

Calif. wildfires bring record 31 deaths



Fires are raging on both ends of California. Photo/CalFire

By Associated Press

The latest on wildfires in California as of Oct. 12 at 6:15pm:

Northern California's wildfires have now killed 31 people – making this the deadliest week of wildfires in state history.

Sonoma County Sheriff Robert Giordano said Thursday night that two more people have been confirmed dead there. That raises the statewide death total from 29 to 31.

The Oakland Hills fire of 1991 killed 25 people by itself, and the Griffith Park fire in Los Angeles in 1933 killed 29.

While no single fire currently burning has killed as many as those, state fire Deputy Director Daniel Berlant says collectively this is the deadliest series of simultaneous fires in the state in recorded history.

Read the whole story

Crews make progress on 2 Eldorado forest fires

Two fires continue to burn in El Dorado County.

The Table Fire as of 6:30pm Oct. 12 was 170 acres and 15 percent contained. It is burning three miles northeast of Ice House Reservoir.

“The fire is in a sheltered location so the predicted winds on Saturday are not expected to have a significant effect,” according to fire officials.

The fire started by lightning more than a month ago. The U.S. Forest Service was letting it burn out naturally, but winds turned it into a wildland fire. No structures are threatened.

The Ice Fire is two miles west of Ice House and White Meadows roads. It is at 30 acres and 95 percent containment. Full containment is expected by Friday night.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. fires making more pollution than a year of

traffic



The Bay Area has been inundated with thick smoke; it reached Lake Tahoe on Oct. 11.
Photo/CalFire

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

There's enough wildfire activity in California and Nevada to blanket much of both states with a layer of smoke in the coming days.

In California alone more than 140,000 acres are burning in large, wildland fires throughout the state. A fire in rough terrain near Reno is also contributing to smoke in Northern Nevada.

In just the past two days, fires in California's Wine Country are thought to have produced as much small particulate matter as all the vehicles in the state produce in a year.

Read the whole story

Bank wants to sever ties with Olson

U.S. Bank wants nothing more to do with Patty Olson.

Olson, a pioneer in South Lake Tahoe, has been embroiled in various lawsuits and land disputes regarding her property in town. She owns the strip mall where the lone medical marijuana shop operates in South Lake Tahoe.

Court documents state, “Debtor [Olson] has consistently overdrawn her account with U.S. Bank, which violates its policies and procedures and permits it to close the account under the deposit agreement with the debtor; and 2) debtor has a tenant selling marijuana from whom she apparently still collects monthly rents. U.S. Bank is federally chartered and cannot accept funds from federally illegal activities.”

The bank believes Olson may have deposited that rent money at different times this year. Banks are not allowed to take money from the sales of marijuana – medicinal or recreational. She has accounts at more than one location.

According to the bank’s court documents, Olson in six months has had the account overdraft six times.

While the bank has the legal right to terminate accounts, it wants to go through the court system to keep everything transparent.

Olson, who now lives in Reno, is challenging the bankruptcy court’s ruling. In the meantime, the foreclosure proceedings on her commercial property are on hold.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Heavenly, Ridge to contribute more to bus service

By Kathryn Reed

Tahoe Transportation District on Friday is expected to enter agreements with Heavenly Mountain Resort and Ridge Tahoe for those entities to pay more money for bus service.

These two are the main private partners affiliated with the South Shore bus service.

The TTD board will meet Oct. 13 at 9:30am at the Stateline offices to discuss the proposals that were negotiated this summer.

Heavenly for years has been part of the mix because so many skiers, as well as employees, use the bus to get to the slopes.

"Since 2010, Heavenly has contributed \$850,000 annually to TTD, which it has used as part of its transit service operations budget. Without a mechanism for annual increases, the real value of the contribution has been reduced through inflation," the staff report says.

The new contract calls for a \$950,000 payment by Heavenly for this fiscal year, which is about 12 percent more than before. Also built into the deal is for an annual 5 percent increase as well as additional increases based on the Consumer Price Index.

The Ridge has been part of the mix since 2010. The time-share company's contribution has been \$140,634 per year.

The new agreement also includes a nearly 12 percent annual increase, the 5 percent ongoing yearly adjustment, and the CPI increase.

In total, TTD provides about 55,000 hours of bus service a year. Most of this is on the South Shore, but it also has commuter routes off the hill in Nevada. The operating budget is about \$6.9 million a year.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Adulting 101: Economic Empowerment is an event being put on by TRYP on Oct. 24 from 5:30-7:30pm at North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach. It's about money management and getting the most out of investments. There will also be a South Shore viewing party at the Tahoe Mountain Lab. This event is free for TRYP members and \$5 for non-members.
- The Resort at Squaw Creek's Harvest Festival is Oct. 13-15 and Oct. 20-22. For more info, go **online**.
- On Nov. 11, El Dorado County Fair Association hosts the 12th annual Crab & Chowder Gala in the Mark Forni Building at El Dorado County Fair & Event Center in Placerville. Tickets are available **online**.
- Glazed and Confused Tahoe Donut on Nov. 1 will begin operating out of Sidelines Sports Pub at Tahoe Beach Retreat in South Lake Tahoe for morning coffee and doughnuts.
- As part of Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest's hazardous fuels reduction efforts, both Carson and Bridgeport Ranger Districts' fire crews will begin pile burning starting in October 2017 through May 2018, weather and fuel conditions

permitting.

Will Wine Country disaster push Congress to fix fire budget?



The Tubbs Fire in has spread into Lake County.
Photo/CalFire

By Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

Washington It's a rare point of bipartisan agreement in divided Washington: The federal system for funding firefighting is broken, and that's hurting our ability to prevent fires from breaking out in the first place.

But lawmakers are at a loggerheads over how to fix the problem, a split that breaks down on largely regional, rather than partisan, grounds. Some in the House and Senate, however,

now hope that national coverage of Northern California's devastating fires could finally spur a congressional compromise, a bit of a silver lining emerging out of all the destruction.

At the root of the problem is the fact that forest fires are not treated like other natural disasters.

Read the whole story

Sandoval, Laxalt disagree on commerce tax

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY — Gov. Brian Sandoval said Tuesday he disagrees with Attorney General Adam Laxalt's proposal to eliminate the commerce tax.

Sandoval responded to a report in the Nevada Independent that Laxalt, expected to announce a bid for governor in the coming weeks, wants to repeal the levy sought by Sandoval and approved with some Republican support in 2015.

Sandoval said the tax on businesses with gross revenues that exceed \$4 million annually will bring in \$391 million over the current two-year budget, every dollar of which is going directly to public education, from Zoom schools to autism programs.

Read the whole story

Be aware of firewood cheats

With winter approaching, the Nevada Department of Agriculture urges consumers to be careful when purchasing firewood. Advertisements can mislabel firewood, leading buyers to believe they are purchasing more wood than they actually are.

Per Nevada law, firewood measurements have specific language. Legal terms for trade of firewood in Nevada are: full cord (128 cubic feet), half of a cord (64 cubic feet) and fourth of a cord (32 cubic feet). Buyers should use caution if sellers use any other terms, which could be an attempt to mislead.

The best way to prevent getting shorted firewood is to get the seller's phone number, license plate, name and address. Buyers should also ask for a receipt showing the price, kind and amount of wood."

If a dispute isn't resolved, contact the NDA's Consumer Equability Division.

UNR team wins Tahoe MedWAR challenge

Twelve teams of four racers navigated through various physical activities and completed wilderness medical scenarios in Tahoe last month.

MedWAR, which stands for Medical Wilderness Adventure Race, is designed for participants with or without a medical

background. For the Tahoe Challenge, participants varied from local adventurers, medical students from UNR and Stanford University, and five teams from Arizona.

Volunteer victims acted out wilderness medical scenarios designed to teach and test each team on their wilderness survival and medical skills. A sampling of the scenarios included an ATV accident, a lightning strike, and an avalanche victim buried in the sand.

Team Med Students Gone Wild from UNR School of Medicine were the champions. All teams completed the race within 10½ hours.

Winners were:

- First place: Med Students Gone Wild – UNR (Jenna Johnson, Austin Meng, Patrick Mullett, and Robert Shrake)
- Second: Team H2UP (Jenn Drennan, Emma Dayberry, Chris Kozłowski, and Caitlin Robinson)
- Third: Team EPI (William Gray Grandy, Jeff Koeck, Morgan Machen, and TJ Middlemis-Clark)
- Fourth: Peumothorax x 4 (Brooke Myatt, Andrew Odland, Kevin Robinson, and Jeremy Vandehurt).

The MedWAR Tahoe Challenge is hosted by Barton Health, Tahoe Center for Orthopedics, and Tahoe Emergency Physicians.