years that I've been at Lake Berryessa, I've had many questions myself. Hopefully, you will enjoy learning about the science and engineering details of Lake Berryessa in this manual, as well as some history and humor.



Policy and Politics Betray the People: The Lake Berryessa Saga: 1958 - 2020

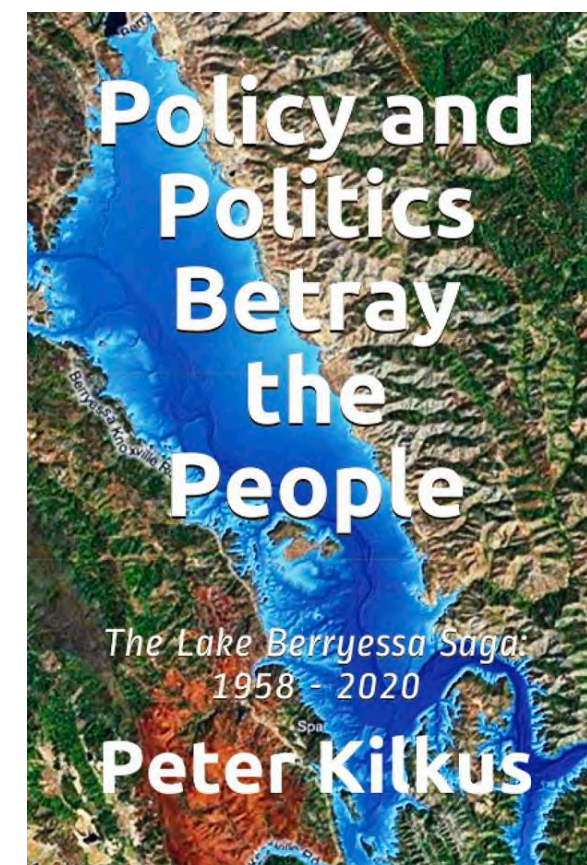
The Big Lie: "The Lake Berryessa resorts, especially the mobile homes in the resorts, discouraged the general public from accessing the lake, prevented the public from using the best parts of the shoreline, and also polluted the lake."

Available on Amazon

Having participated directly for more than twenty years as an advocate for the lake in the fiasco that was the Bureau of Reclamation's Visitor Services Plan, its farcical but tragic outcome, and the process of rebuilding, I have very strong views of the causes and results - supported by facts and data.

This book is a historical anthology, a raw, as-it-happened, unfiltered picture of what many of us lived through. The goal is to provide the history and the context within which such an incredibly destructive course of action took place.

It is dedicated to documenting this tragedy, this final betrayal of Lake Berryessa by the federal government - and, hopefully, the promised revitalization.



Local Print Journalism Disappearing Like Paper in a Bonfire

"Without The Lake Berryessa News there would be no Lake Berryessa News" is more true today than it was in 2005 when I first took over publishing it from Shirl Katleba. The Lake Berryessa News has been around in one form or another since the 1970s. You can download searchable PDF files of it from 2005 to the present at <https://www.lakeberryessanews.com/styled-2/>. That web page also includes some very old fun-to-read editions from the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

Most folks agree that local newspapers are the lifeblood of communities, capturing the stories and moments that define their identity. Their continued existence is vital, and their historic preservation allows people to navigate through time, uncovering the stories that shaped our communities and gaining new insights into its past.

Paul Franson, publisher of the comprehensive NapaLife newsletter and long-time friend of Lake Berryessa, has been following the recent trend of disappearing local news in Napa County.

"Recently, the Napa Valley Register switched over to printing a newspaper only three days a week and delivering it by mail, not carrier. The online e-edition looked pretty much like a modern newspaper with a new design with more space. And no local news. None. The closest was in the weather map, which probably is generated automatically somewhere.

The printed edition had an updated look and did have a reasonable amount of local news. They threw in two sections to "enhance" it, one "360," a national and international report and the other "Lively," with generic features. Nothing local in either section, of course.

The Santa Rosa Press Democrat announced a new Napa focus and had a number of Napa stories early in the week, but not too much since. It will take time to build it up, I'm sure.

Meanwhile, Napa Valley Features hit 1,200 subscribers, not all paid, but a surprising amount, and the North Bay Business Journal announced that NapaLife is joining Highway 29 Media, as did the Calistoga Tribune and Yountville Sun.

Readers can be assured of NapaLife continuing. I haven't missed a Monday issue in 18 years and want that to continue."

New to the Napa County journalism scene is Highway 29 Media Company (<https://highway29.com/>) which describes itself as a "new public benefit corporation committed to producing independent, public interest journalism for Napa Valley. Highway 29 is supported by the Media and Democracy Fund, which allows

community support for our work through the Napa Valley Community Foundation.

Highway 29's mission is to ensure that important sources of local news are not lost in Napa Valley. We believe that when local community newspapers disappear, the community suffers. Over the past two years, more than 360 newspapers have closed across the United States. When newspapers fold, the "news deserts" left behind have dire consequences. Your support is vital. Highway 29 is raising startup funds from local Napa Valley sources. We will depend on area businesses and residents for financing, advertising, contributions, memberships, and other support."

Another new local journalism entry is Napa Valley Features.

<https://www.napavalleyfeatures.com/>

"Napa Valley Features is a reader-supported publication. As a mission-based organization, our goal is not to maximize profit for some distant and often disinterested collection of non-local owners or investors. Instead, the entire structure of *Napa Valley Features* is focused on providing our subscribers the highest-quality local content that we can produce, while our "shareholders" are actually our contributors and, in a very real sense, also the entire community we serve.

We will have "customers," too, which include other publishers who are interested in purchasing our content. In fact, we are in discussions with a few such organizations to figure out how we might share our content with them in the future.

The entire plan surrounding *Napa Valley Features* is to become a reliable source for local Napa Valley news and information. We are not attempting to replace newspapers or directly compete with other local content providers. In fact, we see exciting operations like the newly launched [Highway 29 Publishing Co.](#), [Wine Down Media](#) and other efforts that seek to advance local content as valuable synergistic partners. And who knows, perhaps we will create a model to share with other communities that seek to save, reinvigorate or in some cases resurrect their local news source."

Although Napa Valley Features and Highway 29 Media's focus appears firmly on Napa Valley, perhaps they might do a few stories on one of the major recreational areas of Napa County, Lake Berryessa.

"I feel their pain", although a cliché, is true of The Lake Berryessa News too. But we do not have access to support from the Media and Democracy Fund and Napa Valley Community Foundation.

Due to the destruction of the Lake Berryessa recreational

community by the Bureau of Reclamation, the loss of most small businesses at the lake, and the major fires that brought disastrous losses of homes and businesses, the Lake Berryessa News has been able to continue publishing for the last several years only due to the generosity of our readers.

Their financial contributions to our "20 for 21", "20 for 22", and "20 for 23" donation programs have allowed us to continue publishing, including our print edition which many long-time readers prefer. We will once again promote a "20 for 24" campaign starting in December 2023 to help us survive another year. Here's a preview: "If you love Lake Berryessa and the Lake Berryessa News in all its forms and want to support the Lake Berryessa community as it is revitalized, please send a donation check of \$20 (or more if you feel so inclined) made out to Peter Kilkus (not the Lake Berryessa News) and mail it to Peter Kilkus, 1515 Headlands Drive, Napa, CA 94558. You can stick a crinkly old \$20 bill in an envelope with your information and send it to the same address. You can also use Venmo or Paypal if you wish. My account is under the name Peter Kilkus. You can email me at pkilkus@gmail.com."

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The Lake Berryessa News

www.LakeBerryessaNews.com

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4 **Napa County vs Wildfires**
Barry Eberling, Napa Register

Napa County is receiving plenty of advice on how to improve fire protection in its rural areas, though adding firefighters and turning other ideas into reality would cost millions of dollars. The county had a 295-page fire department master plan done by the consulting firm AP Triton. The company came up with 30 recommendations for the unincorporated areas outside of cities.

All of this landed before the Napa County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, with memories of the 2017 Atlas, Tubbs and Nuns fires and the 2020 Hennessey and Glass fires still seared into the local psyche. "What we don't have here — and that is not in the scope of the document — is how we should prioritize and allocate our scarce fiscal resources," Supervisor Anne Cottrell said. That is to come next. Board chair Belia Ramos broached the idea of forming a countywide fire district that could be funded by a dedicated parcel tax, something that would have to go to voters.

It's unclear precisely how much all of the recommendations might cost, since the study doesn't list a price estimate for most of them. Sometimes, the cost is staff time. The Napa County Fire Department serves the rural areas outside of the county's five cities, responding to wildfires, structure fires, disasters and medical emergencies. The county for decades has contracted with Cal Fire to run the department.

This coverage area includes world-famous Napa County wine country, as the study makes clear. It mentions the billions of dollars annually in revenue and employment that vineyards and the wine industry provide, making some of the stakes clear. The beginning of the study states its purpose — to keep the county fire department from lagging behind community growth and risks.

Add three engine companies — which would mean hiring 18 firefighters — at an annual estimated cost of \$2.3 million apiece, the study recommended. That would provide better fire protection and emergency response coverage for the entire county. "The challenge with adding engine companies is, where can they be housed?" said Kurt Latipow of AP Triton. The rural county has four fire stations with paid firefighters and 14 with volunteer firefighters. AP Triton questioned whether all of those stations are in the best locations.

Consider having Napa County Fire's medical response expand from basic to advanced life support, the study said. Respiratory, stroke and cardiac patients account for 20% of the medical service demand. Fire engines can sometimes reach patients more quickly than ambulances.

Napa County will continue to have Cal Fire run the county fire department at least until July 2025. On Tuesday, supervisors voted to renew the county's Cal Fire contract for two years at a cost of \$39 million. The new contract calls for more than the status quo. The present Cal Fire staffing includes two battalion chiefs, 41 fire personnel and 15 seasonal firefighters, a county report said.

Over two years, Napa County Fire under the Cal Fire contract will add a battalion chief, six full-time firefighters and five seasonal firefighters. The county had more than 200 firefighting volunteers in 2001. That had shrunk to fewer than 100 active volunteers in 2022. According to the volunteer fire chiefs, Napa's rural communities no longer retain the younger generation.

California Fire Insurance Resources

Getting fire insurance in California is nuts right now. A recent seminar was organized by the California Association of Realtors. The State Insurance Commissioner, Ricardo Lara, brought realtors up to date on the home insurance situation and reminded them that while some major insurance companies are pulling back in our state, there are more than 100 others to draw on. The state has published a resource page on their website to assist property owners acquire fire insurance.

California Department of Insurance

We are aware there has been an increase in nonrenewals and understand that residential insurance is getting harder to find in any area that insurers identify as having a higher than average risk of wildfire. While the Department of Insurance doesn't have the legal authority to tell insurers what level of risk they must write or where they must write insurance, we can monitor that they are consistent in their decisions and that their decisions are based on considerations of risk, not other biases. We are here to help you and have a number of tips to help you through this process:



- Wildfire Risk Assessments -
- Defensible Space/Forest Management -
- Home Hardening Upgrades -
- Water System Design & Install-

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-If you get a nonrenewal notice, contact your insurer and ask if there are any specific actions you could take to mitigate your risk and retain your coverage.

-If you think your nonrenewal was unfair, you may [file a complaint with us](#).

-Don't let these actions delay starting your search for a new insurer. Make sure you have done everything you can do at your property to mitigate fire risk then start shopping for coverage.

-In addition to contacting local agents or brokers in the vicinity of your home, you may wish to use our [Residential Insurance Company Contact List](#) that provides toll free numbers for over 50 insurers that are licensed to sell homeowners insurance. You can contact each of them to find the closest agent or broker or, in some cases, get a quote from them directly.

-If you need help from an agent that speaks a specific language, you can use our [Find an Agent or Broker](#) tool to find one near you.

-You can also utilize our [Homeowner Premium Comparison Tool](#) and [Homeowner Coverage Comparison Tool](#) to compare premiums and coverages.

-If your agent cannot help you find coverage with an insurer other than the FAIR Plan, you or your agent should contact other agents and brokers who represent other insurers. Our [Home Insurance Finder](#) tool can help you find other agents in your region or beyond and tells you which insurers they represent.

-Understand that the [California FAIR Plan](#) is available to every homeowner as a last option for coverage. The maximum limit written by the FAIR Plan on a residential property for all coverages combined is \$3,000,000. Because the coverage provided by a FAIR Plan policy is very limited, it is recommended that you supplement the FAIR Plan policy with a [Difference in Conditions](#) policy.

-If none of these options work for you, you may try obtaining coverage in the "surplus lines" market. Ask your agent or broker if they are able to obtain coverage with a surplus lines insurer or obtain coverage through a [surplus lines broker](#) (note, surplus lines insurers are not backed by the California Insurance Guarantee Association).

-If you prefer to speak live with our staff, you are always welcome to call the Department of Insurance toll free at 1-800-927-4357.

Lake Berryessa Statistics: August 3, 2023

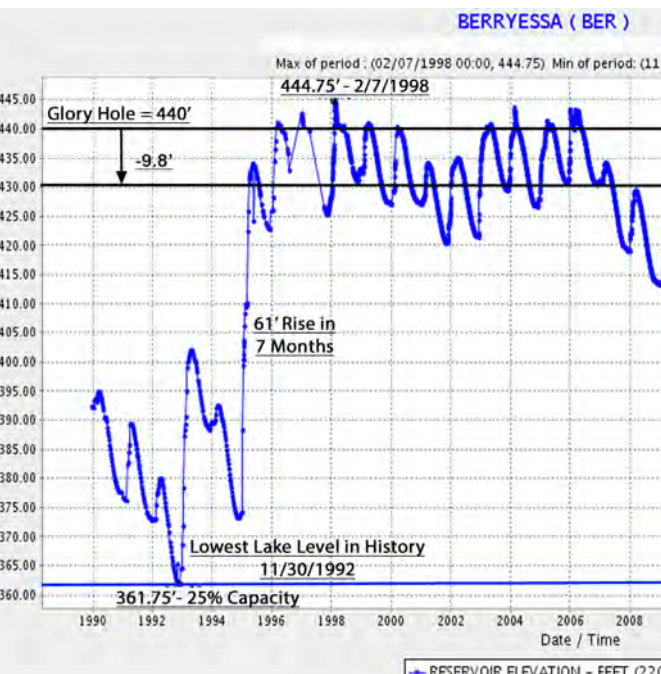
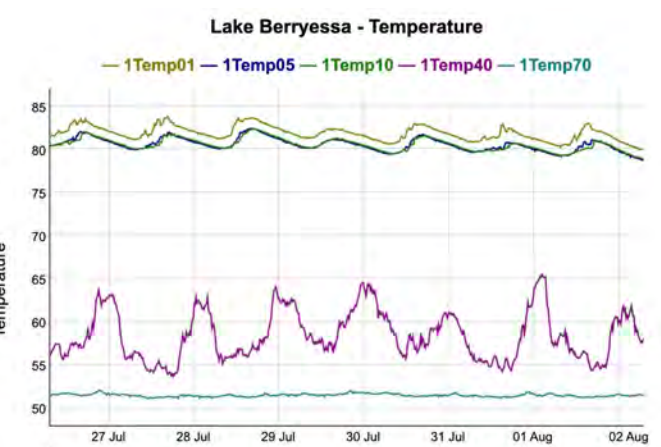
The lake level is down now to 426.5' - 13.5' below Glory Hole and dropping slowly at about 5 inches per week.

Last year at this time the lake was at 403.3', 36.7' below Glory Hole and we were all worried about the future rainfall.

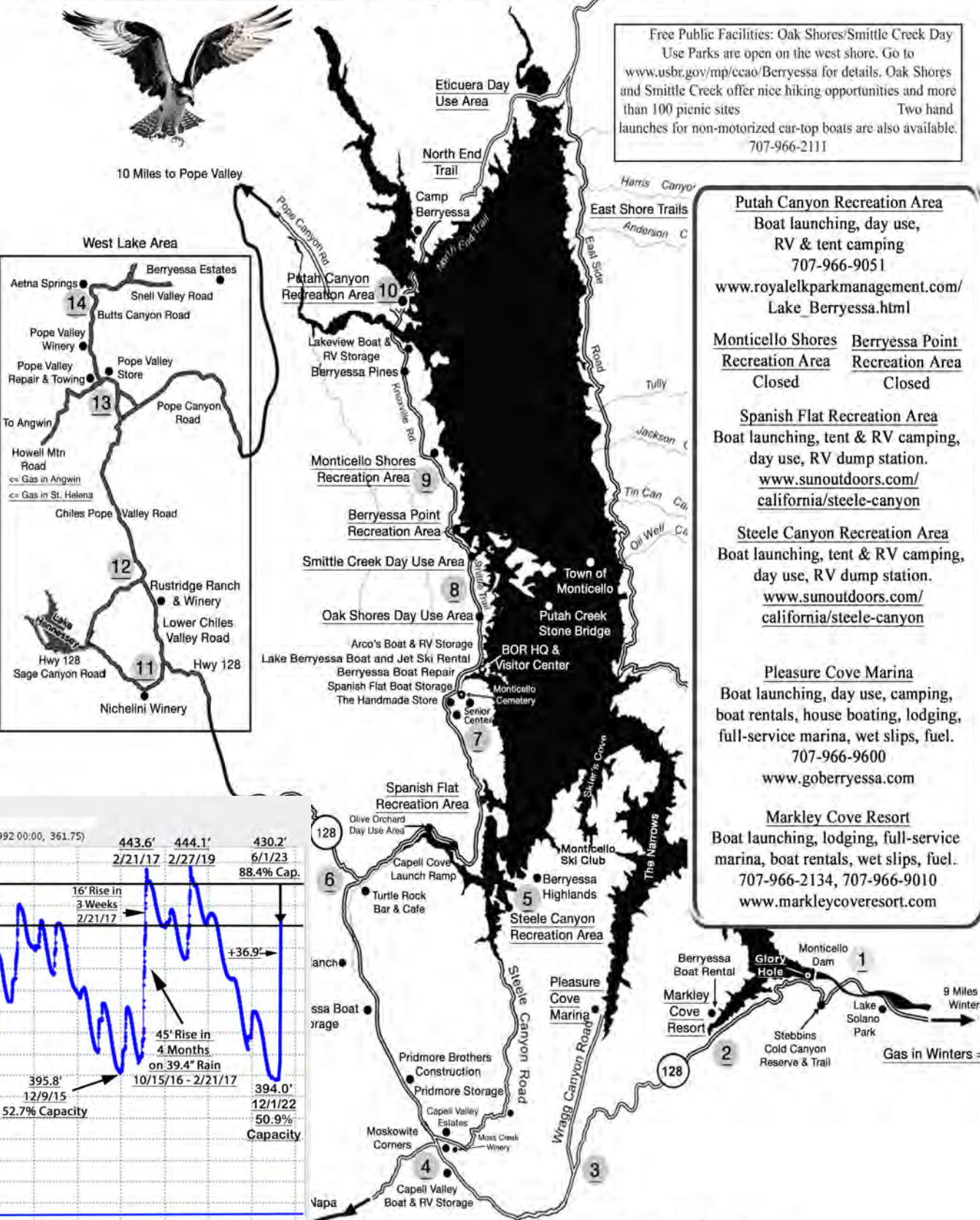
The dam output has risen from the minimum 45 cubic feet per second (90 Acre-Feet/day) required by law and contract to an average of 545 cfs (1,090 AF/day) driven by Solano County agricultural and drinking water requirements.

The Gamble Gauge has dropped to 1,305,895 Acre-Feet or 84.2% capacity.

Lake water temperature remain at about 83 degrees at the surface to 10 feet down and around 60 to 52 degrees from 40 feet to the bottom.



The Greater Lake Berryessa Region



Free Public Facilities: Oak Shores/Smittle Creek Day Use Parks are open on the west shore. Go to www.usbr.gov/mp/cao/Berryessa for details. Oak Shores and Smittle Creek offer nice hiking opportunities and more than 100 picnic sites. Two hand launches for non-motorized car-top boats are also available. 707-966-2111

Putah Canyon Recreation Area
Boat launching, day use, RV & tent camping
707-966-9051
www.royalelcparkmanagement.com/Lake_Berryessa.html

Monticello Shores Recreation Area Closed
Berryessa Point Recreation Area Closed

Spanish Flat Recreation Area
Boat launching, tent & RV camping, day use, RV dump station.
www.sunoutdoors.com/california/steele-canyon

Steele Canyon Recreation Area
Boat launching, tent & RV camping, day use, RV dump station.
www.sunoutdoors.com/california/steele-canyon

Pleasure Cove Marina
Boat launching, day use, camping, boat rentals, house boating, lodging, full-service marina, wet slips, fuel.
707-966-9600
www.goberryessa.com

Markley Cove Resort
Boat launching, lodging, full-service marina, boat rentals, wet slips, fuel.
707-966-2134, 707-966-9010
www.markleycoveresort.com

Note: No auto gas available between Winters and Napa or at Lake Berryessa!
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