

Tree into South Lake home; no injuries



Firefighters rescue a cat from a home that was damaged Feb. 18 by a tree into the roof. Photo/SLTFD

Wicked wind on Sunday brought down a tree into a South Lake Tahoe residence.

No one in the duplex was injured. Even the cat was safely rescued by firefighters.

The two units on Tahoe Vista Drive, though, are uninhabitable. Vehicles were also severely damaged.

The National Weather Service in Reno recorded a gust on Feb. 18 of 56 mph at Lake Tahoe Airport.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Tahoe's state senator shelters accused harasser

By Melody Gutierrez, San Francisco Chronicle

SACRAMENTO — When the state Senate investigated sexual harassment allegations against a high-ranking legislative staffer three years ago, the house's handling appeared to be done quickly and decidedly. The staffer, Steve Davey, was placed on paid leave and ultimately resigned as chief of staff at the request of his boss, Republican Sen. Ted Gaines.



Ted Gaines

But Davey wasn't without a job. Gaines' campaign hired him immediately, even as the investigation continued, then kept him on after the allegations were substantiated. In fact, a Chronicle review of documents released this month by the Legislature and other public records show that legislative employees who were disciplined for sexual harassment, even those who were fired or forced to resign, often faced no long-term effects on their careers.

Some even came out ahead.

Read the whole story

Special TCPUD meeting regarding Tahoe City Lodge

Tahoe City Public Utility District has scheduled a special board meeting for Feb. 22 to discuss the Tahoe City Lodge project.

The only item on open session is: Approving an agreement with Kila Tahoe LLC with respect to the grant of a shared-use parking easement, transfer of density from TCPUD property to the Tahoe City Lodge project, grant of necessary rights for the construction of SEZ restoration on district property and various future agreements for the demolition of the existing clubhouse and construction of a new clubhouse with a conference center and the lease for the conference center.

On closed session is an item about the Tahoe City Golf Course.

The meeting will start at 5pm at the district's offices at 221 Fairway Drive, Tahoe City.

Government puts outdoor industry size at \$373B

By Frederick Reimers, Outside

The outdoor recreation economy is officially a big deal. On Wednesday, the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released numbers detailing the economic power of the outdoor recreation industry, showing it comprises 2 percent (\$373.7 billion) of the entire 2016 U.S. gross domestic product.

It's an impressive figure that puts it on the scale of industries like construction (4.3 percent); legal services (1.3 percent); agriculture, including farming, forestry, and fishing (1 percent); and, most significantly, mining, oil, and gas extraction (1.4 percent). The report also stipulates that the outdoor industry is growing by 3.8 percent, a faster rate than the overall economy (2.8 percent).

The BEA report was two years in the making, initiated when President Barack Obama signed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act. Signed in 2016, it directed the federal agency to measure the outdoor economy with the same tools it uses to chart other industries and the economy as a whole.

Read the whole story

Nevada adds another apprenticeship program

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada is beginning to deliver on a promise to boost its workforce training programs.

The Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation – created by executive order in 2016 to manage and bolster training programs – said last July that it aims to boost the number of apprenticeship programs in the state by 10 percent within the next five years.

At the time, Nevada offered 78 state apprenticeship programs. As of Feb. 6, Nevada offers one more.

Read the whole story

U.S. men in danger of being shut out of Alpine medals

By Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea – For about 20 minutes during the Olympic giant slalom, Ryan Cochran-Siegle was in the leader's box, soaking up the spotlight. By the end of the race Sunday, he had slipped into a tie for 11th.

That's just about par on the icy course for the U.S. men's Alpine skiing team at these Winter Games.

The squad wasn't really expected to do all that well – and it hasn't.

[Read the whole story](#)

Funds allocated for WHS gridiron additions

Whittell High School will soon have a press box and concession stand to go along with its new field.

Douglas County School District trustees last week approved spending \$122,281 to complete the amenities.

While the vote was unanimous, some board members expressed frustration finding out about the overruns when they didn't

have much choice but to approve the bill.

A donation of \$2.5 million from the **Lisa and Robert Maloff Endowment Fund** is paying for the football field to be completely renovated as well as the track. It should be ready for use next school year.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

The mystery of the ‘Red Violin’

By Sean McAlindin, Tahoe Weekly

There are few things humans like more than a good mystery – other than solving one, of course.

When Elizabeth Pitcairn’s grandfather put forth a \$1.6-million secret bid at a 1990 Christie’s auction to win ownership of the legendary Red Mendelssohn Stradivarius violin, she was just shy of her 17th birthday.

In 1720, Antonio Stradivari crafted the historic instrument at his small shop in Cremona, Italy. It is said to be from the golden period of Stradivari’s work, which includes some of the most acoustically perfect creations ever achieved by man.

For nearly two centuries, the whereabouts of the violin were unknown. Those years were beautifully reimagined in the fictional 1998 Canadian film “The Red Violin.”

Read the whole story

Opinion: Fresno could become California's Austin

By Joe Mathews

Could the San Joaquin River, long a dividing line in our state, unite Central California in pursuit of a better future?

In Madera County, across the river from Fresno, a new unincorporated city of multiple planned communities is under construction. Within a generation, it seems likely to swell to more than 100,000 people. On the Fresno side, the county is developing open space, and the city of Clovis is expanding. Rising together, the new Madera town, Fresno, and Clovis could constitute a tri-cities area in Central California.



Joe Mathews

If those three cities cohere into a stronger and wealthier region by mid-century—and that's a gigantic if—greater Fresno, now a relatively poor place of 1 million people, could transform into California's answer to Austin, an inland metropolis capable of spreading the Golden State's coastal prosperity to its dusty interior.

Of course, such a transformation would require extensive regional planning of the sort that Fresno's leaders sometimes

talk about, but rarely do. That would mean stronger regional governance bodies and funding for transportation, economic development, water management, recreation, and air quality. And such structures would require collaboration among local governments that have fought bitterly in court.

Unfortunately, the very structure of California, and its land-use planning, work against turning Fresno into a regional powerhouse. In our state, local jurisdictions are weak and have little power to raise their own revenues; so they must compete with other local governments, often using questionable subsidies, in the chase for development and the taxes it brings. The game is: support development that provides revenue for your city, while spreading the costs—in traffic, water, and air quality—onto your neighbors.

Madera and Fresno counties, and Fresno city, have often sued each other to block their respective development plans. But most of that litigation is over, offering an opportunity to build together.

The region needs a more resilient water infrastructure (the new Madera developments tout their water efficiency), and tax-sharing to improve the river itself and support a regional transportation network. The area also needs to develop and recruit more local government officials who have deep training and experience in regional planning.

The new river city ought to inspire these efforts. After all, Madera, the county on Fresno's northwestern flank, is saying via its new development that it doesn't want to be small, poor and isolated anymore. That's the same message all of greater Fresno must embrace.

Indeed, Madera County is pitching its new developments as a huge step forward for central California: master-planned communities with trails and schools and job centers and water recharge facilities wrapped in, providing the greater density

and smaller lots of urban living.

The signature project, now under construction, is Riverstone, with commercial space and 6,600 homes of various sizes across six themed districts, along Highway 41, best known to most Californians as a road to Yosemite. “The new-home community of Riverstone,” boasts one brochure, “will be a celebration of California living where people of every generation can enjoy the relaxed and informal spirit of the Golden State.”

Other developments in the pipeline—with names like Tesoro Viejo and Gunner Ranch—are supposed to offer a similar approach; county officials suggest they might be incorporated one day as the county’s third city (after Madera city and Chowchilla). These developments are close to Fresno County projects—like a town-size development near Friant Dam.

“This is going to be a new town and we have this opportunity with a blank canvas to do it right,” Madera County Supervisor Brett Frazier told a local TV station.

Much could go wrong. If the new river city doesn’t produce promised jobs and inspire better transportation, the expanded development could fuel sprawl, add to air pollution, and turn 41 into a traffic nightmare.

Successful regionalization will require outside help. The state’s climate change regime must prioritize infill development in central Fresno, so that the urban core isn’t weakened as people move to the new river city. The ongoing revival of Fresno’s downtown needs the added momentum of the state’s high-speed rail project, which is already under construction across Fresno County (a signature rail bridge is being built across the river, linking Madera and Fresno in another way).

Greater Fresno will gain if high-speed rail provides faster connections to Northern California and Southern California, making it an affordable crossroads between two world-class

regional economies.

And Fresno has a large population of undocumented immigrants who badly need legal status so they can advance themselves, and their region, economically.

You should not bet the farm on the grand project of turning greater Fresno into the next great region. But if Madera's new development can inspire progress in that direction, California would have reason to celebrate—and perhaps call the new river city Future Town.

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

How to fit in exercise while you travel

By Shivani Vora, New York Times

Think you won't have time to exercise on your next vacation? Not according to Annette Lang, a New York City-based certified personal trainer. "You can actually maintain and even improve your fitness level when you're on the road," she said. "And, you don't have to bother with a gym to do it."

Lang naturally has plenty of tips on how to get some exercise while you travel. Here are some of the ones she offers her clients when they tell her they're leaving town.

Think about how you can include some activity on each day of your getaway, Lang said. If you're in an urban destination that has a bike share program, for example, consider renting a bike for an hour or two, and take a ride along a waterfront or

other scenic part of town.

Read the whole story