

Enforcement campaign shows drivers are speeding

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office issued more than 200 speeding citations during a three-week, multi-agency Joining Forces traffic safety campaign in late February and early March.

From Feb. 19 through March 7, deputies joined with the Reno Police Department, Sparks Police Department and Nevada Highway Patrol for a high-intensity enforcement campaign focusing on speeding. The campaign is part of ongoing efforts by Nevada law enforcement agencies to increase public safety through the state's Joining Forces program.

Sheriff's Office patrol staff assigned to this event initiated a total of 301 traffic stops. Although a driver may be stopped for one violation, several other violations may be observed during the subsequent investigation making it possible that a driver may be issued citations for numerous violations.

The total number of violations cited and warnings issued during this event was 421. Most of those citations, 220, were issued for speed violations.

Violations cited include:

- 220 speeding
- 27 cell phone use/distracted driving
- 51 failure to show proof of insurance
- 20 driver's license related violations
- 28 motor vehicle registration violations
- 9 vehicle equipment violations
- 4 violations for running a red light
- 1 failure to yield right of way
- 2 felony arrest

- 1 drug arrest
 - 11 other violations.
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STAR looking for senior volunteers

El Dorado County's Sheriff's Team of Active Retirees is looking for members.

It is comprised of senior citizens who enhance crime prevention services in the community. The STARs conduct patrols in specially marked vehicles, functioning as the eyes and ears of the sheriff's department, reporting any suspicious activity observed.

STARs help with:

- Conducting business/home security checks
- Patrol trailheads, beaches, and campgrounds
- Provide traffic control at accident scenes, forest fires, and other emergency events
- Assist at the Drug Store Project, Day of the Young Child, Sober Grad Night, and other community events
- Patrol school parking lots, school bus stops, and neighborhoods.

Applicants must attend a two-week training where volunteers gain knowledge of patrol procedures, radio communications, traffic control, vacation home checks, and department policies and procedures.

For more info, contact Lori Hatfield at 530.621.5111.

Husky takes overall honors at I-Did-A-Run

As part of North Lake Tahoe's SnowFest 2016, the 12th annual I-Did-A-Run event took place on March 13 at Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Area.

Dogs of all shapes and sizes pulled out all the stops to compete in this on-snow dog pull race with proceeds from raffle sales raising \$1,671 for the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe. Dogs raced against the clock pulling covered wagon sleds over a snow-covered course. Prizes were awarded to the speediest finishers among four weight divisions.

In total, 38 dogs ranging in age from 5 months to 15 years old raced for the title:

- Division 1 (0-25 pounds) winner: Raina, an American Cocker Spaniel, at 2.57 seconds, owner: Dean Eppley. Of interest, Raina was the second oldest dog that competed in this year's event at approximately age 14.

- Division 2 (26-50 pounds) winner: Sascha, a mixed breed adopted from the Humane Society, at 2.79 seconds, owner: Hannah Grey. Of interest, Sascha was the youngest race winner this year at age 1.

- Division 3 (51-75 pounds) winner: Nikolai, a Siberian Husky, at 2.40 seconds, owner: Hannah Gray. Of interest, Nikolai was last year's fastest dog and overall event winner.

- Division 4 (76+ pounds) winner: Nellie, a Golden Retriever, at 3.11 seconds, owner: Melissa and PJ Madigan. Of

interest, Nellie was one of three Golden Retrievers to race and the only winner for her breed.

The overall winner was the second consecutive year was Nikolai, owned by Hannah Grey of Dayton. In addition to being the fastest dog and overall winner for two years, Nikolai also competed as a puppy in 2014, taking first place in division 1.

Tahoe area climber to attempt Everest without oxygen

Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Even when he's recalling a failed attempt to ski the Himalayan peak Makalu, Adrian Ballinger is quick with a joke or a smile.

But the mountaineer's next big expedition is no laughing matter.

Ballinger, 40, of Olympic Valley plans to summit Mt. Everest without using supplemental oxygen.

For Ballinger the attempt is the culmination of two decades as a mountaineer and guide, including six previous Everest summits with oxygen.

Read the whole story

Genoa putting on Easter egg hunt, brunch

The inaugural Cotton Tails Easter celebration at Mormon Station State Historic Park in Genoa will include a pancake brunch served picnic style, followed by an Easter egg hunt for children of all ages, with baskets being awarded to raffle winners in each age group.

There will be a photo booth and face-painting artist. The Easter Bunny is scheduled to make an appearance. There will also be farm fresh eggs for sale.

The event is March 26 from 10am-2pm. **Tickets** are \$12 for adults and \$8 for children for the pancake brunch. The Easter egg hunt is \$6 per participant.

For more info, call 775.782.2590 or email mormonstation@park.nv.gov.

Food Bank needs volunteers for SLT distribution

The Food Bank of El Dorado County will be in South Lake Tahoe distributing food on March 23 from 10-11am at the American Legion Hall, 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

One allocation per household will be provided to people struggling to make ends meet, who live in El Dorado County and meet the state income guidelines. Income guidelines are **online**.

The Food Bank needs volunteers that day from 9:30-11:30am to help distribute the food. For more info, contact 530.621.9950 or volunteer@foodbankedc.org.

Audit: Caltrans maintenance spending doesn't match need

By KCRA-TV

Caltrans is under the microscope after a state audit showed the agency spent \$250,000 to develop a new road maintenance budget model and then abandoned it.

The audit, released Thursday, said the new budget model for the maintenance division, which was created with help from a consultant in 2009, would have allocated money based on what areas needed it most.

"However, we found that the maintenance division abandoned this approach, and instead has based funding allocations to the 12 Caltrans districts on a simple average of historical spending. . . , despite reporting to the Legislature that it was using a more sophisticated method," state Auditor Elaine Howle said in the audit report.

Read the whole story

Sexual hostility hiding within national parks, forests

By Kathryn Joyce, [Huffington Post](#)

On an early Friday morning in late June 2006, Cheyenne Szydlo, a 33-year-old Arizona wildlife biologist with fiery red hair, drove to the Grand Canyon's South Rim to meet the river guide who would be taking her along the 280 miles of the Colorado River that coursed a mile below. She was excited. Everyone in her field wanted to work at the Grand Canyon, and after several years of unsuccessful applications, Szydlo had recently been offered a seasonal position in one of the National Park Service's science divisions. She'd quit another job in order to accept, certain her chance wouldn't come again.

The June expedition—a nine-day journey through the canyon on a 20-foot motorboat operated by a boatman named Dave Loeffler—would be her last chance that summer. When Szydlo asked a coworker what Loeffler was like, the reply was cryptic: “You’ll see.”

Travelers eat and sleep together, and, due to the lack of cover, must often bathe and go to the bathroom in full view, using portable metal ammo cans outfitted with toilet seats. Commercial river guides often say that no one can claim their privacy on the river, so fellow passengers should offer it instead. In Szydlo's recounting of the trip, Loeffler didn't adhere to this code.

We're used to hearing stories of sexual harassment in the Army, the Navy, or within the police force; 25 years after the

Tailhook scandal, when scores of Marine and Naval officers allegedly sexually assaulted some 83 women and seven men at a military convention, there's a general cultural understanding of what women face in traditionally male-dominated public institutions. The agencies that protect America's natural heritage enjoy a reputation for a certain benign progressivism—but some of them have their own troubling history of hostility toward women.

In 2012 in Texas, members of the Parks and Wildlife Department complained about a “legacy” of racial and gender intolerance; only 8 percent of the state's 500 game wardens were women. In 2014, in California, female employees of the U.S. Forest Service filed a class-action lawsuit—the fourth in 35 years—over what they described as an egregious, long-standing culture of sexual harassment, disparity in hiring and promotion, and retaliation against those who complained. (That lawsuit is still pending.) And this January, the Department of the Interior's Office of Inspector General announced that it had “found evidence of a long-term pattern of sexual harassment and hostile work environment” in the Grand Canyon's River District, a part of the Park Service.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Fiscal ineptness continues in EDC

By Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County's roads are literally falling apart,

especially with the significant precipitation the county has had in the past four months. For the last eight years the county has allocated between \$1 million and \$2 million annually to attempt to keep up with EDC's road maintenance.

But that ended as the Board of Supervisors, led by then Chairman Brian Veerkamp, adopted a budget policy that no General Fund money will be used for road maintenance at the budget meeting on Sept. 14, 2015. According to EDC residents and taxpayers, road maintenance is the No. 2 priority of the county after public safety. That No. 2 position was confirmed by the recent survey of EDC residents.



Larry Weitzman

The lack of general fund money is becoming a significant problem as at the latest BOS meeting (March 8) the BOS approved the purchase of 30 acres of land near the Missouri Flat industrial park for about \$2.65 million to build a new sheriff's headquarters. The money for the land was planned and allocated, but the much bigger issue is that the money to build a \$40 million to \$50 million sheriff's HQ has not. There is nothing in the budget for that. There is no question a new HQ is needed as the current HQ on Fairlane near the government center is on the cusp of becoming a superfund site. While that might be a slight exaggeration, we have needed a new HQ for years.

With the exception of Supervisor Shiva Frentzen and to some extent Supervisor Ron Mikulaco, the EDC board hasn't a fiscal clue as demonstrated by what was said at the BOS meeting of

Feb. 23, item 33, the mid-year budget report.

Receiving significant discussion was the lack of road maintenance as Supervisor Mikulaco said "that the most important asset that this county has that everyone uses every single day is our roadway network." He went on to say "if this board was going to adopt putting \$3 million into the road fund (from the General Fund) ... that's something I would support."

Supervisor Mike Ranalli went on to kick the can down the road (but with all the potholes that might be hard) when he said, "Um, I would prefer at this juncture, though, to kind of see all of the needs and totality before any specific recommendations." Ranalli doesn't have a clue, especially about the budget. That's because at that final budget meeting last September he voted to end General Fund road maintenance and to successfully end five-year budget forecasts along with the rest of the board. Didn't Ranalli read the citizens survey? It's the No. 2 priority behind public safety. Maybe when his car's wheels, tires, suspension, alignment and/or engine (rock through the oil pan) get destroyed, he will look at his political mumbo jumbo differently.

Supervisor Sue Novasel chimed in with respect to Supervisor Frentzen's motion for a five-year budget projection and a \$2 million transfer of General Fund money to road maintenance: "I agree with Supervisor Frentzen that we have to keep our infrastructure going. That should be No. 1 goal ... those two are huge and I realize and I do agree with you Michael (Ranalli) that we really need to take a look at the whole budget." (Novasel also likes to play kick the can.) "But that being said I would also really like to see an increase, (at) least \$2 million, maybe \$3 million in our roads when we get there. Again I will again thank Supervisor Frentzen for bringing up the five-year projection." Novasel voted against Frentzen's motion later just as she didn't support it at the budget meeting last September.

At the Sept. 14, 2015, budget meeting it was Veerkamp leading the charge as BOS chairman to delete road maintenance from the General Fund budget along with the practice of preparing budget projections even against the pleas of Supervisor Frentzen. Without those projections the BOS has no idea of the future. This is just one of the consequences of the outrageous 15 percent raise to EDC employees and unnecessary employee hiring (budget projections reveal that outrageous cost) about two years prior which Veerkamp supported and voted for. But it gets worse.

Frentzen at this Feb. 23 BOS meeting made a motion for five-year budget projections to start again and for a transfer of \$2 million to the road fund. Mr. Kick the Can (Ranalli) says, "I'm supportive of the items but I am not gonna support the motion at this time. I think when it comes to forecasting, certainly there are some items that need to be looked at in five years." On the contrary, the record shows that it was Ranalli who didn't support Frentzen's motion of continuing the requirement of five-year budget projections last September. First Ranalli votes against the idea of five-year budget projections and then uses not having the budget projections as an excuse for not using General Fund money for road maintenance. Circular logic. Because of his fiscal malpractice, Ranalli is not qualified for his job.

Frentzen's motion to provide the BOS with a five-year budget projection and to provide the road fund with \$2 million in General Fund money is seconded by Mikulaco. With two yes votes from Frentzen and Mik and three no votes from Veerkamp, Novasel, and Ranalli the motion is given the kiss of death.

But this quote from interim CAO Larry Combs highlights this meeting: "Since, I have not had a chance to look at the budget and the projections for revenue, I can't forecast what effect taking \$2 million out of the General Fund (for road maintenance) would mean. But, that's approximately the amount that's going to be needed for debt service on the Public

Safety facility. So, I would not recommend your board giving me that direction.”

Combs has been here eight months and says he doesn't know the budget or its future. He even presided over the September budget meeting where he told the BOS budget projections are worthless. And on March 8 he recommended to the BOS to spend \$2.65 million for a sheriff's HQ property and he doesn't know if we have the resources to pay for the \$40 million to \$50 million HQ structure or even for the debt service of \$2 million or more annually if our county were to go into debt to build it. Why do we pay this guy almost \$100,000 annually for this level of incompetence – especially when he only works part time?

More circular logic.

At the end of this fiscal year (June 30) EDC will have spent an additional \$77 million on salary and benefits since June 30, 2013, due to additional hiring and a 15 percent compounded raises. For four years' prior, the county salary and benefits budget remained level at about \$118 million. Nearly 70 percent of our general fund revenues now goes to salary and benefits. And they are going up. Without that expense, we could be driving on glass smooth roads and have the best sheriff's HQ in California without going \$40 million into debt.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Fresh pasta isn't always

better than dried

By Tim Carman, Washington Post

Until he apprenticed at Incanto in San Francisco, Michael Friedman considered fresh pasta sort of the holy grail of Italian cooking – something chefs should strive to make and perfect.

To make your own fresh pasta meant “you were at the height of your craft,” says Friedman, the chef behind the linguine, rigatoni, paccheri and other pastas at Red Hen in Bloomingdale. “I believed that for a really long time.”

But then Friedman worked with chef Chris Cosentino at the now-shuttered Incanto, and the Washingtonian discovered the many possibilities of dried pasta. Cosentino pushed the boundaries of the pasta that many simply shake from a box. He was extruding and drying pastas in-house, designing shapes unique to Incanto, such as a noodle that resembled tripe, which was then paired with two types of actual tripe, remembers Friedman.

Read the whole story