DCSD to have regular late start dates

Students in Douglas County will start some days 90 minutes later than the other days.

The purpose is to give teachers more time to strategize about what they are doing regarding student achievement.

“The late start days are instrumental in providing teachers and administrators time to look at data they have on student performance and collaborate together on how to improve the great things we already are able to provide for our students,” Douglas County School District said in a press release.

For Whittell High and Zephyr Cove Elementary schools the late starts will be the second Wednesday of each month. Exceptions include no late start day in November, and it moving to the third Wednesday in January.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Portion of Heavenly dedicated to 96-year-old

By Vicki Gonzalez, KCRA-TV



Martin Hollay

Heavenly Mountain Resort honored a longtime employee and skier by dedicating a special portion of the mountain just shy of his 97th birthday.

Martin Hollay moved to South Lake Tahoe in 1957, building his home up the street from the resort. The 96-year-old still skis at Heavenly, completing 100 runs last winter.

“My life is the mountain, and it still is today,” he said.

His home is a museum of Heavenly collector items. Hundreds of skis line his backyard and ski boots are used as flower pots – along with dozens of apparel, photos, and trophies.

Read the whole story

Meyers Area Plan on track for winter adoption

By Kathryn Reed

After two years of silence, El Dorado County has released the final draft of the Meyers Area Plan. This is the fourth version.

It was almost like all sides needed a cooling off period.

Years of raucous meetings did more to divide than to unite the community.

What most could agree on was the mission statement that was developed: “Meyers is an ideally situated, spacious, historic, and walkable mountain community that values sustainability, health, wellbeing and the natural environment. Uniquely concentrated with year-round outdoor sport and recreational opportunities, the Meyers mountain culture is the hallmark of our thriving local-based economy boasting a diverse commercial and retail environment, welcoming visitors and providing residents with an extraordinary place to live, work and play.”

The area plan was created with the goal of embracing that sentiment, while at the same time adhering to a lot of government regulations.

The public has a month to comment on the notice of intent to adopt a mitigated negative declaration of environmental impact. There is one public hearing on the notice. However, the area plan itself will have five public hearings – two via El Dorado County and three for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Feb. 22 is the tentative date for the TRPA Governing Board to vote on the plan.

This area plan builds on the 1993 community plan. That plan, while it was supposed to be updated every five years, never was.

“I thought the Meyers Community Plan was well thought out and I think the area plan is, too,” Supervisor Sue Novasel told *Lake Tahoe News.* “It will be interesting when we go through public comment to see if people have concerns with it.”

Novasel will not be able to vote on the plan because of having property in the area.

“At a glance, it looks like the proposed land use and zoning does not match what the majority of the community input asked

for during previous iterations," Jennifer Quashnick, a Meyers resident who has been vocal throughout the process, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

Brendan Ferry with the county said the substantive changes since the public last viewed the area plan have more to do with TRPA passing its transit plan, as well as changes to state and federal law.

The 42-foot maximum height for new construction was retained from previous versions. TRPA would have allowed 65 feet.

"We changed the sign standards extensively," Ferry told *Lake Tahoe News.* "There will be a more uniform setback to make the corridor more visually appealing."

In the new plan 348 acres are considered conservation land, while 137 acres are designated recreation. Historic trees remain protected.

Condensing the plan to three distinct regions would allow for a hotel to be built; which was not possible under the community plan. Density regulations would limit it to 30 units per acre.

TRPA rules, the right-of-way from Caltrans and the limited size and number of parcels in Meyers might never make that type of business a reality, though.

The extensive right-of-way that Caltrans has remains. Rejiggering that debacle would come outside the scope of the area plan.

Even without the area plan being a done deal, the county is going forward to make the roads in Meyers better. On the Sept. 12 Board of Supervisors agenda is an agreement with Caltrans for "a multimodal complete streets strategy." A roundabout at highways 50 and 89 is in the works.

—

Notes:

· Comments are due Oct. 6. Send them to: El Dorado County, 924 B Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150 Attn: Brendan Ferry.

· The public hearing on the notice will be Sept. 27 before the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Plan Implementation Committee. The meeting will be at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

· The document is available **online**.

Opinion: Where's the safest place in Calif. to live?

By Shawn Hubler, Sacramento Bee

Last week, as Los Angeles burned, San Francisco baked, Houston reeled amid biblical flooding and the Florida Keys braced for Hurricane Irma, David W. Titley picked up his phone on the other side of the country and cut to the chase.

"Forty north," the Penn State University meteorology professor of practice told me, almost before I'd asked the question. "I'd basically look at being north of that."

My query was one many of us are wondering about in this age of mounting natural disasters: If climate change is a given, what's the best place to live? Or, maybe, the least-worst?

Read the whole story

Is radio becoming obsolete?

By Mark Austin, Digital Trends

A study from New York University paints a grim picture for the future of radio. Larry Miller, head of the Steinhart Music Business Program, says that traditional radio, by failing to adapt to the rise of digital formats, has not engaged with Generation Z – people born after 1995. He also warns that radio will continue to decline in popularity and relevance unless substantial changes are made.

The problem for the industry, in a nutshell, is that young people don't listen to the radio. Young millennials only spend 12 percent of their listening time on radios, according to a 2016 Music Business Association study. On-demand streaming, such as Spotify or Apple, account for more than half of Generation Z's daily listening.

People have been predicting the demise of radio forever, but there's no denying that the quality and selection digital music is far superior to analog FM.

Read the whole story

Douglas County manager's contract extended

On a 3-2 vote on Sept. 7, Douglas County Manager Larry Werner's contract was extended to Dec. 31, 2019.

Commissioners Larry Walsh and Dave Nelson were the dissenters. Walsh wanted the term to go through Dec. 31, 2018. Nelson wants to hire a permanent county manager.

Werner has been at the helm of the county since February 2016 when Jim Nichols and the commissioners parted company. Werner's stint was originally supposed to be an interim appointment and never expected be what is now semi-permanent.

The county does have an out, as does Werner. Both may end the contract with 30 days notice.

The contract adjustment did not come with a salary increase. Werner makes $14,333 a month ($171,966/year).

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

West had snowy winter, so why the fiery summer?

By Dan Elliott, AP

Acrid yellow smoke clogs the skies of major Western U.S. cities, a human-caused fire in the Columbia River Gorge rains ash on Portland, Oregon, and a century-old backcountry chalet burns to the ground in Montana's Glacier National Park.

Wildfires are chewing across dried-out Western forests and grassland, putting 2017 on track to be among the worst fire seasons in a decade.

A snowy winter across much of the West raised hopes that 2017 wouldn't be a dried-out, fire-prone year, but a hot, dry summer spoiled that.

Read the whole story

Money Matters: Financial planning for unmarried domestic partners

By Nic Abelow

Today's "modern family" is decidedly nontraditional. According to the latest Census data, less than 25 percent of American households currently consist of married couples with dependent children, while more than 40 percent of unmarried couples have children under the age of 18. Even the term "married" can be defined differently depending on where you live. Some states allow and recognize same-sex marriage, but the majority of states and federal government do not. Therefore, it's important for domestic partners to ensure they have legal protections in place to protect their families and themselves.



Nic Abelow

Legal protections

Unmarried partners lack many of the legal protections granted to spouses in the event of divorce or death. Although most

states will consider a claim by an unmarried partner, there is no specific legal precedent in the absence of a written contract. Domestic partners may wish to consider creating a domestic-partnership agreement that details the sharing of expenses as well as the ownership and distribution of assets should the relationship end. Unmarried couples with children should consider signing a written agreement acknowledging parental rights and responsibilities and having each partner name the other as primary guardian in wills.

Retirement considerations

Unmarried couples are not eligible for their partner's Social Security benefits and, in some cases, employer-sponsored retirement plan distributions. The IRS allows a nonspousal beneficiary of an IRA to take required distributions over his or her lifetime rather than in a lump sum, allowing for potential tax-deferred growth over a longer period of time. Domestic partners who can afford to do so may want to contribute the annual maximum to an IRA to capitalize on this benefit.

Estate planning issues

If an unmarried individual dies without a will, the state may distribute assets to his or her closest blood relatives, leaving the surviving domestic partner out in the cold. To help rebut a challenge to a will, domestic partners may want to videotape their wishes in the presence of an attorney.

Federal tax law allows all assets to pass to a spouse tax free and no applicable estate taxes are due until the second spouse dies. Unmarried couples, however, do not enjoy this tax advantage. For those with significant taxable assets, it will be necessary to pursue other avenues to avoid estate tax. One strategy is to purchase life insurance to pay any potential federal and state estate taxes. The surviving partner must own the insurance to avoid it becoming part of the estate of the

deceased. Therefore, each partner should own enough insurance to pay anticipated taxes on the assets of his or her partner.

Nic Abelow is a LPL financial advisor with Abelow, Pratt & Associates Financial Advisors and Wealth Management in Lake Tahoe.

EDC man indicted in suspected drug death of teen

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

Five years after a 15-year-old El Dorado High School student died from ingesting a hallucinogenic drug, a Camino man has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of possessing and distributing a counterfeit version of LSD that caused the death.

Elijah Lee Richter faces the federal charges in the September 2012 death of Alejandro Nunez Avila, who was found unresponsive at a Pollock Pines home and later died at Marshall Hospital.

Read the whole story

Water use ticks up again

across California

By Aaron Mendelson, KPCC

This year, urban water use has settled into a pattern: Californians are consuming more water than in 2015 and 2016, when mandatory measures were in place to cut down on use during a five-year drought.

At the same time, water use has remained below the levels reported in 2013 and 2014, cheering water regulators who hope to make conservation a habit.

July 2017 numbers were released Wednesday by the State Water Resources Control Board, and they fit this pattern for the fifth month running.

Read the whole story