

Drone crashes, just misses ski racer

By Associated Press

The international ski federation is banning camera drones from its World Cup races after a drone crashed and nearly hit Austrian skier Marcel Hirscher during a slalom race in Italy.

FIS men's race director Markus Waldner tells the Associated Press that drones will be prohibited "as long as I am responsible ... because they are a bad thing for safety."

The unmanned flying object carrying a TV camera came down and shattered on the icy slope just behind Hirscher during Tuesday night's race in Madonna di Campiglio. The four-time overall champion was unhurt and continued his run, finishing second behind Norwegian winner Henrik Kristoffersen.

The company responsible for the camera drone, sports marketing agency Infront, says in a statement "the circumstances leading to (the crash) are currently being examined."

Ritz-Carlton elevates s'mores to a higher level



Homemade marshmallows raise s'mores at the Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe to gourmet status. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – Charred. That's how the chef likes her marshmallows.

Daniella Rinaldi prepares about 2,000 of these gooey squares each week at the Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe. Then guests turn them into s'mores.

Rinaldi likes when hers catch fire. That's what happens when the stick stays static. To get an even golden hue it requires constant turning. Then the inside is totally melted.



Pastry Chef Daniella Rinaldi says marshmallow trays must rest for 12 hours before they can be cut. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

These are no ordinary marshmallows. Egg whites, sugar, corn syrup, water and gelatin never tasted so good. To this taste tester it seemed like the difference was more than the flavorings. What that extra might be the pastry chef was keeping a secret.

Over the massive gas fire pits on the back patio of the resort hotel guests are invited each day at 4:30 to partake in a free s'mores extravaganza. (If others show up, they won't be turned away.) Often there is a line before the first marshmallow is speared and set on fire. Each day a flavored marshmallow and

regular one are available.



The fire pit beckons people to come make a s'mores each afternoon at the Ritz. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

One outing was not enough for Lei Mikawa and Isreal Nahsohn of Napa. They saw the platter of s'mores ingredients at check-in and made a beeline to the fire pit. The fun of roasting the marshmallow brought them back another afternoon.

They are typical of the usual crowd – adults seem to have more fun; it's nostalgic for them.

Eleven chairs surround the fire – ideal for hanging out, getting warm or partaking in the fun. While the logs are fake and fire is produced by gas and not wood, the marshmallow doesn't know the difference.



All the fixings for gourmet s'mores.
Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E.
Wright

The flavors change with the season and the ingredients available. In summer Rinaldi's inspiration comes from the resort's garden – fresh herbs like mint and tarragon are used. At Halloween she created Frankenstein flavor and pumpkin spice.

For *Lake Tahoe News* she shared bubble gum – which was exactly like eating a piece of bubble gum. The blue marshmallow is a hit with kids – adults are a bit more discerning. It brought back memories of when bubble gum ice cream was a favorite.

The vanilla bean lacks that distinct vanilla flavor, and instead tastes more like a regular marshmallow.

The ginger snap is like taking a spoonful of molasses – outstanding if you like that flavor.

The chocolate mint was bursting with flavor. The only problem is the marshmallow is brown so it was more difficult to know exactly when it was done roasting.



The finished product. Photo Copyright
2015 Carolyn E. Wright

Ritz employees – one who is called a marshmologist – are at the ready to help turn the marshmallow into a s'mores. Pieces of Hershey's chocolate are on graham crackers waiting for the hot gooeyness to complete it.

S'mores stands for some more. Credit is given to the Girl Scouts for creating the marshmallow, chocolate, graham cracker treat; with kudos to Loretta Scott Crew for coming up with the combo in the 1920s. They are so popular that there is now a National S'Mores Day – Aug. 10.

Editorial: Federal water bill deserves Calif.'s backing

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Dec. 16, 2016, Modesto Bee.*

Amid the worst drought in memory, California's congressional delegation has failed once again to compromise on a \$1.3 billion water bill that could deliver more water for farms and help the environment.

When it became clear earlier this month that the latest effort on this legislation was kaput, the politicians did what they so often do in the face of failure: point fingers.

Northern California Democrats – sensitive to regional needs and the desires of environmental interests – said they largely had been frozen out of negotiations.

Central Valley Republicans, who have had a front-row view of fallowed farmland, job losses and people in community food lines, pinned the blame on California's two Democratic senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer.

Read the whole story

How to market to millennials

By Howard Riell, Vegas Inc.

Business owners increasingly are recognizing the need to market to millennials, young people ages 22 to 34 – as well they should.

“Millennials are the chosen generation for many marketers because of their sheer number and perceived buying power,” according to NPD Group, a market research company.

Millennials comprise nearly three-tenths of the adult population (29 percent) and are more ethnically diverse than Gen-Xers and baby boomers.

“Millennials are different from other generations for a number of reasons,” said Kirk Jacobson, managing partner of JW Advisors, a business financial consulting firm.

Read the whole story

Turmoil beginning with Adelson's purchase of paper

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS – When several reporters for the main newspaper in Las Vegas were taken off their beats and assigned to investigate three judges, the decision seemed strange because it came from the paper's new owners, not a newsroom editor.

The mystery deepened weeks later, when the public learned that casino mogul Sheldon Adelson and his family had purchased the paper in a secretive deal. And the questions only intensified, leading the staff of the *Review-Journal* to publish a front-page story about suspicions that the owners had attempted to use the paper to settle a personal score with a judge handling a lawsuit against Adelson, a wealthy political donor known as a Republican kingmaker.

On Tuesday, the *Review-Journal* editor who decided not to run anything on the three judges told the staff he was stepping down after accepting a voluntary buyout.

Mike Hengel stunned the newsroom with his departure, which was announced Wednesday on the front page in an article that said an unspecified number of other employees had also accepted buyouts.

"I think my resignation probably comes as a relief to the new owners," Hengel said in an audio recording obtained by the Associated Press.

Many of the questions center on a small Connecticut newspaper that published a story singling out Elizabeth Gonzalez, one of the Nevada judges who was monitored by the Las Vegas reporters. The *New Britain Herald* called her rulings "inconsistent" and "contradictory" and cited them as evidence for why Connecticut may not want to consider creating specialized business courts.

The judge has clashed numerous times with Adelson's attorneys in a high-profile wrongful-termination lawsuit brought against Adelson's casino company, Las Vegas Sands.

Earlier this year, Gonzalez admonished Adelson in court for not answering a routine question about work e-mails, telling him he could not argue with her.

The publisher of the Connecticut paper is Michael Schroeder, who also happens to be the manager of a Delaware company formed to facilitate the purchase of the *Review-Journal* for the Adelsons.

Schroeder was introduced to the *Review-Journal* newsroom on Dec. 10, and he was the one who initially refused to identify the newspaper's new owners.

It was not clear if the other two judges – a Las Vegas justice of the peace and a Clark County family court judge – had any connection with Adelson. The newspaper report said they were selected by the reporters.

Gonzalez was selected by someone at the *Review-Journal*, but not within the newsroom, because she specializes in business lawsuits and is handling unrelated cases involving Adelson and fellow casino mogul Steve Wynn, the report said.

As news organizations adapt to an ever-changing media landscape, many newspapers have changed hands, with some being acquired by billionaires. But few American newspaper owners have a political agenda to rival that of Adelson, who has contributed tens of millions to GOP campaigns.

Gatehouse Media, the paper's former owner that will continue managing it, has said Adelson has no intention of using the newspaper as a platform.

Andrew Seaman, chairman of the ethics committee of the Society of Professional Journalists, stresses that the story in the Connecticut newspaper could be a coincidence but acknowledges the only way to describe the sequence of events is "weird."

"The implication is that there is some connection with the Connecticut newspaper, and it's all connected to the sale," Seaman said. "It's very concerning."

After he decided against publishing any of the material about the judges, Hengel said, he sent the research to Publisher Jason Taylor and never heard more.

"I didn't see the point of it. I still don't see the point of it," Hengel said Tuesday, adding that he had not talked with anybody from the Adelson family or Schroeder. "I wasn't interested in publishing it."

Schroeder did not return phone calls and emails. He declined to comment to the *New York Times*, but told the newspaper the Las Vegas reporters were "stirring up trouble."

Adelson's spokesman for the Las Vegas Sands, Ron Reese, declined to comment, as did Gonzalez, who spoke through her executive assistant, and longtime *Review-Journal* attorney Mark Hinueber. He said he could not say anything about whether he or other employees were still employed by the paper.

The Adelsons bought the *Review-Journal* and a handful of other

Nevada papers for \$140 million – nearly \$40 million more than what Gatehouse paid for the properties in February. The family did not disclose the purchase until the newspaper staff, media watchdogs and politicians, including some presidential candidates, demanded to know the identity of the new owners.

The Adelsons said they held back revealing themselves as the owners because they did not want an announcement to distract from last week's Republican presidential debate held at the Venetian, the casino-hotel on the Las Vegas Strip that is part of Adelson's empire.

Seaman said Review-Journal reporters have earned respect for their dogged reporting about their own sale.

"It shows," Seaman said, that "they are not afraid to stand up to the people who sign their paychecks, which is very admirable."

Holiday food traditions reconnect us with healthy habits

By Ellie Krieger, Washington Post

At first glance, the holiday season seems to be anything but healthy, with its piles of party food, elaborate dinners and cookies, cookies, cookies. But underneath that candy-cane coating is a surprisingly nourishing core.

You see, good nutrition is much more than what we eat and the grams of saturated fat or sugar a food has. It is also, maybe more importantly, about the way we eat and how we approach

food.

If you look a little deeper, you can see how the underpinnings of our holiday food traditions may help us reconnect with healthy habits that would serve us well throughout the year.

[Read the whole story](#)

Snowpack exceeds average for first time in years



Kirkwood received so much snow earlier this week that when the roads were closed employees spent the night at the resort. Photo/Provided

By Bettina Boxall, Frank Shyong and Joseph Serna, Los Angeles Times

A series of powerful snowstorms in the Sierra Nevada has resulted in a small milestone in drought-stricken California: The snowpack is now higher than average for this time of year.

The storms, which are likely to continue into Friday, have fattened the mountain snowpack to levels California hasn't seen for two years, said Steve Nemeth, water supply forecaster for the state Department of Water Resources.

The announcement was welcome news to a state that has struggled with extremely dry conditions for more than four years. However, experts were quick to point out that California's drought is far from over.

Statewide, the snowpack is 111 percent of average for the date. In the northern Sierra, it is 116 percent of the norm; in the central Sierra, 121 percent of average and in the southern Sierra, 85 percent of the norm.

Read the whole story

Nevada offering several First Day hikes

Nevada State Parks is offering a series of guided hikes led by park rangers and/or local volunteers as part of the nationwide First Day Hikes Program.

The Jan. 1 hikes are free and the park entrance fees will be waived.

Hikes in Northern Nevada include:

- **Rock Point Mill Hike**

Take a short walk through the remains of the Rock Point Mill and learn some of Nevada's early history, from the California Gold Rush to the development of Dayton State Park. Dogs are not permitted on this walk. This walk is less than one mile round trip, but it includes some short, rocky hills and stairs. Participants should wear sturdy hiking boots, bring water, and dress in layers for the weather. This walk should last approximately one hour. We will discuss the purpose of the mill along with some of Nevada's early history, including the California Gold Rush, and the gold and silver discoveries at Virginia City. Difficulty: Moderate

Meet at 10am. The Rock Point Mill is located across the highway from Dayton State Park. Participants should park in the northeastern corner of the Gold Ranch Casino parking lot.

For more info, contact Kim Zuch at 775.687.4319 or washoelake@hdiss.net.

- **Fort Churchill State Park**

This will be a three-mile, round-trip hike along the Nature Trail at Fort Churchill State Historic Park. Hikers of all ages are invited to be immersed in the beauty of Fort Churchill in winter and learn about the area's rich history and abundant natural resources.

Dress for the weather (hats, gloves, and waterproof boots recommended), and be sure to bring water. In the event of severe weather, the hike may be canceled.

Difficulty: Easy. It will be from 1-4pm.

Meet at the John C. Fremont Picnic Area at Fort Churchill State Historic Park.

For more info, contact Kristin Sanderson at 775.577.4880 or bucklandstation@hotmail.com.

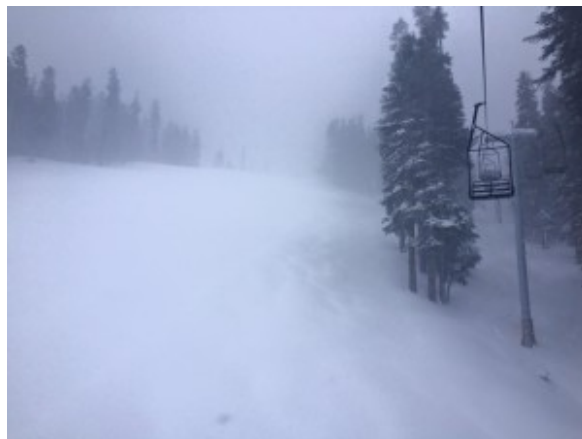
- Washoe Lake State Park

Hike through the sand dunes at Washoe Lake starting at 1pm.
Difficulty: Easy.

Meet at the Washoe Lake State Park Equestrian Area.

For more info, contact Kim Zuch at 775.687.4319 or washoelake@hdiss.net.

Tornado on West Slope, steady snow in Tahoe



It will be a powder at
Sierra-at-Tahoe on
Christmas, as well as all
Tahoe resorts.
Photo/Provided

The National Weather Service in Sacramento has issued a tornado warning for the West Slope of El Dorado County until 4pm Dec. 24.

A 3:14pm the public reported a tornado near Folsom or El Dorado Hills. Doppler radar showed this tornado moving east at 20mph, according to the NWS. Locations impacted include Placerville, Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Shingle Springs, Rescue, Cameron Park and other nearby towns.

KCRA-TV has coverage of the tornado.

A winter storm warning is in effect for the Lake Tahoe Basin until 10pm Christmas Eve.

As of 3:30pm about 1 foot of snow had accumulated in South Lake Tahoe and was continuing to fall.

Many city streets have not been plowed.

Highways are mess, with several accidents and spinouts being reported. At times the roads have been closed to clear the wrecks. For current road conditions, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

Scattered snow showers are forecast for Christmas, with mostly sunny skies on the weekend.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Study: Hunger, homelessness on the rise

By Ned Resnikoff, Al Jazeera

Many of America's largest cities continue to grapple with rising food insecurity and homelessness, according to a report released by the U.S. Conference of Mayors on Tuesday. The latest iteration of the non-partisan group's annual Hunger and Homelessness Survey found that homeless shelters and food pantries across 22 U.S. cities are struggling to keep up with rising demand for their services.

It is in Washington, D.C., Seattle, and Los Angeles where homelessness was found to have increased the most sharply over the past year. The largest increase came in Washington, D.C., where the number of people experiencing homelessness rose by 28 percent and the number of homeless families went up by 60 percent. Meanwhile, requests for emergency food assistance in the city rose by 27 percent during the same period.

Overall, across the 22 cities included in the survey, homelessness increased by 1.6 percent over the past year, the survey found. The amount of emergency food assistance distributed by those cities increased by three percent. The cities surveyed included Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia and San Francisco.

Read the whole story