

Time to worry about mosquitoes

With this being Mosquito Awareness Week, El Dorado County health officials are reminding residents to take steps to protect themselves from mosquitoes as warmer weather approaches.

West Nile virus is primarily a disease of birds that can be transmitted to people and animals by mosquitoes. WNV is a mosquito-borne disease that can result in debilitating cases of meningitis and encephalitis, and death to humans, horses, avian species and other wildlife. In 2017, there were 536 confirmed human cases of WNV in 44 counties throughout California, with no cases in El Dorado County. Statewide there were 43 human deaths.

Pregnant women should be aware about the risks of traveling to Mexico and other countries where the Zika virus can be transmitted through mosquito bite, which can result in harm to the growing fetus.

El Dorado County vector control technicians respond to resident complaints and provide surveillance and control of mosquito sources in designated areas of the county.

Residents and visitors can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking the following precautions:

- Eliminate or drain all sources of standing water around your property including flower pots, old tires, and buckets. Mosquitoes can lay their eggs in sources of water as small as a bottle cap.
- Avoid activity outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and the first two hours after sunset.
- If you are being bitten or see any other activity outside these time frames, contact vector control.

- If you are outdoors when mosquitoes are biting, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Apply insect repellent containing EPA-registered active ingredients such as DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Always apply according to label instructions.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitted screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- If planning travel out of the country, check with the Centers for Disease Control for current information and advisories related to Zika, yellow fever, and other travel-related risks.

To report a dead bird, call 877.968.2473. To report a complaint about mosquito activity, contact El Dorado County Vector Control at 530.573.3197 in the Tahoe basin, or 530.621.5300 on the West Slope.

STPUD rewarded for its transparency to public

South Tahoe Public Utility District has received the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence through California Special District's Association.

This certificate requires compliance in three best practice areas including: basic transparency including the Brown Act, website, and public outreach.

This is the second time STPUD has received the award.

The application consisted of 44 documents and 158 pages that were reviewed by representatives of two peer agencies, Tahoe

City Public Utility District and South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce. Once reviewed by the peer agencies, it was forwarded to the Special Leadership Foundation for consideration.

In a statement, STPUD said, "This achievement demonstrates the district's commitment to being open and accessible, while engaging the public and creating greater awareness of district activities."

Scheduled burns throughout Tahoe basin

Weather permitting, the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, which includes local, state and federal agencies, will continue prescribed fire operations this week around the Tahoe basin.

The North Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Douglas fire protection districts, California State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service will conduct prescribed fire operations in Sugar Pine Point and Burton Creek state parks on the West Shore, Kings Beach and Diamond Peak Ski Resort on the North Shore, Logan Shoals on the East Shore and on Kingsbury Grade, off Ski Run Boulevard and near the Golden Bear subdivision on the South Shore. Smoke may be present.

A map with project locations and details is available for viewing **online**. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

MontBleu ownership changing hands

By Wayne Parry, AP

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. – Carl Icahn’s company has struck an approximately \$1.85 billion deal that would fuse the gaming and hotel operations of Tropicana Entertainment to Eldorado Resorts Inc.

The agreement, announced early Monday, includes the sale of Tropicana Entertainment Inc.’s real estate to Gaming and Leisure Properties Inc. It doesn’t include Tropicana’s Aruba assets, which will be disposed of as a condition to closing.

Eldorado Resorts is acquiring the operating assets of seven casinos in six states, including two in Nevada – the Tropicana Laughlin and MontBleu in Stateline.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- There will be a blood drive May 11, noon-5pm at the South Lake Tahoe rec center at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd. It is sponsored by Barton Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.

- Ellen Nunes will talk about her art at Benko Art Gallery, 3979 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe on April 20, 5-8pm.

· The 15th annual Cinco de Mayo celebration benefiting South Lake Tahoe Family Resource Center will be May 4, 5-10pm at Heavenly's California Lodge. Cost is \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door; \$10 for ages 6-12, and free for 5 and younger. For tickets, call 530.542.0740.

· Nevadans on average are paying 45 percent more per month for health insurance compared to a year ago, according to a study.

Nevada tourism agency doles out awards

The Nevada Division of Tourism honored several individuals and organizations for their dedication to the state's tourism industry.

Award winners are as follows:

Excellence in Tourism Award – Reno-Tahoe Territory

The Carson City Culture and Tourism Authority, formerly the Carson City Visitors Bureau, was recognized for its work to rebrand the community as a destination for outdoor recreation, arts and culture, farm-to-fork dining and special events.

Excellence in Tourism Award – Cowboy Country Territory

For more than 15 years, Kerrie Supanich has worked in tourism at West Wendover. Supanich has participated in several travel trade and consumer shows on behalf of Cowboy Country, including the Go West Summit in Salt Lake City earlier this year. Cowboy Country promotes tourism in northern Nevada along the Interstate 80 corridor.

Excellence in Tourism Award – Nevada Indian Territory

Michon Eben is actively involved with Nevada Indian Territory, which promotes cultural tourism throughout the state. She has coordinated cultural tours, as well as developed and curated exhibits highlighting the artists and veterans of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. Eben also is working to preserve historical photos and documents through digitalization and works with the Artown festival in Reno to ensure a Native American presence at the event.

Excellence in Tourism Award – Las Vegas Territory

Las Vegas tourism professionals Michelle Dillard, Richard Scown and Jan Johnson serve as the finance committee for Las Vegas Territory, which promotes visitation to the Las Vegas region. As a group, they were recognized for their volunteer efforts to improve and elevate Las Vegas Territory's accounting processes.

Excellence in Tourism Award – Nevada Silver Trails

Shari Bombard, tourism and events coordinator for the town of Tonopah, was honored for her work with Nevada Silver Trails Territory, the section of Nevada south of Highway 50 and north of Las Vegas.

Excellence in Tourism Award – Pony Express Territory

Jane Moon, director of tourism and visitor events for the city of Fallon, was recognized by Pony Express Territory, which promotes visitation along the Highway 50 corridor. Moon, a longtime Nevadan and former Miss Sparks, was commended for her volunteer efforts with many community groups, as well as her work with the Fallon Convention and Tourism Authority.

Statewide Excellence in Grants Award

Ed Spear, president of the Grand Circle Association (promoting the American Southwest) and former chairman of Pony Express Territory, was recognized for his skill as a grant writer. He has used that skill to secure grants for various tourism entities, including Pony Express Territory.

Statewide Excellence in Tourism Award

In addition to his work as executive director of the Elko Convention & Visitors Authority, Don Newman represents rural communities on the Nevada Commission on Tourism, the entity that advises TravelNevada. A strong supporter of tourism throughout state, Newman has served on such committees as the Nevada 150th Anniversary Commission and was instrumental in the state's acquisition of the Sesquicentennial Saddle, a handcrafted artisan saddle created by J.M. Capriola and on display at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City.

Larry J. Friedman Industry Partner of the Year Award

Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters, with locations in Las Vegas and Boulder City, was recognized with the Larry J. Friedman Industry Partner of the Year Award.

Opinion: Feds redefine endangered species protections

By Maya L. Kapoor, High Country News

In March, Susan Combs became temporary assistant secretary for

Fish and Wildlife and Parks, in charge of overseeing both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Parks Service. Combs, a Texas rancher and politician with a history of hostility toward protected species, fought to avoid protecting dwindling Texas species when she served as comptroller.

Her appointment happened quietly on a Saturday and had been not announced on the department's website as of this writing. Environmental advocacy groups believe her appointment invalid, because Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, not President Donald Trump, appointed her. The nonprofit Natural Resources Defense Council commented, "In typical Trump administration fashion, (Combs) now oversees what she hopes to dismantle."

Combs' controversial appointment comes as the Fish and Wildlife Service is quietly but radically altering its approach to the Endangered Species Act, from species protection to habitat management.

Read the whole story

Bear trapped in vehicle does serious damage



A bear locked in a truck in

Tahoe destroys the inside of
it. Photo/EDSO

A South Shore car owner found out the hard way why leaving food in a vehicle is a bad idea.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies spent part of April 16 enticing a bruin to leave a vehicle. It did. But left behind was a destroyed interior.

"Another very important reason to lock your vehicles up at night, particularly in bear country, is that bears are very adept at entering unlocked vehicles looking for food. If you are lucky, they will rummage around and leave your car relatively unharmed," deputies said on the EDSO Facebook page.

The bears are out, having awoken from their winter slumber. And they are looking for food.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Study: 70% of produce in U.S. contain pesticide residue

By Amel Ahmed, KQED-TV

Even after being carefully washed or peeled, nearly 70 percent of fruit and vegetables sold in the U.S. contained pesticide residues, according to a review of recent tests conducted by the Department of Agriculture.

"It is vitally important that everyone eats plenty of produce, but it is also wise to avoid dietary exposure to toxic pesticides, from conception through childhood," said Sonya

Lunder, senior analyst with nonprofit Environmental Working Group, which conducted the analysis.

The reviewed data revealed a total of 230 pesticides and pesticide breakdown products in thousands of crops that were sampled.

Read the whole story

Placer County setting for trafficking movie

By Sonaiya Kelley, Los Angeles Times

In one haunting moment from Liongate's upcoming thriller "Traffik," a young woman is drugged and loaded into a waiting truck by sex traffickers after having spent much of the night running for her life. Nina Simone's stirring "Strange Fruit" punctuates the scene, a touch that filmmaker Deon Taylor calls a "spiritual moment" intended to draw a parallel between trafficking and that other institution that commodifies people held against their will.

"I had to put that in there because (trafficking) is the modern-day slavery," Taylor said.

"Traffik," which was "shot with a microbudget," was produced in part by its star Paula Patton's Third Eye Productions.

The film, which Taylor wrote, directed and produced through his Hidden Empire Film Group, was shot in Northern California's Placer County, where the director lives with his

wife, Roxanne Avent, a producer on the film. The project was inspired by true events.

Read the whole story