

King Fire restoration proposals being sought

Eldorado National Forest is seeking comments as it prepares an environmental impact statement for the King Fire Restoration Project

There will be an open house Jan. 13 at the Best Western Plus Placerville Inn, 6850 Green Leaf Drive, Placerville from 6-8pm. A presentation on the proposed action will be followed by questions and answers with the planning team, and an opportunity to talk to specialists about specific aspects of the project including fuel reduction, tree salvage, reforestation, wildlife, watershed protection, and research.

The forest is currently proposing to treat 14,000 acres of national forest that burned with high severity.

The objectives are:

- Reduce risk from falling dead, dying, and defective trees;
- Reduce long term fuel accumulation in strategic locations to improve control of future fires;
- Restore diverse vegetation including conifer forests in a manner that improves future resiliency;
- Expeditiously remove fire killed timber to generate funds for restoration and contribute to the societal need for wood products;
- Take advantage of research opportunities to increase knowledge regarding the environmental effects of large fires, how to reduce the risk of future fires, and how to restore resilient forests.

A complete description of the proposed action and project maps is online, then click on King Fire Restoration Project.

Issues or concerns identified during the current scoping phase will be used to develop project alternatives prior to releasing a draft EIS. There will also be another comment period when draft EIS is released in the spring.

Nev. benefits from last-minute congressional action

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

By the skin of their teeth, congressional lawmakers passed a \$1 trillion budget through next summer, OK'd all military spending and approved a series of tax breaks.

Amid sometimes high-stakes drama, Congress got it all done in a flurry of last-minute legislating and back-room deals during the lame-duck session.

It was also Sen. Harry Reid's final few weeks as Senate majority leader. The Nevada Democrat will hand over power to Republicans when the new Congress takes over in January.

But Reid and the rest of the Nevada delegation made sure that plenty affecting Nevada made it into the final pieces of legislation of the 113th Congress – with at least one major caveat.

Read the whole story

Poll: Race is country's most important issue

By Mark Berman, Washington Post

For the first time in more than two decades, more than one in 10 Americans say that race is the most pressing issue facing the country, according to a new Gallup poll.

The poll showed that 13 percent of Americans think that race relations and racism are the most important problems, the same number of people who said the economy, and more than those who cited unemployment (8 percent), immigration (7 percent) and terrorism (2 percent), among many other things.

In fact, the only thing that more people named as a problem was general dissatisfaction with the government, Congress and politicians, with 15 percent of people citing that.

[Read the whole story](#)

Letter: Meyers appreciative of support

To the community,

The Meyers Community Foundation would like to thank the individuals and businesses that made our 4th annual Meyers Tree Lighting event on Dec. 5 such a success.

Almost 400 people showed up to ring in the holidays and celebrate Meyers, and we couldn't have done it without

phenomenal local support.

As most people know, the tree had been struck by lightning and it took a community effort to bring our holiday tree back to life. Instrumental to the lighting of the Meyers Community Tree were the skillful team of Ed Cook Tree Service, K and K Services (Kenny Curtzwiler), Liberty Energy and John Dayberry.

Also, a special thanks goes out to CalStar for “dropping in Santa,” Lake Valley Fire District for their Christmas truck, the California Conservation Corps, Santa Dylan Thomas, Santa’s helper Misty, Sunrise Rentals for providing power, Downtown Café for providing cookies, Sierra-at-Tahoe for providing the cotton candy booth and JoAnn Conner for providing Santa suit.

Businesses, families and individuals that donated to the tree lighting are recognized as follows:

Platinum sponsors: The Appointment Biz-Colin Hupp and Julie Threewit, RE/Max Realty Today, Jeff Chamberlain DDS, Divided Sky, the Fair Family;

Gold sponsors: Greenfront Mortgage, Lira’s Supermarket, Bert’s Café, Getaway Café, Meeks, Alpine Septic and Plumbing, Novasel and Schwarty Investments, Inc., Vichas Consulting, the Brejc Family, the Praul-Cooper Family, Sierra Windows and Doors, New Visions Construction, Sierra-at-Tahoe and Lake Tahoe Golf Course;

Silver sponsors: Richard and Joan Young, John and Susan Hartzell, Freel Perk, Rise Designs, Studio Lake Tahoe, Bona Fide Books, Lee and Margaret Vestal, the Hannah Family, Affordable Construction Services, Carl Ribaud and the Orr Family;

Bronze sponsors: Golden Bear Events and Watta Bike.

Thanks to all who came out to enjoy the festivities – we wish you a happy holiday.

Roads expected to be crowded during holidays

AAA projects 98.6 million Americans will journey 50 miles or more from home during the year-end holiday season, an increase of 4 percent from the 94.8 million people who traveled last year. The holiday period is defined as Dec. 23-Jan. 4.

This upward trend marks the highest forecast growth rate for the year-end holiday season since 2009 and the highest travel volume for the holiday period on record.

Nearly 91 percent of all travelers (89.5 million) will celebrate the holidays with a road trip, an increase of 4.2 percent from 2013. Air travel is forecast to grow 1 percent from 2013, with 5.7 million travelers taking to the skies.

Low gas prices continue to help boost disposable income. Today's national average is at the lowest level in five years and 70 cents lower than last year.

The calendar is having a positive effect on the number of travelers expected this year. This year the holidays land on a Thursday, creating a holiday travel season that is one day longer than last year's and the longest since 2008, offering travelers more options for departures and return trips.

According to AAA's Leisure Travel Index, hotel rates for AAA three diamond lodgings are expected to increase 4 percent from one year ago, with travelers spending an average of \$143 per night compared to \$138 last year. The average hotel rate for

AAA Two Diamond hotels has risen 5 percent, with an average cost of \$108 per night.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Amazon Sunday delivery coming to S. Tahoe

Amazon's Sunday delivery will be available in South Lake Tahoe starting in January.

The packages come in the morning to the post office and are delivered that same afternoon.

Las Vegas was the pilot for the service, and it has been rapidly expanding. Reno and Carson City has had the delivery for the last two Sundays. However, it will not be available on the Nevada side of the South Shore because there is no home delivery there.

New technology is being developed to better streamline the process.

"A yellow-armed machine scans everything. It tells the clerk scanning what route it goes to," Suzanne Phillips, interim manager of postal operations, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "It prints out turn-for-turn for the route."

Having these physical directions will make it easier for the Postal Service to enlist the help of drivers from other offices or ones who are used to a different route.

Retirement essentials to follow in the new year

By Carl Edwards

Wow, what an amazing market ride over the last few years. Running on tracks laid by an unprecedented Federal Reserve monetary easing program, the market has once again run to new all-time highs and appears to still have some steam. Or does it?

While no one really knows the answer to this, it is important to remember history as a guide, and to think about the future – your future. It wasn't all that long ago that the world's financial system was shaken to its core, leaving many retirees running for shelter from the Ebola-like symptoms displayed by world financial systems. Fear over which institution or country would next display the almost certain deadly symptoms ran rampant.

I am certainly not echoing the calls of the past and screaming it's time to get your guns and gold. I am, however, pointing out to consumers the recent and vivid reminders of the importance to get back to the basics with your financial planning this New Year. If we fail to remember the past, we repeat it. You have worked too hard preparing for this time in your life.

Let's review three vital elements you should implement in your retirement plan this New Year.

- **Get your annual financial check-up.** How can we possibly forget to do this? Annual check-ups are the No. 1 preventative care tool at our disposal. While many individuals should be meeting more regularly with their financial advisor, everyone should have at least the minimum of an annual visit. Problems creep up and this is often the best way to catch them before it is too late.

- **Don't forget to diversify.** Are you working with a broker who always wants to sell you mutual funds full of stocks and bonds? Does your annuity guy think every dime you have should be stuffed into insurance products? The reality is they are probably both wrong. Find an advisor this year who knows the benefits of each of these products, but who also knows the value of how they work together. Diversification is important and it may include each of these products along with other assets such as individual stocks and bonds, certificates of deposit (structured and fixed), business development companies, real estate investment trusts, precious metals, and numerous other investments.

- **Rebalance, rebalance, rebalance.** With the great equity run up we have encountered since the lows of March 2009, it is vital to remember that we must continue to evaluate our investment portfolios. While equity portfolios have risen significantly since that time, other areas of our portfolio may not have fared so well, leaving our risk levels in need of adjustment. It is often a good idea to capture some of those hard-earned gains. You never know – the next major pullback could be just around the corner. Be prudent, not greedy.

Carl Edwards is a chartered financial consultant and is the owner of C.E. Wealth Group.

Neighbors not happy with Placer wineries

By Richard Chang, Sacramento Bee

Placer County officials are looking to clamp down on its burgeoning wine industry following complaints by residents over noise and traffic.

In the last decade, several wineries have opened, with vintners spending millions of dollars on tasting rooms that have become regional attractions. But the newfound popularity and growth has come at the expense of neighbors, who often put up with rowdy parties, loud wedding music and large tour buses.

The Placer County Planning Commission is considering limits on any for-profit event with more than 20 people, wine tastings exempted. The restriction would allow wineries to have only six such events per year.

Winery owners are pushing the county to move in the opposite direction, noting that private events – weddings, fundraisers, parties, dinners – are essential to their bottom line. The wine industry brings tourism and tax dollars to the county, the owners argue.

[Read the whole story](#)

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Carolyn Wright of Zephyr Cove Tennis Club has been named Reno-Tahoe captain of the year by the USTA Northern California Adult Leagues Department.

- Eight-time X Games gold medalist Nate Holland of Squaw Valley headlines the U.S. Snowboarding's 2014-15 snowboardcross team.

- Tickets are on sale for the annual Passport Weekends in El Dorado County on April 11-12 and April 18-19.

- Homewood Mountain Resort is opening this weekend.

- A big shout out and thank you to Toogee Sielsch of South Lake Tahoe for his photo that is now the masthead of *Lake Tahoe News* for the winter.

Vonn on a winning streak; Mancuso 15th

By USSA

VAL D'ISERE, France – Lindsey Vonn (Vail) positioned herself on the doorstep to history Dec. 20, winning her 61 career Audi FIS Ski World Cup with a 0.19 second victory in the Val d'Isere downhill. It left her just one win away from matching the all-time win record held by the legendary Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell.

Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg and Austria's Elisabeth Goergl tied for second.

Starting 13, Goergl set the pace to beat. Vonn came down 20, skiing aggressively and making a few mistakes – but staying ahead of the Austrian the entire way down the Oreiller-Killy course. Rebensburg, coming down later, was the only one to challenge Vonn and settled for the second place tie.

It was only Vonn's fourth race back since a series of knee surgeries. She has won two of the three downhills she's skied, and moved out of a tie with Tina Maze to takeover the Audi FIS Ski World Cup downhill lead.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) was 15, with Alice McKennis (Glenwood Springs, Colo.) 18.