

Officials: Smoke on South Shore from control burn



Smoke from a controlled burn on the South Shore has residents worried.
Photo/LTN

Smoke from a controlled burn on the south end of Fallen Leaf Lake has prompted several calls to local fire agencies. Officials say the fire is under control.

A helicopter flew over as well to ensure it was fine, Lake Valley Fire Chief Tim Alameda told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Winds are carrying the smoke over Heavenly Mountain Resort. Wisps of smoke can be seen from the Carson Valley as well.

Members of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, which includes local, state and federal agencies, will continue prescribed fire operations this week in numerous locations around Lake Tahoe.

Weather permitting, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District and U.S. Forest Service operations will take place on Brockway Summit above Kings Beach, from Logan Shoals to Spooner Summit, on Kingsbury Grade near Edgewood Creek, above Pioneer Trail off Fountain Place Road and near Big Meadow off Highway 89.

AP exam figures give Nev. reason to celebrate

By Meghan Delaney, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada is normally at the bottom of national education rankings, but new data released Wednesday gave the Silver State a rare opportunity to celebrate.

For the second year in a row, Nevada's performance on Advanced Placement exams was highlighted in an annual report by the College Board for showing one of the biggest year-over-year increases.

"Nevada is sort of the star of this year's AP report, alongside Massachusetts," said Trevor Packer, who administers the AP program for the College Board. Massachusetts, for the second year in a row, led the nation in overall passing rate, but Nevada posted one of the sharpest gains to finish 14th overall.

[Read the whole story](#)

Nev. OKs \$5.1M legal contract

for Yucca Mountain fight

By Associated Press

CARSON CITY — Nevada's Board of Examiners has approved a \$5.1 million contract with an outside legal team to help fight President Trump's proposal to restart the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

The panel chaired by Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval voted unanimously this week to extend the state's contract for another two years with the Austin, Texas-based firm Egan, Fitzpatrick, Malsch & Lawrence.

Robert Halstead, the head of Nevada's Nuclear Projects Agency, said the state lacks the expertise in dealing with the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission to do the work itself.

Read the whole story

Albertsons to scoop up remnants of Rite Aid

By Associated Press

The privately held owner of Safeway, Vons and other grocery brands is plunging deeper into the pharmacy business with a deal to buy Rite Aid, the nation's third-largest drugstore chain.

Albertsons Companies is offering either a share of its stock and \$1.83 in cash or slightly more than a share for every 10 shares of Rite Aid. A deal value was not disclosed in a

statement released Tuesday by the companies.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- John Brissenden, 69, of Hope Valley has been appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, where he served from 2005-17. Brissenden has owned Sorensen's Resort since 1980. He was a member of the Alpine County Board of Supervisors from 1989-93.
 - Liberty Utilities has a planned outage for Feb. 21 from 8am-4pm in the Tahoma area along El Dorado Street and Deer Avenue to replace overhead wire.
 - Slightly Stoopid will be at Harveys in Stateline on June 16 at 5pm. Stick Figure and Pepper will open. This is a general assignment show. Tickets are \$39.50.
 - Placer County's Tahoe Basin Design Review Committee has a meeting set for Feb. 27 at 4pm in Tahoe City to discuss Tahoe City Marina's request to convert existing commercial space into 10 studio apartments (multi-family) with a mixture of market rate, moderate, and affordable units.
 - During the week before Oscar night, the Minden Library will be showing films nominated for the 2018 Academy Awards. "Dunkirk" (rated PG-13) will be shown on Feb. 27 at 4pm and "Darkest Hour" (rated PG-13) on March 3 at 10:30am.
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Wildfires inspire new idea: Charging rural customers more for electricity

By David R. Baker, San Francisco Chronicle

The cost of preventing power-line wildfires could rise so high that California's top utility regulator recently suggested a new way to pay for it – charge residents of high-risk areas more money for electricity.

Michael Picker, president of the California Public Utilities Commission, floated the idea during a Jan. 31 meeting on fire safety for utility companies. With more Californians moving into rural areas prone to fires, he questioned the fairness of forcing all utility customers to pay the costs of preventing rural wildfires sparked by utility lines.

“Should we actually start to charge differentially for the use of the distribution system for those sections that are in the high-fire-hazard zone and people who choose to live there?” Picker said.

While it wasn't a formal proposal, Picker said in a follow-up interview that it's an idea worth discussing.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Four Sacramento

sequels to 'Lady Bird'

By Joe Mathews

Good news, Sacramento! "Lady Bird," a coming-of-age film set in Sacramento—and written and directed by local product Greta Gerwig—has been nominated for five Academy Awards, including best picture.

Here's the better news, Sacramento! Gerwig says she will make three more films about her hometown.



Joe Mathews

"I would like to make a quartet of films in Sacramento," Gerwig, told the Sacramento Bee. "I have three more before the quartet is done."

What will these films be about? No one, perhaps not even Gerwig herself, knows. But here's hoping Gerwig explores Sacramento's severe challenges, from soaring housing prices to a weak jobs market, just as "Lady Bird" takes on the city's relatively low levels of college graduates.

The title character—a teenager named Lady Bird—is so disappointed with Sacramento's second-tier cultural and higher-education offerings that she leaves for a private college in New York. This brain drain is all too common. Sacramento ranks 58th out of 102 American metro areas in educational attainment.

So—in the spirit of civic renewal—I offer the Oscar-nominated

director my own treatments for four sequels.

1. "Lady Bird Gets Her Tree"

A homesick Lady Bird, in her late 20s, moves back and visits coffee shops for six months before deciding that Old Soul best fits her aura.

She and her artist boyfriend (Michael B. Jordan) fall behind on the \$1,500 monthly rent on an Oak Park one-bedroom, because their only steady job is driving for Lyft. After their landlord evicts them so he can rent to richer Bay Area refugees, Lady Bird relocates to the American River homeless encampment. But then, inspired by the beauty of the regional tree canopy, Lady Bird builds a treehouse in West Sacramento, and the housing-friendly council lets her keep it.

2. "Lady Bird Returns: Hired Liar"

In this black comedy, Lady Bird returns from the East Coast to lobby for children's groups. She discovers not only that legislators don't care about children—but also that, in a horror movie turn, they keep millions of children in a secret, off-budget city beneath the Capitol. She tells local media, but they don't have enough reporters to cover the story.

Lady Bird falls into despair. But then she meets a wealthy British-born telecommunications lobbyist, who is a British-born graduate of Stanford (Tom Hiddleston). They carry out a torrid love affair in his San Francisco pied-à-terre and his Tahoe chateau. She likes the fine life, and becomes a lobbyist for developer Angelo Tsakopolous.

When her beau proposes in a luxury box at a Kings game, Lady Bird replies: "Yes, on one condition. Promise me we'll never have children. Because the schools here suck."

3. "Lady Bird in the Swamp"

After eating a deep-fried, bacon-wrapped peanut butter cup at

the State Fair, Lady Bird becomes disoriented on her way home and drives into a Delta slough.

She's rescued by an improbably handsome seventh-generation pear farmer (Chris Pine), who makes her his wife. The film becomes a climate change pastoral, as Lady Bird observes the worsening cycles of flood and drought in the swamp, struggles with subsidence, and takes on the DIY job of putting her home on stilts.

Then mysterious engineers appear on the property. Powerful water agencies are secretly drilling an underground water tunnel that was abandoned after a court fight long ago.

In a final act straight out of "Erin Brockovich," Lady Bird investigates and digs a hole that puts her body in front of the tunneling machine. She is killed, but so is the tunnel project. Finally.

Sacramento Film 4: "Lady Bird versus the Apocalypse"

Yes, Gerwig is only doing three more films, but I'm sure her agent will want her to do a bigger payday action film—set in Sacramento, of course.

In 2050, years after her death in the Delta tunnel, new technology brings Lady Bird back as a part-human-part-machine cyborg. She settles happily in Sacramento—until a Pineapple Express system arrives and rains over the city for months, collapsing levees and completely flooding her hometown.

Searching for higher ground, she heads first to the foothills, but a vigilante squad of gun-toting locals shoots at her and other city refugees, because they vote too Democratic. So, after building a raft from old wood furniture, she heads west across the flood waters to Davis. There, NIMBYs express sympathy for Sacramento's dispossessed but refuse to accept the refugees, saying they cannot possibly support any more development.

Out of options, Lady Bird swims through the floodwaters south to downtown Stockton, where she takes shelter in the abandoned Federal Building. Inside, she discovers an old, rugged man who is also part machine (Harrison Ford). He takes her on his catamaran back to Sacramento, where they restore order and kick some serious butt.

After that, everything is OK in California's capital.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

California pot growers lagging in getting licenses

By Associated Press

LOS ANGELES – Nearly two months after recreational marijuana became legal in California, less than 1 percent of the state's known growers have been licensed, according to a report released Monday by a pot industry group.

The 38-page report from the California Growers Association says 0.78 percent, or 534, of an estimated 68,150 marijuana growers were licensed by the state as of Feb. 7. The association cited such obstacles to licensing as cost and regulatory barriers.

A study published last year by the University of California Agricultural Issues Center estimated the newly created state market for recreational marijuana should produce \$5 billion in taxable revenue this year.

Read the whole story

Future of SLT's city manager, city attorney unknown

By Kathryn Reed

Apparently whatever rattled the South Lake Tahoe City Council members to the point they stripped City Manager Nancy Kerry of all her duties isn't that egregious based on the decision to keep her on the payroll.

The council in closed session on Tuesday again were discussing Kerry. The closed session items for Feb. 20 and Feb. 12 were listed as: public employee discipline/dismissal/release.

No reason has been given as to why the taxpayers are paying to keep Kerry at home.

Mayor Wendy David during council comments on Tuesday said she recognizes the council is being scrutinized for what appears to be a lack of transparency, but added that they are "absolutely prohibited from speaking about personnel issues. It ensures confidentiality."

David said the goal is to be cautious, deliberate and decisive. She gave no indication of when a resolution to the conflict would be forthcoming.

Interim City Attorney Nira Doherty said she will be going on vacation starting Thursday. It is not known if someone else from her law firm of Burke, Williams & Sorensen will be handling the city manager legal work during her absence or if it will be tabled until her return. The city's contract is with the actual firm, with Doherty being the appointed attorney to handle South Lake Tahoe because of her prior full-

time employment with the city.

Doherty did request that at the March 20 meeting that the contract with her firm be discussed in open session.

It's possible the council will be looking for a new city manager and new city attorney this year. And with it being an election year, (the seats of David, Austin Sass and Tom Davis are up) the future of those two top level positions in the city become political fodder.

The city manager and city attorney are the only two positions the council has a say over.

For now, Fire Chief Jeff Meston is the acting city manager.

Variety of free gardening classes in Nevada

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and its certified master gardeners will be offering free gardening classes.

Gardening in Nevada: The Bartley Ranch Series is for anyone who wants to garden – those with big yards, small yards, or just patio or balcony space. The classes, offered in partnership with Washoe County Regional Parks and Open Space, run 6-8pm every Tuesday, Feb. 20-March 27, at Bartley Ranch Regional Park, 6000 Bartley Ranch Road in Reno.

The classes are taught by cooperative extension horticulturists, experts and certified master gardener volunteers, as well as local business owners.

For more info, go **online**.