

11% raises for Placer County workers in 4 years

Updated 12:34pm:

By Kathryn Reed

Placer County has put itself further into debt by agreeing to give employees four years of raises.

Supervisors on July 25 granted the more than 2,000 employees a 4 percent wage increase starting in August, a 3 percent increase in July 2018, 2 percent increase in 2019, and another 2 percent in 2020. The agreement is actually for five years, ending in June 2022.

The county's 85 confidential and unclassified non-management employees are receiving the same wage increase.

The nearly 250 upper managers have not received a salary increase. "That's not to say we won't at some date in the future be considered for a raise – but at this time, nothing is on the table," county spokeswoman DeDe Cordell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The last spike in salaries for the union members was an agreement from 2014 that included a combined 6 percent raise over the last three years.

The new raises will cost taxpayers \$7.9 million this fiscal year. The county projects the annual impact over the remaining length of the agreement to range from \$13.5 million to \$20 million. Those figures include merit increases and pension costs.

Those pension expenses are what have been glossed over – last week and earlier this summer when the \$796,495,106 2017-18 budget was approved. The General Fund is about \$460 million;

this is considered the discretionary spending account. It includes wages. But when wages start taking up more of the budget it means less money for services. Services include repairing roads and other basics that residents expect government to provide.

For every dollar that goes to wages, approximately another 50 cents of taxpayer money go to pension costs. Retirees are given a defined amount of money they get to retire with for what can be decades after they've done any work for the county. (Placer retirees also have health benefits.)

David Boesch, county chief executive officer, in the budget report on June 13 barely mentioned CalPERS. The same goes for the July 25 staff report.

Earlier this year the state Public Employee Retirement System notified all member agencies that their obligations would be increasing. For Placer County the annual obligation is going from \$54 million to more than \$100 million a year. This was before the raises that were approved for the next four years.

According to PensionTracker, in 2015 the pension debt per household in Placer County was \$10,573. That means each household in the county would have to pony up that amount to pay off the county's CalPERS debt. (In El Dorado County it's \$12,856 and in South Lake Tahoe \$24,757.)

Placer County has no substantive plan to deal with the rising retiree costs. CalPERS can say it needs more money and member agencies have no choice but to pay. It would take an act of the Legislature to change how things are run.

For cities and counties that choose the status quo in terms of how to do business, layoffs will be the ultimate answer in how to pay for the raises because revenues can't keep pace. Giving raises is the easy out; providing that instant gratification for all within the agency instead of looking for innovative solutions or being fiscally conservative. It remains to be

seen if multi-year raises are the prudent thing for elected officials because it's the taxpayers – aka voters – who are left footing the bills that never end.

Opinion: Calif. pensions – \$206B elephant in the room

By Steve Westly, San Jose Mercury News

Jerry Brown has been a strong governor and a moderating force on budget issues. But when it comes to pensions, the new state budget projects that California has nearly \$206 billion in “unfunded liabilities” for the state’s two public pension funds.

Over the last eight years, we added \$100 billion in unfunded retirement liability for these funds. This is the elephant in the room of state finances, and it is time we got serious about it.

You probably haven’t heard much about the looming pension crisis because elected officials don’t like talking about it and it’s easy for them to kick the can down the road: they can make promises to public employees now that won’t come due until they’re out of office.

Read the whole story

High-tech team recovers body of missing paddleboarder

By Hannah Knowles, Sacramento Bee

A body believed to be that of a college student presumed to have drowned in Lake Tahoe in June 2016 was recovered Monday afternoon near the area where he was last seen.

A high-tech search team hired by the family of 20-year-old Marc Ma was located about 1:05 p.m., according to a Placer County Sheriff's Office Facebook post. A camera spotted the body in about 240 feet of water near the West Shore Cafe. The body was brought to shore with assistance from of the Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Ma's family commissioned the search with a special vessel that can scan deep water.

[Read the whole story](#)

Why kids need exposure to germs

By Lulu Garcia-Navarro, NPR

As a new parent, Jack Gilbert got a lot of different advice on how to properly look after his child: when to give him antibiotics or how often he should sterilize his pacifier, for example.

After the birth of his second child, Gilbert, a scientist who studies microbial ecosystems at the University of Chicago,

decided to find out what's actually known about the risks involved when modern-day children come in contact with germs.

"It turned out that most of the exposures were actually beneficial," Gilbert says. "So that dirty pacifier that fell on the floor – if you just stick it in your mouth and lick it, and then pop it back in little Tommy's mouth, it's actually going to stimulate their immune system. Their immune system's going to become stronger because of it."

Read the whole story

Varied bike events make Tahoe a cycling destination

By Ty Polastri

Each year, major road cycling events attract thousands of cyclists to the Lake Tahoe area. They come from across the United States and internationally to enjoy Tahoe's natural beauty, fresh air, and cycling challenges that may include distance traveled, summits conquered or riding for a cause.

Two particular events have been delivering exceptional rides for over 20 years. They are the Death Ride: Tour de California Alps (Death Ride) in the Alpine County area, and America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride in Tahoe (AMBBR).

Each event attracts more than 3,000 riders annually with uniquely different ride routes and personal objectives.

Death Ride. The Death Ride challenges cyclists to ride five mountain passes, 129 miles, and 15,000 feet of elevation gain. For many cyclists, the Death Ride serves as a benchmark to

test and evaluate their personal fitness and endurance levels. Featured the second week in July each year, the ride provides ample time for cyclists to train for the event and once their preparedness is tested on event day, they can share their experiences, and re-establish new personal goals and continue their training.

America's Most Beautiful Bike Ride. On the other hand, AMBBR challenges cyclists in a slightly different way. While riding around the Lake's 72-mile circumference and 4,000 plus feet of elevation is certainly a challenge in its own right, the added challenge is raising dollars for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Each year, the Society in collaboration with Teams In Training conducts a six month cyclist's training program in preparation for the ride and coaching them in the solicitation of pledges for the fundraising portion of the event. More than 2,000 riders from 23 states come to Tahoe to ride for family and friends who have been afflicted with these deadly blood diseases. The AMBBR event is the largest yielding fundraising event for the society each year – having raised over \$94 million with 24,000 participating cyclists since they started coming to Tahoe in 1994. These funds help the society explore new paths to cures, supporting approximately 300 active, cutting-edge research projects in blood cancer research for leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma. The event is on the Sunday following Memorial Day Weekend each year and is open to about 3,500 riders. This event, like the Death Ride sells out early.

More recently, the world's cycling media and public has learned about Tahoe and the surrounding area's beauty and great road cycling conditions as a result of the internationally televised Amgen Tour of California (TOC) professional bike race. The Amgen TOC is the most important professional bike race in America. The world's top pro teams send members here to compete in the weeklong event as it travels along the coast, climbs the sierras, and entertains

thousands of spectators in major cities. This event serves both as a training race for the development of new professional cyclists and for the elite professional cyclists as a preparation for the world's most important bike race in July – the three weeklong Tour de France.

Cyclists who have not yet ridden the area in either of the events or recreationally, can now get a glimpse of the areas' beauty and type of roads by viewing the new bike video produced by Bike Tahoe in collaboration with the Nevada Commission on Tourism. This video, Road Cycling: Lake Tahoe is part of the We Bike Tahoe Video Series highlighting some of the ride sections featured in the Death Ride and AMBBR events.

Ty Polastri is president of Bike Tahoe.

Home builders want students for construction jobs

By Hudson Sangree, Sacramento Bee

Sacramento home builders are trying to deal with a severe shortage of construction workers by training high school students in summer internships. They want the teens and their parents to consider the possibility that a construction career might be a good alternative to college, though that can require some convincing.

“There's a negative stereotype about dirty jobs,” said Rick Larkey, executive director of the North State Building Industry Foundation. The group is leading the effort to recruit 5,000 new workers over five years in Sacramento, Placer, Yolo and El Dorado counties. A big part of that is the

outreach to high-school students through internships and after-school programs.

The foundation's pitch on its website is that a four-year college degree isn't the guarantee of financial success it used to be. The American workforce is in desperate need of skilled technicians, and incomes for construction work can rival jobs requiring four-year degrees without the expense of college.

Read the whole story

SJ Earthquakes honor men who rescued player from drowning

By Aja Seldon and Spencer Blake, KRON-TV

On Saturday the San Jose Earthquakes honored three heroes who rescued one of their players from drowning over the Fourth of July holiday.

Twenty-year-old Brazil native and Earthquakes midfielder Matheus Silva, was swimming in Lake Tahoe when he went under after struggling to stay afloat.

Two paddle boarders, Colby Peterson, and Chris Guenther jumped into action.

Read the whole story

Letter: Kirkwood workers help at Bread & Broth

To the community,

"It was great to see a community come together to help those down on their luck," said Jacob Klade while taking a break from serving shepherd's pie, roasted zucchini and Swiss chard salad to the guests at Bread & Broth's Monday meal on July 17.

Klade and his fellow sponsor team members Christopher Hostnik, Jarrett Morgan and Christian Neville, all from Kirkwood Mountain Resort, were on hand to help the B&B volunteers at Kirkwood's Adopt A Day of Nourishment.

Kirkwood Mountain Resort hosts six adopt a days annually and all of the sponsorships are funded through Vail Resorts' EpicPromise grant program. Vail Resorts grants support many nonprofit partners in Vail Resorts mountain communities. Through these partnerships, Vail Resorts helps ensure our communities thrive. Vail has been funding Monday dinners since the inception of the AAD program and B&B could not be more grateful for Vail's support.

The Vail EpicPromise monies have funded over 75 meals and fed over 6,800 dinner guests through B&B's Adopt A Day program. In addition, Vail has sent awesome team members to help at their sponsorship meals. These last four sponsor crew members were enthusiastic and could not have been more helpful at the dinner event. "It was a great experience," added Klade. "I am looking forward to the next opportunity to volunteer at a B&B meal again.

To partner with B&B as a donor or sponsor, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Recreational tennis players shine at Zephyr Cove



Kim Iliffe hits a forehand with partner Keri Mills en route to winning the women's 10.0 division on July 30. Photo/ZCTC

By Lake Tahoe News

It was hard to find a time when Kim Iliffe wasn't on one of the six courts at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club in the last four days.

The Mill Valley resident was the lone player entered in three events at the Tahoe Tennis Classic. She walked away the winner in two divisions and reached the semi-finals in the third event.

Also having a two-win tournament was Carolyn Wright of Zephyr

Cove.

This 34-year-old all doubles tournament on July 27-30 set a record with 215 players.

Illiffe paired with Michael Kiskinen of El Dorado Hills in the mixed 10.0 division to get the best of David Hardern of Gold River and Amanda Walker of Gold River 6-7, 6-4, 6-3.

Illiffe and Keri Mills of Carmichael retained their title in the women's 10.0 division by beating Jeanette Berry of Reno and Laura Pierce of Reno 6-2, 6-3.

Illiffe was also playing in the 9.0 division. With partner Dawn Schlagel of Sacramento they made it to the semi-final round where they lost to Berry and Pierce 6-0 7-5. In the finals on July 30, Berry and Pierce beat Penne Burgess of Carson City and Shannon Schuld-Gray of Carmichael, 6-4, 1-6, 6-3.

Wright teamed up with Barbara Cooper of South Lake Tahoe in the women's 7.0 division to beat Denise Higgins of Gardnerville and Rhoda Shaponik of South Lake Tahoe 6-1, 7-5. All four have been teammates on the ZCTC 3.5 USTA team.

In the 7.0 mixed Wright and Thor Spargo of Fair Oaks defeated last year's champions Craig and Donna Rockwood of South Lake Tahoe 6-3, 6-2.

Other results:

- **Women's 8.0:** Donna Kaneko of San Jose and Lauri Selover of San Jose defeated Karen Frederick of San Jose and Patricia Spratt of San Jose 2-6, 7-6, 6-2.

- **Women's 6.0:** Nancy Cumming of Rancho Palos Verdes and Jean Van Well of Incline Village beat Kari Beronio of Zephyr Cove and Carol Romero-Bergren of Zephyr Cove 6-2, 6-3.

- **Men's 10.0:** Tony Matkulak of Reno and Kevin Strawn of Reno beat Ryan Johnston of South Lake Tahoe and Mohamed Irfan

Lakdawala of San Francisco 2-6, 7-6, 6-2.

· **Men's 8.0:** Fernando Quinones of San Francisco and James Reed of Modesto beat Duane Catania of Incline Village and Vincent Catania of Elk Grove 6-2, 6-1.

· **Men's 6.0:** Carl Bergren of Zephyr Cove and Ted Cloward of South Lake Tahoe beat Mike Riley of Incline Village and Dan Smith of Zephyr Cove 6-1, 6-2.

· **Men's 50 doubles:** Geoff Garret of Rocklin and Ken Vowell of Lincoln defeated Lee Shin of South Lake Tahoe and John Wlcek of South Lake Tahoe 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

· **Men's 65 doubles:** Kurt Chan of Gold River and Tad Yukawa of Palm Desert beat Dan Bohannon of Orange and Mark Peterson of Truckee 6-4, 6-2.

· **Men's 70 doubles:** David Heldt-Werle of Reno and Steven Privette of Sparks beat Brian Silvestri of Stateline and Brian Streck of Galveston, Texas, 6-1, 6-2.

· **Mixed 8.0 doubles:** Andrew Stinnett of South Lake Tahoe and Joyce Youngs of South Lake Tahoe beat Fernando Quinones of San Francisco and Amy Warden of Modesto 6-3, 6-1.

Carson City bypass opening this week

It's done. Starting this week there is no longer a need to drive through Carson City to get to Reno, or for those in Reno to drive through the capital city to get to Lake Tahoe.

The last leg of the Interstate 580 Carson City Freeway is

ready for vehicles. The earliest the southern end of the freeway will be open is 10am Wednesday. The northern end will open later that afternoon or on Aug. 3.

Motorists should anticipate minor lane and traffic pattern changes across the area as the new freeway segment opens. Periodic, minor roadside shoulder and lane closures will take place on South Carson Street and the Carson City Freeway for finishing construction.