

South Lake Tahoe brothers involved in stabbing

An altercation between two brothers on Tuesday night ended with one behind bars and the other in the hospital.

Christopher Amato, 24, of South Lake Tahoe was arrested Feb. 2 on assault with a deadly weapon charges. Bail was set at \$25,000.

His stepbrother, who is in his 30s, was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital with a non-life threatening stab wound to his abdomen.

Officers responded about 6:35pm Tuesday to the 1400 block of Melba Drive. They found the victim in front of the residence and the suspect inside. They live there with their mom.

Officers are still investigating what led to the confrontation. A knife about 5-inches long was recovered.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. has more control over education dollars

By Joy Resmovits, Los Angeles Times

Starting next year, California and seven other states will have more control over how they spend the millions of federal dollars tied to a questionable tutoring program.

Under the George W. Bush administration's No Child Left Behind

law, schools that serve high concentrations of poor students and were rated as underperforming for several years were required to set aside money for tutoring, known as “supplemental education services.”

Between 2011 and 2014, California spent \$507 million on these programs. But the California Department of Education routinely received complaints alleging that the tutoring companies provided little feedback on students’ academic progress, fabricated invoices and lied about enrollment and attendance information.

Read the whole story

Study: Drought could worsen fires, feed insects, spur plant die-offs

By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle

Worsening drought conditions may be doing more damage to forests in California and throughout the West than their ecosystems can handle, causing a spiral of death that could have a devastating impact on land managers, a U.S. Forest Service study concludes.

The 300-page report issued Monday – “Effects of Drought on Forests and Rangelands in the United States” – outlines how hotter, drier and more extreme weather will spark massive insect outbreaks, tree and plant die-offs, bigger and more costly wildfires, and economic impacts to timber and rangeland habitat.

The study by 77 scientists from the Forest Service, universities, non-governmental organizations and national labs seeks to bring together years of peer-reviewed research and provide the best science to forest and rangeland managers as they grapple with the effects of climate change on the 193 million acres of national forest. There are 21 million acres in California's 18 national forests.

Read the whole story

Feds aim to reduce U.S. water footprint

By Ian James, Desert Sun

The Obama administration has begun an initiative aimed at making the United States more water-efficient, saying the country has the potential to reduce its total water use by a third.

Deputy Interior Secretary Mike Connor said some of the White House's objectives include encouraging more recycling of wastewater and promoting investment in water treatment and desalination technologies.

The White House announced its new "water innovation strategy" last month and plans a summit on March 22, which is World Water Day, focusing on potential solutions to the country's water challenges. The White House said in a fact sheet about the initiative that with improvements in efficiency, better management practices and more widespread adoption of water

reuse technology, “we have potential to considerably reduce water usage by 33 percent.”

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- The El Dorado County Senior Nutrition Program in South Lake Tahoe needs volunteer drivers to deliver lunchtime meals to homebound seniors. For information, call 530.621.6160.
- Justine Martin and Andrew Horejs are opening MoonHouse Brewhouse at 2040 Dunlap Drive in South Lake Tahoe in the old Grass Roots building
- South Lake Tahoe disc jockey Keenan will be at Whiskey Dicks Saloon in South Lake Tahoe every Tuesday. Must be at least 21 to attend. Doors open at 9pm. No cover.
- Late-Nite Productions presents Thick as Thieves, a South Lake Tahoe rock and blues band, that will put on a free show Feb. 6 at Whiskey Dicks Saloon in South Lake Tahoe for those older than 21. Doors open at 9pm.
- Carson Valley Trails Association’s annual meeting is March 1 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Douglas County Community and Senior Center, 1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville.

Storms significantly boosting Sierra snowpack



Frank Gehrke is the state's official snow survey taker.
Photo/LTN file

By Lake Tahoe News

It doesn't matter that the water content of the snow near Echo Summit is 130 percent of average; officials aren't about to say the drought is anywhere near over.

"While the recent rains and growing snowpack are wonderful to behold, we won't know until spring what effect it will have on the bottom line for California's unprecedented drought," Felicia Marcus, chair of the State Water Resources Control Board, said in a statement. "Until we can tally that ledger, we have to keep conserving water every way we can. Every drop saved today is one that we may be very glad we have tomorrow."

The manual reading was taken this morning in the snowfield near the entrance of Sierra-at-Tahoe. The snow depth was 76.2 inches, with the water content at 25.4 inches.

Those numbers are significantly higher than a year ago and

above normal for this time of year. In 2015, the water content was 2.5 inches. Water content has averaged 19.5 inches for the last 50 years.

The last time this area recorded these kinds of numbers was in 2005 – snow depth was 77.1 inches, water content 29.9 inches.

Statewide the water content is 20.4 inches, which is 114 percent of normal for Feb. 2.

Snow is so vital because in normal years it supplies about 30 percent of California's drinking and irrigation water. Most reservoirs in the state remain below average for this time of year.

Calif. partnership to increase controlled burns

BY Olga R. Rodriguez, AP

Environmental groups and federal and state agencies have formed a partnership to increase the use of prescribed fires to improve the health of California's forests and watersheds and minimize the effects of increasingly devastating wildfires.

The agreement signed by the CalFire, U.S. Forest Service and other federal and state agencies and several environmental groups, including the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy, will enable the sharing of resources and expertise among the signatories, who will have their first working meeting Tuesday.

"This allows us to bring key parties together and have a more

organized approach to addressing some of the impediments that we face on using fire to restore our natural landscapes,” said Jim Branham, Executive Officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, one of the state agencies that endorsed the memorandum of understanding.

Prescribed fires are not without controversy because of the air pollution they create but the groups and agencies involved agreed to find ways to better manage smoke during controlled burns. They also agreed to train personnel in agencies that don’t have the staff for prescribed burn because of strained resources.

The agreement comes after several massive wildfires largely fueled by extremely dry vegetation scorched hundreds of square miles of forests and destroyed hundreds of homes in drought-parched California.

In Lake County last year, a wildfire burned so hot that the flames generated their own wind and blew out embers that started spot fires ahead of the blaze.

Supporters say controlled burns are one way to prevent wildfires that quickly explode in size and intensity.

“The last couple of years have been kind of a wakeup call that we need to figure out how to put (prescribed fires) back on the landscape in a more sophisticated way than we’ve done in the past,” Braham said.

Study: 1 in 11 shopping for

guns online in Nevada can't legally possess one

By Wesley Juhl, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nearly one in 11 people shopping for guns online in Nevada is prohibited from possessing a firearm, according to a study by Everytown for Gun Safety released Friday.

Everytown for Gun Safety, a national gun control advocacy group, researched listings for firearms on four websites: Armslist, Gunlistings, Backpage and Facebook, where private-party sellers in Nevada used dozens of dedicated pages to arrange gun sales.

The study, called "The Wild Wild Web," evokes Nevada's frontier history:

"Frontier days seem distant in Nevada, where the rugged landscape has recently acquired a 21st-century sheen. Cities have sprouted in its deserts. Technology companies like Tesla Motors and Faraday Future vie for the state's workforce," the report said. "But invisible to most Nevadans, an unregulated commerce in firearms continues. And it's facilitated by the same digital platforms driving the economic boom."

Read the whole story

AG: IVGID violated open

meeting law

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Attorney General Adam Laxalt says the board of the Incline Village General Improvement District violated the open meeting law and failed to correct it.

Laxalt said the move to reorganize the board at North Lake Tahoe in August is void because of the violations.

Read the whole story

Pennsylvania groundhog 'predicts' early spring

By Associated Press

PUNXSUTAWNEY, Pa. – The handlers of Pennsylvania's most famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, said the furry rodent failed to see his shadow at dawn Tuesday, meaning he "predicted" an early spring.

"Is this current warm weather more than a trend? Per chance this winter has come to an end? There is no shadow to be cast, an early Spring is my forecast!," read Jeff Lundy, vice president of the Inner Circle of The Punxsutawney Groundhog Club.

Lundy is one of the top hat-wearing group that announces the forecast every year.

A German legend has it that if a furry rodent sees his shadow

on Feb. 2, winter will last another six weeks. If not, spring comes early.

The forecast was delivered with temperatures in the low 20s, on a clear day when the high temperature was expected to reach the unseasonably mild mid-40s.

The Inner Circle congratulated the mid-week crowd of about 10,000 revelers, which the group said was one of the largest for a weekday celebration. Many of those in attendance had stayed overnight and partied into the wee hours waiting for the groundhog's forecast.

Truth be told, Phil's handlers don't wait to see if he sees his shadow – which he almost certainly would have Tuesday. Instead, the Inner Circle decide on the forecast ahead of time and announce it on Gobbler's Knob, a tiny hill near the town for which the groundhog is named, about 65 miles northeast of Pittsburgh.

Records going back to 1887 show Phil has now predicted more winter 102 times while forecasting an early spring just 18 times. There are no records for the remaining years.

Tuesday's celebration was billed as the 130th forecast by Phil.

In New York, Staten Island Chuck agreed with Phil: An early spring is coming.

The groundhog did not see his shadow as he emerged from his home at the Staten Island Zoo early Tuesday.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio missed this year's annual Groundhog Day commemoration. The Democrat had gone to Iowa to stump for Hillary Clinton for that state's caucus.

Traditionally, the city's mayor attends the festivities. De Blasio dropped the groundhog in 2014, the first year he attended the ceremony as mayor. The groundhog died a few

months later.