

# Calif.'s 'gig economy' could be hit by ACA repeal

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

On a recent Friday at Old Soul Coffee Roasters in Sacramento, actor Ian Hopps hunched over his laptop as he edited a flier for an upcoming performance with the Davis Shakespeare Ensemble. He had just come off a shift from the East Sacramento restaurant where he waits tables and was killing time before his curtain call for "The Tempest" later that evening.

The 26-year-old lives paycheck to paycheck as a freelance actor/part-time server and doesn't get health benefits through either position, he said. After turning 26 and becoming ineligible for his parents' insurance, he enrolled in a Medi-Cal plan, made available only after the Affordable Care Act became the law of the land in 2010.

With private insurance out of his price range, Hopps said he was relieved to have an accessible option and not have to "bite the bullet" of taking on a full-time job for benefits. As Medi-Cal and other federal health programs face an uncertain future, part-time and self-employed workers such as Hopps wonder how they'll pursue their careers, and stay covered, if the law is repealed.

More than any other state, California embraced former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, expanding eligibility for the low-income Medicaid program to childless adults and creating the Covered California exchange, which offers subsidized plans to people who can't afford private insurance. About 3.7 million people have enrolled in Medicaid since the health law was implemented, and 1.3 million now have plans through Covered California.

**Read the whole story**

---

## **Snippets about Lake Tahoe**

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce's annual Business Expo is March 31 from 4:30-8:30pm at Harveys. Cost is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door.
  - The Black Tie and Tails event at the Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe raised \$180,000 for the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe.
  - The League to Save Lake Tahoe is having an open house and volunteer training on April 5 from 5:30-8:30pm at 2608 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. RSVP to [events@keeptahoeblue.org](mailto:events@keeptahoeblue.org).
  - The annual Nowruz "New Year" Celebration Feast to benefit Veterans Healing Camp is March 21 from 5-10pm at the Casino Fandango Buffet Banquet Room in Carson City. Tickets are available at the Casino Fandango cashier cage or by contacting Shahla Fadaie at 775.781.2394.
- 

## **Nevada U.S. attorney dumped by attorney general**

Nevada's U.S. attorney is one of the lawyers ousted by the Trump administration.

Daniel Bogden's last day on the job was March 10.

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions asked for the resignation of 46 U.S. attorneys who were holdovers from the Obama administration.

Bogden served two stints for a total of 14 years as Nevada's top prosecutor. He was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2001 and then let go by him six years later. Obama put him back in the job in 2009.

Steven Myhre is the interim head of the Nevada office.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

---

## **Letter: Appreciative of plowed trails**

**To the community,**

A big thank you to the city of South Lake Tahoe, the county of El Dorado, and the businesses and residents of Tahoe's South Shore for clearing the snow from your sidewalks and paths.

Even during these big storms, you have made sure the multi-use paths and many sidewalks on the South Shore are passable. And after 2 feet of snow overnight, you made the roads and paths safe enough for 500-plus locals to take to the streets by 11am on Jan. 21 for the Women's March. This is a big and welcome change from the previous years of sidewalk and bike path "freshies". Let's save those for the slopes.

Now before any drivers start clamoring about roads and berms and potholes and the rest – we sympathize, we also want the

roads clear. The funding for sidewalk and path snow removal comes from Measure S, which the city and county can only use for bike paths and the like, not city streets or potholes. Thanks to this dedicated funding and your gallant snow clearing efforts, Tahoe is becoming more accessible to people with handicaps, no car, or no license as well as those who choose to walk or bike throughout the year.

Even with the dedicated snow removal, getting around without a car in the winter is not all snowflakes and hot cocoa. There are a number of areas with no sidewalks to clear, non-compliant businesses, and otherwise impassable off-road areas. You know many of these places – just think of where you see us walking or biking in the street, usually against traffic and with a look in our eyes ranging from concern to terror. The sidewalk along Pioneer between Highway 50 and Larch is a good example. Let's work together to make these improvements, along with keeping up the good work. And if you are a business and have not yet cleared the snow from your sidewalks, please get out there and help make South Lake Tahoe more accessible for people walking and biking.

Let it snow!

**Gavin Feiger, Lake Tahoe Bicycle Coalition and Community Mobility Group**

---

## **How is Burning Man affecting the Black Rock Desert?**

**By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal**

The Black Rock Desert is due for an environmental checkup –

one that specifically determines whether Burning Man is having an impact on the land – though it may be a while before the desert gets a diagnosis.

The most recent environmental assessment that addressed Burning Man's impact, conducted in 2011, set the parameters for how the event should be conducted for the past five years. The 343-page document, however, expired last year. It could be another two or more years before Burning Man and the Bureau of Land Management are able to complete another assessment.

The BLM, which oversees the Black Rock Desert and issues an annual multi-million dollar recreational permit for Burning Man, has been conducting assessments since 1991, Burning Man's second year in the desert. At the time, less than 300 people took part.

**Read the whole story**

---

## **Mountaineer to give presentation in Tahoe City**

On April 13, Alpenglow Sports partners with outdoor publisher Mountaineers Books to host mountaineer Leif Whittaker in Tahoe City.

Whittaker brings a fresh perspective on his famous father, Lou Whittaker, a mountaineering legend who forged his legacy as the first American to summit the world's tallest peak, Mount Everest.

In 1963, the world followed the first American Mount Everest Expedition, and watched as "Big Jim" Whittaker became the

first American to stand on top of the world. He returned home a hero.

Leif Whittaker's "My Old Man and the Mountain" is the story of what it was like to "grow up Whittaker"—the youngest son of Jim Whittaker and Dianne Roberts. He shares glimpses of his upbringing and how the pressure to climb started early on. Readers learn of his first adventures with family in the Olympic Mountains and on Mount Rainier; his close yet at times competitive relationship with his brother Joss; his battle with a serious back injury; and his efforts to stand apart from his father's legacy.

With wry honesty he depicts being a recent college grad, still living in his parents' home and trying to find a purpose in life—digging ditches, building houses, selling T-shirts to tourists—until a chance encounter leads to the opportunity to climb Everest, just like his father did.

Whittaker's multimedia presentation will be at Tahoe Art Haus Cinema, followed by questions and a book signing. The event starts at 7pm and doors open at 6:30pm. Buy \$10 tickets **online**. Tickets will be available at the door on the night of event for \$12.

---

## **Sierra extends season, sets appreciation day**

Sierra-at-Tahoe is extending its season through April 23.

Sierra will honor guests with Customer Appreciation Day on April 24. Customer Appreciation Day is dedicated to reminiscing about the plentiful powder days with high fives in

celebration of another awesome season.

Skiers and riders of all ages can purchase a lift ticket for only \$35 on April 24. Lift ticket proceeds that day will benefit youth recreation and education including baseball, soccer, swimming and other youth activities in South Lake Tahoe.

Sierra-at-Tahoe will operate a limited number of lifts from 10am-2pm, including Grandview Express and Easy Rider Express. All guests are invited to join General Manager John Rice and the rest of Sierra's team for the official "last run of the season" from the top of Grandview Express beginning at 2pm. Last call at the Sierra Pub will be 2:45pm, in time for the ending of all winter operations at 3pm.

---

## **Road Beat: Chevrolet Volt, shockingly good**

**By Larry Weitzman**

Recently the Road Beat had a chance to drive a new second generation Chevy Volt. It was my first time and let me say it is impressive.

This second generation gets a new refined and quite attractive body, sleek and stylish. It is a compact car riding on a 106-inch wheel base with a length of 180 inches. Width is 71 inches which is wide (and stable) for a compact car.

Here is where it gets interesting. In drives of 50 miles or less, it can run pure electric, no gas required and it has plenty of snap. After 50 miles, the Volts new higher capacity

L-I battery pack (18.4 kWh) gets help from the new 1.5L 101 hp gas engine which is no longer used strictly as a generator to provide electricity to the battery which provides power now to two electric motors, but instead is connected directly to the front wheels through a series of sun, planetary and ring gears. Because the electric motors also use the same gear sets via a series of three clutch packs, the engine can add power to the larger (117 hp) electric motor while the smaller electric motor (64 hp) acts as a generator charging the L-I battery at the same time. In pure electric, the system, either the bigger of the two electric motors operate or if more power is demanded, both electric motors can power the Volt.



The Volt practically makes a gas station obsolete. Photo  
Larry Weitzman

In any event, the Volt is a peppy car with claims of 0-30 mph of 2.6 seconds (that's very quick) and a 0-60 mph time of 8.4 seconds. Hopefully, I will be able to fully test a Volt and get actual data to confirm or even beat those times. Ditto for

fuel economy which over a short drive using both the electric motor and gas engine in aggressive driving averaged 66.7 mpg. Some mopeds don't get that kind of fuel economy.

The passenger cabin volume is 90 cubic feet, about average for a compact car, but the trunk is small at 10.6 cubic feet. But it is very nicely appointed with top quality materials. Over the last decade, General Motors has made a concerted and successful effort to upgrade the interior quality of all their new models that started with the Holden, Pontiac Grand Prix in 2004. And Volt has a comfortable, stylish quality interior.

Driving the Volt was a fun experience. Throttle response as promised by Chevy was very responsive and instantaneous. It was also linear and easy to modulate, just like a rheostat controlling an electric motor like when you played with your electric train. Wait a second, this is an electric motor controlled by a "rheostat." But there is more and that is the incredibly smooth integration of the gas engine which can be brought on line if you select that driving mode. It is so smooth and quiet you simply can't tell during its operation. But in "normal" driving you will never ask for it and simply drive electric for the 50 miles or so that the battery can power the vehicle. And driving pure electric is kind of fun.

But there is more to this than simply going on the gas engine "range extender." Because of the design of the system and that the electric motors can simultaneously act as generators, when you need extra power the battery always seems to be there, so there is no drop in performance. In this respect, Volt acts like a regular hybrid, the battery/electric motor and engine work together when requested by the throttle/rheostat.

Volt gives you some serious fuel economy without have to worry about pushing after a pure electric car runs out of electrons or you need a charging station and a long lunch/dinner or motel room. It's never a problem because you have the light weight range extender gas engine which on its own returns an

EPA 42 mpg. In my short drive, however, using the Volt like a hybrid and asking for the gas engine during some pedal to the metal runs, the Volt averaged that 66.7 mpg. If you were to drive the Volt pure electric and only drove 50 miles a day, you might never use the gas engine. But it's not a pure EV, however, so there is no range anxiety issue or looking for a charging station, just drive it like a regular automobile. You have total utility and an almost electric car to boot. Your electric company will always be with you with an endless, invisible extension cord. Volt may be the future.

Pricing for the new Volt starts at about \$35 large with a long standard equipment list. Add some options and/or fancier trim and you might pay \$5-10K more. But if all cars were like the Volt, the price would be much higher, perhaps by \$10,000-\$15,000 more to return a proper corporate ROI (return on investment). I don't know the future, but here is the right now deal. At \$35K, the Volt is not much more expensive, if at all, than other conventional hybrids. Chevy has produced over 100,000 Volts and reliability has been excellent. If you want incredible fuel economy coupled with good performance (actually better than most hybrids) and your average daily use is under 100 miles, this is your ride. And then there is the possibility of charging stations at your destination before your trip home. Gas stations will become a thing of the past and that you pass.

*Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.*

---

# Nevada dam in race against Sierra snowmelt

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

The view from Lahontan dam looking west features a shimmering desert lake framed in the distance by the snowy Sierra Nevada.

The warm, late winter sun above and low roar of water surging through the dam below makes the quiet deck of the 102-year-old structure seem like a nice place for a hammock and an afternoon nap.

But there's no time to rest for Mark Solinsky or anyone else responsible for operating the dam and downstream infrastructure.

That's because they're in a race to prevent snowmelt from the glimmering Sierra Nevada from topping spillways at the rim of the desert reservoir.

**Read the whole story**

---

## Editorial: Immigration policies would hurt all Nevadans

**Publisher's note:** *This editorial is from the March 6, 2017, Las Vegas Sun.*

In this emotionally agonizing time for unauthorized immigrants

living in Nevada, there's at least one bright spot: Some of the state's top leaders are showing them they're not alone.

That group of leaders includes state Sen. Yvanna Cancela, D-Las Vegas, who recently introduced a proposal to protect immigrants living in the state. Cancela's bill would prevent state and local police in Nevada from transferring custody of a person to federal immigration authorities, and from detaining people for those authorities.

It also would bar police departments from providing information to immigration authorities unless it involved a person's criminal history.

**Read the whole story**