

Nev. No. 2 in nation for private job growth

By Associated Press

CARSON CITY — Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval announced last week that the state ranked second in the nation for private sector job growth in 2014.

The Republican governor said Thursday that the state added 40,700 new jobs last year, the second largest percent increase in the country behind North Dakota.

Nevada was ranked high in job growth in the years before the economic downturn, and bottomed out between 2008 and 2010. Sandoval said in a statement that the improved numbers meant the state's economy was moving in the right direction.

The state's Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation also reported Wednesday that Nevada's jobless rate dropped to 7 percent in May, down from 7.1 percent recorded since January. It's the first time the unemployment rate has dropped this year.

Children's scientific day camps offered

The Tahoe Institute for Natural Science's nature day camps for children start in July.

Entomologists ages 6-12 will spend time playing games, searching for wildlife and reflecting on the day's adventure,

as well as bonding with fellow campers. Camps are divided into two age groups, with each doing age-appropriate scientific events.

Day camps in South Lake Tahoe are July 20-23, from 9am-1pm for ages 6-8. Cost is \$150 or \$125 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science members. For ages 9-12, the camps are July 6-10 from 9am-1pm. The cost is \$280 or \$245 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science members.

Camps for those in the North Shore-Truckee area are July 13-17 from 9am-1pm. This is for ages 6-8. Cost is \$150 or \$125 for Tahoe Institute for Natural Science or KidZone Museum members.

For more information about TINS Nature Camps, contact James at James@TINSweb.org or 775.298.0064.

Tennis club going country for a day



While wearing cowboy boots won't actually be allowed on the tennis courts, all other country related apparel is encouraged at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club's July Hump Day.

The theme for the July 8 event is Country Fried Hump Day.

This Hump Day Mixer will include barbecued chicken, raffle prizes, and an adult doubles round robin for all ability levels. The tennis is semi-serious because the emphasis is on fun. Play starts at 5:30pm.

The mixer costs \$10 for club members, \$15 for non-members, and \$5 for spectators (meal only). Membership is \$80 per year. To join, go online or do so the night of the event.

Participants of Hump Day events are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert, as well as beverage of choice. No advance sign-up is required.

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club is on Warrior Way off Highway 50 in Zephyr Cove. The nonprofit Zephyr Cove Tennis Club Foundation is hosting the event.

Tricks to predicting the weather

By Graham Averill, Outside

I was stumbling around in the middle of the night, lost in a wicked snowstorm on the Appalachian Trail and all I could see with my headlamp was a wall of white. I knew an A.T. shelter was a mile through the woods and the interstate was five miles in the other direction, but I was blinded by the snow. I pictured myself hiking in circles, eventually curling up in a ball like the man from the famous Jack London story.

My death would be humiliating, considering I was only seven miles from the nearest Waffle House. I never should've

believed the farmer and his bean jar, I thought.

For as long as people have wondered if they should bring an umbrella, there have been folksy ways of predicting the weather. That famous ground hog, the stripes on a wooly worm, the shape of persimmon seeds—all of that folklore we have used to forecast long-term weather patterns. Some farmers insist the number of fogs in August foretell the number of snows in winter. They put beans in a jar for every fog they count, then go on the local news and say it's going to be a dry winter.

Take it from me: You should not make backpacking plans based on the number of beans in a farmer's jar.

Read the whole story

Alpine County increasing network of trails

By Kathryn Reed

Building a trail from Turtle Rock Park in Markleeville to Grover Hot Springs seemed like a simple enough of an idea. Then the proponents hit the wall of bureaucracy.

“Basically we discovered that it was going to be a big ordeal or a lot of challenges to create the trail. There were some big expenses we were not prepared or able to cover,” Andy Lovell, president of the Alpine Trails Association, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

However, the Alpine Trails Association members have penetrated the bureaucratic wall and are on course to make their dream a reality. Memorandums of understandings are being worked on

with landowners. It's possible that trail will break ground in 2018, with completion in 2020.

The association formed in summer 2013 with the main desire of creating that one trail. The U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and California State Parks own the land where the trail would be built. Each has a process, criteria, rules, regulations and hoops to abide by or jump through. It's not just taking a shovel to the ground, the trails group has learned.



Alpine County's trail network is growing.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

The 47-member Alpine Trails Association has not been deterred. The group spent the better part of 2014 creating a 501(c)3 nonprofit, recruiting members, taking classes, reaching out to other established groups like the Tahoe Rim Trail Association and Carson Valley Trails Association, and building relationships with the land owners.

"We have become much more adept at what we are doing because of the lessons given by people in more knowledgeable associations," Lovell said. "It's good if all trails are made in the same way with the same expectations of the people who use them."

Now, trails the Alpine group hadn't thought about are getting built.

In talking with the BLM about trails, the group learned the federal agency had a shovel ready project – just no one to build it. This was the 1.1-mile interpretive loop around Curtz Lake in Markleeville. This trail was finished at the end of May. A couple signs still need to be installed.

The association wrote a proposal to the BLM earlier this year to expand the trail system in that area and into the Indian Creek Recreation Lands. BLM agreed to it and now the association is tasked with 11 miles of trail work. This is one reason why the Grover project has been pushed back a few years.

“The most important thing is to connect Turtle Rock to the interpretive trail. It is just over one mile,” Lovell said. “It will tie in our entire trail system. Turtle Rock will become the hub. It will connect from there to all the Indian Creek Recreation Lands trails.”

The Alpine group and BLM have agreements for the trail builders to work on an eight-mile loop that connects Indian Creek Reservoir, the East Fork of the Carson River, Curtz Lake and Summit Lake.

Lovell had high praise for BLM in regards to how easy the agency has been to work with as well as the ability to use their tools.

A \$10,000 grant that was awarded last week to the trails group by Alpine County will pay for a shed and tools. This in turn will mean the group can invite more people out on trail building days because there will be enough tools for volunteers.

This is the first grant the association has received. Members plan to keep writing more so the trail system in Alpine County continues to grow.

“We have other plans to expand that trial system on the

Eastern Slope of the Sierra in Alpine County,” Lovell said. “We are hoping to connect with Woodfords and Markleeville.”

Notes:

- For more info about the Alpine Trails Association, email Andy Lovell at ata.andyl@gmail.com.
- The group also has a website.
- Workdays are in the spring and fall on Tuesday and Saturdays from 9am-2pm.

Opinion: What the Confederate flag really means

By Washington Post

In the aftermath of Thursday’s tragedy in Charleston, the U.S. and South Carolina flags flew at half-mast over the top of the South Carolina State House to honor the black victims of a hate crime. But flying high in front of the building was another symbol: a Confederate flag.

Some argue that the flag is a symbol of slavery and oppression, while others insist that it is purely a matter of Southern heritage and pride.

But too little of the conversation takes into account the flag’s complicated history, according to Matthew Guterl, a professor of Africana and American studies at Brown University

who studies race in the aftermath of the Civil War. Given his research, which has touched frequently on the use of the Confederate flag, Guterl says that he finds it impossible to argue that it's a neutral symbol.

I spoke with Guterl to learn what exactly people misunderstand about the flag, its history, and how that affects what it symbolizes today.

Let's start with what drives the mentality that has angered so many people. Why do people embrace the Confederate flag?

There are at least two reasons why people embrace the battle flag or the stars and bars, which was first used by the army of northern Virginia.

The first, which is a kind of surface explanation, is that they imagine that in that context the flag is a representation of Southern history, Southern heritage, and Southern culture. They tie it to questions of state's rights, and the absence of federal oversight.

Read the whole story

Crews lose ground, no containment in Washington Fire



One of the many aircraft drops retardant on the Washington Fire on June 22. Photo/Susan Wood

Updated 10:43pm

MARKLEEVILLE – Alpine County's largest town was like an eerie ghost town Monday evening.

A few kids were playing in front of the cafe on Highway 89. One man was in front of his studio. Otherwise it was like everyone else had abandoned the town. A bowling ball could be rolled through town without hitting anything.

With the 14,942-acre Washington Fire threatening Markleeville, people were not waiting for mandatory evacuation orders before leaving.

More than a dozen structures in the outlying are still threatened. Turtle Creek and Indian Creek campgrounds are closed.

"Today the section of the fire that was initially heading to

the northwest toward the town of Markleeville progressed more to the west than north,” firefighters said. “Tactical priority is to keep the fire from spreading farther northwest toward the town of Markleeville.”

The fire is now at zero percent containment, whereas it had been at 10 percent. This is because the high winds made it unsafe for firefighters on June 22. More than 500 firefighters are trying to get a handle on the wildland fire that is burning in a rugged area. It was started by lightning.

Fire crews will be discussing the situation at June 23 at 8am at the Board of Supervisors meeting room, 99 Water St., Markleeville.

— *Reporting by Susan Wood*

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Updated 3:50pm

Hundreds of firefighters are trying to gain control of the Washington Fire, which as of Monday afternoon had burned 9,500 acres.

“Resources are focusing their efforts on the northwest flank of the fire in an effort to protect the town of Markleeville,” officials said.

Markleeville residents have been told to prepare to evacuate, though no evacuations have been ordered.

Heavy smoke is covering the area and can be seen for a great distance.

The fire started by lightning remains 10 percent contained as of 3pm June 22.

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The Washington Fire burning near Markleeville has charred

between 6,500 and 8,900 acres, officials told *Lake Tahoe News* on Monday morning.

It is about five miles from the town of Markleeville.

"We are forecasting heavy winds again to day. It grounded the use of aircraft for most of all day yesterday and we're worried it will happen again today," Larry Lucas with the U.S. Forest Service told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Winds are forecast to subside on Tuesday.

The fire is burning in a rugged, remote area that makes it difficult to get ground crews to it.

Officials believe the cause of the fire is lightning. It was first spotted on June 19.

Lucas explained that when there are heavy bursts of lightning and a lot of trees are hit that usually it amounts to nothing. But when there are windy days like what occurred over the weekend, it can whip a smoldering tree into a raging forest fire.

Highways 89 and 4 in the area remain closed. About a dozen structures remain threatened. The fire is 10 percent contained.

—Lake Tahoe News staff report

Bare slopes have Chile looking like Tahoe

By **Javiera Quiroga**, Washington Post

With 15 years' experience working as a waitress at the resort, Pereira can't remember the last time the slopes were this barren by mid-June. The only snow to be seen is the fake variety, put down last week for a photo shoot.

"In all my years here, the snow has never taken so long to arrive or the season so long to start," Haydee said as she stood in the deserted restaurant.

Santiago, which sits below the ski resorts, has seen just 1.2 centimeters of rain this year, 86 percent less than normal, and there is none forecast for at least another seven days. The situation gets more complicated for Valle Nevado and the other ski resorts in the Andes mountains by the capital in a week or so, when package tours start to arrive from countries such as Brazil.

People began skiing toward the end of May last year, with the resort officially opening June 14. This year there isn't so much a shortage of snow, as a complete absence.

Read the whole story

Music at beach to raise money

for CASA

CASA's annual free concert at Lakeview Commons in South Lake Tahoe is Aug. 14 from 4:30-8pm.

The fundraiser for Court Appointed Special Advocates will feature two local bands. The audience decides who wins by voting with their wallets.

This is a family-friendly event with local vendors, beer/wine garden, live/silent auction, raffle prizes and more.

There will be a free bike valet.

For more info, contact Alexis Foley at 530.573.3093 or alexis@casaeldorado.org.

Casinos improve efforts to fight money laundering

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

The gaming industry's fight against criminals who want to use casinos to disguise illegal money was front and center Thursday at the Paris resort.

There, industry leaders and government officials gathered for a conference that addressed how casinos are handling their obligations under anti-money-laundering law.

The verdict, according to one government official: Casinos have done a better job lately of reporting suspicious financial activity, but there's still room for improvement.

Last year, the director of the Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network – or FinCEN – spoke at this same Bank Secrecy Act conference and reminded the casino industry of how it needs to instill itself with a “culture of compliance” when it comes to money-laundering law.

Read the whole story