

Journal #2645

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7.30.12

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Genetic entrepreneur to compete in Genomics X Prize By Helen Briggs BBC News

Genetic make-up contributes to longevity

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A race to unlock genetic clues behind living to 100 is set to begin next year, after a US team announced it will compete for the \$10m Genomics X Prize.

Genetic entrepreneur Dr Jonathan Rothberg is entering the challenge to identify genes linked to a long, healthy life.

His team - and any other contenders - will be given 30 days to work out the full DNA code of 100 centenarians at a cost of no more than \$1,000 per genome.

The race will start in September 2013.

Under the rules of the Archon Genomics X Prize, teams have until next May to register for the competition.

Dr Rothberg's team from Life Technologies Corporation in California is the first to formally enter the race.

Dr Jonathan Rothberg

- Pioneer of DNA sequencing
- His latest business venture, Ion Torrent, makes the Personal Genome Machine and the Ion Proton sequencer
- Rothberg claims his machines can sequence DNA more quickly and cheaply than ever thought possible
- The Ion Proton sequencer will be used for the challenge

Being able to sequence the full human genome at a cost of \$1,000 or less is regarded as a milestone in science.

It is seen as the threshold at which DNA sequencing technology becomes cheap enough to be used widely in medicine, helping in diagnosis and in matching drugs to a patient's genetic make-up.

“If they can do a human genome in two hours with one little machine, it's just stunning. We have come a long way.” Dr Craig Venter Genetic entrepreneur

One hundred people aged 100 have donated their DNA for the project.

Scientists believe people who reach a very old age may have certain rare changes in their genes which protect against common diseases of later life, such as heart disease and cancer.

If these genes can be identified by analysing the DNA codes of centenarians, it will help scientists search for new medical treatments and perhaps ways to prolong life.

However, many sample DNA sequences will be needed in order to get the accuracy needed to pinpoint changes on the scale of a few genetic letters among the three billion in the human genome.

Dr Craig Venter

- One of the scientists behind the effort to decode the first human genome sequence
- Venter and his team built the genome of a bacterium from scratch and put it into a cell to make a synthetic life form
- He has had his own DNA sequence decoded

Dr Jonathan Rothberg, a geneticist and entrepreneur, said the DNA of 100 centenarians is a good start towards finding "the fountains of youth".

He told BBC News: "One hundred people will give you a hint. One thousand will make you reasonably sure. Ten thousand will let you say, 'Hey, these are the genes involved in cancer or heart disease'".

Dr Craig Venter is the originator of the prize and one of the main players in the race to sequence the first human genome, which was completed in 2003.

He said he could never have imagined that genome sequencing would come this far in so little time.

He told the BBC: "I can't emphasise [enough] how impressed I am with the progress of technology and the dropping of the cost.

"If they can do a human genome in two hours with one little machine, it's just stunning. We have come a long way."

The X Prize Foundation offers awards for solutions to modern scientific challenges, from space to the human genome.

Any data gleaned from the X Prize will be shared with other scientists in the field, to aid the quest for insights into aging.

How to Protect Lake Tahoe (and Places Like It)

Kaid Benfield, Atlantic Cities

The United States is wonderfully blessed by having within (or adjoining) its borders some magnificent natural wonders, some of which are renowned international treasures. Places such as the Grand Canyon and Yosemite come to mind, as do Cape Cod, the Great Lakes, the Florida Everglades, Big Sur, the Oregon Coast, Lake Tahoe, Denali, the mountains, deserts, and open ranges of the Intermountain West, the volcanoes and beaches of Hawaii, and the Chesapeake Bay. There are many, many more such places, both large and small. Areas of incomparable beauty, these places harbor extraordinarily rich and valuable, but also fragile or abused, ecosystems.

Lake Tahoe hates beach butts (and it cannot lie)

By Emily Griffith, Lake Tahoe Bonanza

Breathe in. Fill your lungs with clean, crisp alpine air. Exhale and appreciate the pristine environment that provides such clean air. It's a beautiful day in Tahoe; paradise.

The bite is on; fishing for salmon off California Coast is best in years

Redwood Times redwoodtimes.com

If your fishing gear has been in the garage collecting dust, now's the time to pull it out because the salmon are here, and the bite is on. Anglers and sport fishing charters off the California coast are returning to the docks with full boats and happy customers as the strong ocean salmon bite continues, making 2012 one of the best salmon seasons in years.

U.S. farmers seen weathering 2012 drought better than in 1988

Christine Stebbins, Reuters

U.S. farmers face 2012 drought with strong balance sheets

* Farmers carry more insurance than during drought of 1988

* Dairy farmers under greatest stress as feed costs soars

U.S. crops are taking a beating in the worst drought since 1988 but most farmers are not sweating like they did 24 years ago when a drought hit as they were just starting to recover from a farm depression that brought down a big slice of the Midwestern economy.

Win-Win: How Farmers Benefit from the Drought [Bryan Walsh](#), Time Magazine

The drought of 2012 is etching its name deeper into the history books. According to a report by the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), more than 55% of the U.S. is in a state of moderate to extreme drought — the largest swath of the country that's been this dry since 1956. Only 31% of the nation's corn crop is currently rated good or excellent, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) — and that's lower than the 38% rated as poor or very poor. Fears of a shriveled harvest have helped push the price of corn to an all-time high of \$8.24 a bushel on the Chicago exchange. In the words of the NCDC report, "crops, pastures and rangeland have deteriorated at a rate rarely seen in the last 18 years."

Rare Burst of Melting Seen in Greenland's Ice Sheet
Kelly Slivka, New York Times

In a scant four days this month, the surface of [Greenland's](#) ice sheet melted to an extent not witnessed in 30 years of satellite observations, [NASA reported](#) on Tuesday.

NASA satellites spot sudden, unprecedented melting

<http://world.einnews.com/article/106834033>

HISTORY:nevada (HistoryNevada) on Twitter twitter.com/HistoryNevada

Ongoing history project for the Silver State. Wiki, articles and links. Politically neutral. For writing/project enquiries: info@historynevada.com.

LegiStorm users can now download lists of congressional staff contact information

LegiStorm is proud to introduce a powerful new tool for people to communicate with Congress. With the launch of our new [congressional contact list building and download](#) capability, subscribers and non-subscribers alike have the power to find the people in Congress they need based on any number of useful criteria.

Powered by LegiStorm's congressional staff database with industry-leading accuracy and timeliness, the list-building capability brings users an affordable new solution for finding just the right decision makers to reach out to in Congress.

Newcomers to the site without a LegiStorm Pro subscription can build and download [simple lists](#) based on staffing within an office or a state delegation or those who cover a specific role or legislative issue within an office. Users are [charged per downloaded contact](#).

Annual subscribers to LegiStorm Pro are treated to a whole new level of list-building capability, as well as 2000 free download credits. Subscribers can build lists based on multiple criteria, including [more advanced options](#) such as where the person went to college. The lists are highly configurable, with users being able to add or subtract anyone from the list as needed.

All Pro subscribers can build and browse as many lists as they want without charge - only downloading the contact information requires an extra fee, and then at a low rate.

Downloads are in highly portable .csv format, with each record containing a staffer's name, title, office, key role served, legislative issues covered and all the contact information including email, phone, fax and office address.

The uses for such new functionality are many. Some examples:

- Colleges and universities can search among the more than 18,000 educational records LegiStorm has to find and track all the people who went to their school.
- Associations can find all legislative assistants who cover a particular legislative issue of interest.
- Interest groups can contact all schedulers to notify legislators of a special event.
- A lobbyist can create a custom list of everyone on Capitol he meets who is sympathetic to a particular issue.
- A foundation can reach out to every chief of staff or legislative director from Western states.

You can [read more here](#) about LegiStorm's contact list-building capability and pricing.

Jock Friedly, President & Founder

States Cut Medicaid To Balance Budget

[Kaiser Health News](#) staff writers Phil Galewitz and Matthew Fleming, working in collaboration with [USA Today](#), report: "Thirteen states are moving to cut Medicaid by reducing benefits, paying health providers less or tightening eligibility, even as the federal government prepares to expand the insurance program for the poor to as many as 17 million more people" (Galewitz and Fleming, 7/24). Read the [story](#). Also, check out the related [story](#) and [chart](#).

Nevada Diabetes Association

Diabetes is a very expensive condition to manage and treat. Bring costs down for care is a step in the right direction. The NDA/CDA has drug and diabetes supply discount cards that can also help. Contact our main office at 775-856-3839 or 1-800-379-3839 for more information.

Ok, get a great - and long - cup of coffee and take a tour. All are www. sdc

Native Treasures

- sfnewmexican.com
- cowboysandindiansnm.com
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Did you know the saying "God willing and the Creek don't rise" was in reference to the Creek Indians and not a body of water? It was written by Benjamin Hawkins in the late 18th century. He was a politician and Indian diplomat. While in the south, Hawkins was requested by the President of the U.S. to return to Washington . In his response, he was said to write, "God willing and the Creek don't rise." Because he capitalized the word "Creek" it is deduced that he was referring to the Creek Indian tribe and not a body of water.

Mining claims

Amodei legislation's fate hangs on Senate action

By [Dennis Myers](#) dennism@newsreview.com [This article was published on 07.26.12.](#)

The Amodei measure can be read at <http://tinyurl.com/cc32uu8>

U.S. Rep. Mark Amodei, a Nevada Republican, claims his bill offers “predictability and transparency.”

The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) claims the measure would give “a free ride” to mining corporations.

Amodei called it a “job creating bill.”

One of Amodei's New Jersey colleagues in the House called it a “giveaway.”

Amodei called it “streamlining.”

One of his Massachusetts colleagues called it a throwback to unregulated mining.

What was clear was that the Amodei bill, if passed, will speed up—and reduce—environmental review of mines. Surprisingly, few if any environmental groups took note of the legislation or got involved in lobbying on it.

A fierce fight unfolded in the U.S. House over the measure, which Amodei calls the “National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2012.” It was introduced on April 19 and designated H.R. 4402.

The legislation is not a bipartisan measure. It was approved in the House on a 256-160 vote. Every Republican who voted supported it. Only 22 Democrats voted for it. Those 22 included Nevada Democrat Shelley Berkley.

Little was heard from the measure until it came out of committee to the floor for a vote. PLAN quickly sent out a message to its members in Nevada with the subject line, “Tell Congress: Put People Above Mining Profits.” The message itself was headlined “Rep. Amodei's Minerals Production Act: Bad for Nevada.”

Amodei—who served as president of the Nevada Mining Association during his last term in the Nevada Senate—described the bill this way: “Duplicative regulations, bureaucratic inefficiency, and lack of coordination between federal agencies are threatening the economic recovery of my home state and jeopardizing our national security. Nevada, which is rich in strategic and critical minerals, also has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Decade-long permitting delays are standing in the way of high-paying jobs and revenue for local communities. This bill would streamline the permitting process to leverage our nation's vast mineral resources, while paying due respect to economic and environmental concerns.”

PLAN described the bill this way: “[It] would nearly abolish the public's right to participate in the management of mining claims on lands that belong to all of us. ... Nevadans and others must speak out against this bill that will: Eliminate meaningful environmental review for mining

projects; nearly eliminate opportunities for citizens to participate in critical public review of mining projects; speed up permitting for mines; and force federal land managers of most public lands to make mineral extraction—not conservation or even recreation—their top priority.”

PLAN director Bob Fulkerson said, “The mining industry already enjoys free and open access to hardrock minerals on public lands, minerals they receive for free—no royalties—under the antiquated 1872 Mining Law. In addition, federal law already prioritizes mining as ‘the highest and best use’ of public land.”

The White House issued a statement that said the measure “would undermine and remove the environmental safeguards, for, at a minimum, almost all types of hardrock mines on Federal lands. Notwithstanding the title and the stated purpose of the legislation, H.R. 4402, as reported by the House Natural Resources Committee, is drafted in such a manner as to cover virtually all hardrock mining on Federal lands. . . . The Administration strongly supports the development of rare earth elements and other critical minerals, but rejects the notion that their development is incongruent with environmental protection and public involvement in agency decision-making.” The statement also said the Amodei bill threatens “hunting, fishing, recreation and other activities which create jobs and sustain local economies across the country” because it elevates mining uses of the public’s lands over others.

House Natural Resources Committee chair Doc Hastings, a Washington Republican, said, “America cannot afford to be heavily reliant on foreign countries for our energy or for strategic and critical minerals that are necessary for so many of the products used in our daily lives. We have all seen the impact of our dependence on foreign oil; when we have the resources, like rare earth elements, available here at home there is no reason that we should have complete dependence on foreign minerals.”

New Jersey Democrat Rush Holt charged that the bill “has almost nothing to do with national strategic critical minerals production. Make no mistake, this is a giveaway. It is free mining, no royalties, no protection of public interest, exemption from royalty payments, near exemption from environmental regulations, near exemption of legal enforcement of the protections.”

Senate in doubt

An amendment by U.S. Rep. Raymond Cravaack, a Minnesota Republican whose district includes the Mesabi and Vermilion iron mining districts, passed without a roll call vote. It would allow projects already in the permitting pipeline to switch to the faster process.

Republicans also voted down an amendment by Massachusetts Democrat Ed Markey amendment to require a 12.5 percent royalty on gold, silver and uranium mined on public lands.

Markey said of the full piece of legislation, “In this latest giveaway to corporations, Republicans claim that sand, gravel, stone and clay are ‘strategic minerals,’ ushering a new Stone Age in the United States. This bill isn’t giving us the futuristic technologies of the Jetsons. It’s giving us the prehistoric technologies of the Flintstones.” He said it would allow mining corporations to go around the environmental review process that now exists under the National Environmental Policy Act, elevating mining over other uses of public lands, including uses employed by other industries such as grazing. (Last week, the Reno Gazette-Journal weighted a reader poll in

Amodei's favor by including the word *strategic* in the question, though it is in dispute whether the bill involves strategic minerals.)

Hastings said Amodei's measure gives "American manufacturers, small businesses, technology companies, and construction firms to use American resources to help make the products that are essential to our everyday lives and in the process also put more Americans back to work." But critics pointed out that it benefits American manufacturers only in the sense that Canada is in America. Most mining corporations are Canadian.

The mining press and media in mining districts, including Reno's Mineweb, are watching the process carefully. The Bemidji Pioneer in Minnesota speculated that Amodei's measure "appears to apply to both mineral exploration and actual mining projects."

The measure's fate in the Senate is uncertain. PLAN is hoping Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada, the Democratic floor leader, will stop it. Reid was elected as a critic of the mining industry in 1986 but made his peace with it during his first term.

Climate change

By [Ashley Hennefer](mailto:ashleyh@newsreview.com) ashleyh@newsreview.com [This article was published on 07.26.12.](#)

Nevada has a new state climatologist—Douglas Boyle, who comes from a research background in climate control, and is a professor in the University of Nevada, Reno's geography department. Boyle is a member of Nevada's Drought Response Committee, the Division of Emergency Management and the Division of Water Resources. He is a paleoclimate modeler, and has conducted extensive research on groundwater hydrologic systems in arid and semi-arid environments, including areas of south America, Tibet and Nevada's Great Basin ecosystem.

The state climatologist's position is through the Nevada State Climate Office, a department in UNR's college of science. The office's website features the Nevada Drought Plan ("Dry spell," May 31), research on the region's climate activity and a climate archive. Check out more at <http://www.climate.unr.edu/index.html>.

Save Veronica Rose

"To all of our amazing supporters it is with completely broken hearts that we share this devastating news with you. The SC Supreme Court has ruled 3-2 in favor of the Indian Child Welfare Act. Veronica is to remain in Oklahoma and will not be coming home to Charleston. We cannot thank you enough for all of your prayers and willingness to stand as a united front for our sweet Veronica. <http://www.sccourts.org/opinions/HTMLFiles/SC/27148.pdf>"

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Hundreds celebrate rare white bison

The New Republic 7.30.12

GOSHEN, Conn. (AP) — Dozens of American Indians wore the traditional garb of their ancestors, sang songs and beat drums on a western Connecticut farm Saturday in celebration of the birth of one of the world's rarest animals — a white bison.

GOSHEN, Conn. (AP) — Dozens of American Indians wore the traditional garb of their ancestors, sang songs and beat drums on a western Connecticut farm Saturday in celebration of the birth of one of the world's rarest animals — a white bison.

The miracle calf was officially named Yellow Medicine Dancing Boy at the elaborate ceremony at the Mohawk Bison farm in Goshen in the state's northwestern hills. It was born June 16 at the farm of fourth-generation farmer Peter Fay.

Many American Indians consider white bison a symbol of hope and unity; some consider their births sacred events. Experts say white bison are as rare as one in 10 million.

Yellow Medicine Dancing Boy is not an albino, and Fay said DNA testing confirmed the animal's bloodlines are pure and there was no intermingling with cattle.

Lakota tribe members from South Dakota were among the hundreds of people who gathered at the celebration. Other tribal elders from the Mohawk, Seneca and Cayuga tribes participated.

Crowds patiently waited by the roadside before slowly marching into the pasture and lining up alongside a fence as the ceremony began. Children squeezed up against their parents and peered through the fence.

Some women were dressed in colorful tunics and other items indigenous to American Indian culture, including bracelets, feathers and boots. Men also wore traditional costumes. Those leading the ceremony wore plain and small headdresses.

Fay, 53, runs the farm below Mohawk Mountain and invited American Indians to the event, which also included a feast and talks by tribe elders.

"I'm almost like the calf to them because I'm the caregiver. They've been here almost every day, teaching me," said Fay, who has a herd of bison tattooed on his right shoulder.

Fay attended a sweat lodge ceremony with the elders on Friday night in Cornwall. The nearly two-hour ceremony was a way to repair damage done to their spirits, minds and bodies. It acted as a prayer for a name for the calf to come to them through the spirits.

Saturday's ceremony was held under an arbor next to a large fire, amid thunder and large dark rain clouds. Marian and Chubb White Mouse, members of the Oglala Lakota tribe in South Dakota, traveled to Goshen from Wanblee, to lead the ceremony.

Marian White Mouse told the crowd the birth of a white bison is a sign from a prophet, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, who helped them endure times of strife and famine.

“We come with one prayer, one heart and one mind,” she said tearfully. “This is truly a miracle. I hope that this one prayer will keep my people together, keep all of us together.”

Barbara Threecrow, an elder from the Naticoke tribe who lives in Hudson Valley, N.Y., sat holding a sacred Canupa of beaver skin containing a pipe.

“I believe this is an awakening,” Threecrow said. “This is a way of telling people to remember the sacredness of all of life.”

We have a few young Taíno runners who will be leaving on Aug-01 to join the 2012 Peace & Dignity Journeys in New York on Aug-05-2012. They will be running until they get to Guatemala in November. You can check out it on

Facebook @

[http://boriken2010peaceanddignityjourney.blogspot.com/2012/06/from-areyto-to](http://boriken2010peaceanddignityjourney.blogspot.com/2012/06/from-areyto-to-hip-hop.html?sref=fb)

-hip-hop.html?sref=fb and can make donations @

<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/164824?c=home>. Hope you can help us [spread the word. Thanks! :\)](#)

Taíno-tí,

Seneko Kakona [Many Blessings],

Joanna & Family