

Calif. law would let vet bills be write-offs

By Taryn Luna, Sacramento Bee

If you own a pet, you've likely cringed after reading the bottom line of a vet bill.

A state assemblyman wants to ease the financial burden of pet ownership with an income tax credit that allows Californians to write off half the money they spend on vet costs up to \$2,000 per year.

Devon Mathis, R-Visalia, introduced Assembly Bill 942 on Thursday to give pet owners a break on vaccinations, check-ups, surgeries, x-rays, prescriptions and other medical-related expenses for their four-legged friends. The tax credit is limited to healthcare costs for dogs and cats.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

• The 14th annual Drug Store Project will be at Lake Tahoe Community College on April 4. Public and home schooled students in sixth grade may attend. Contact Lisa Huard at lhuard@ymail.com to get registered. More info about the program is available **online**.

• United Airlines will offer nonstop flights between Reno and Chicago later this year.

- From the U.S. Forest Service: “In 2016, a total of 889 wildfires (below average) burned 356,951 acres (near average) of National Forest lands in California.
 - Results from Truckee’s survey on recreational marijuana are available **online**.
 - Devon Bell was sworn in Feb. 27 at Placer County sheriff.
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Best in Basin nominations being sought

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is accepting nominations for its annual Best in Basin awards program through March 31.

TRPA created the awards program to recognize projects that demonstrate exceptional planning and design and compatibility with Lake Tahoe’s environment and communities.

The program has five award categories for projects completed in 2016: building and general construction projects; water quality restoration and erosion control projects; defensible space and forest health projects; public and environmental improvement program projects; and sustainability actions and projects.

Projects must have been completed in 2016 to be eligible for an award. More information is available **online**.

More skiers turn to short-term rentals

By Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times

In search of some extra cash, Jim and Janet Dooley started renting out a spare bedroom in their Big Bear home to skiers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

“This has brought us a couple of hundred dollars a week,” said Janet Dooley, who listed the room about two years ago on the online booking platform Airbnb. Most of the guests have been young travelers, heading to the slopes at the nearby Bear Mountain and Snow Summit ski resorts.

For ski resort towns, the growing popularity of Airbnb, VRBO and other online booking sites has become a mixed blessing.

Read the whole story

Letter: Chamber reiterates its South Shore vision

To the community,

Tahoe Chamber would like to thank Councilmembers Tom Davis and Austin Sass, and the council for the invitation to attend the City Council Feb. 14 special meeting and for the opportunity to present the business community's priorities to the city as they prepare for their strategic planning retreat.

Several years ago, the Tahoe Chamber and its members

established a vision and a set of priorities for the South Shore community titled Tahoe Future 2020. The vision statement from that document reads:

“In 2020 the South Shore of Lake Tahoe will be a vibrant community with a diversified and robust economy and a built environment that complements the natural environment. Our focus and investments in community, economy and environment balance one another to create an incredible sense of place where people desire to visit, recreate, live, work and invest.”

To the Tahoe Chamber, this vision statement is as true today as when it was first written.

The Tahoe Future 2020 states five core principles in order to achieve the vision. The core principles are economic vitality, intellectual capital, infrastructure, sustainability and quality of life. At the Feb. 14 special meeting, the Tahoe Chamber introduced these five core principals and highlighted two critical priorities for the city to focus on in 2017 and beyond.

First is infrastructure, which is essential to the success of businesses on the South Shore. Infrastructure is the means by which our members deliver their goods and services, as well as how customers access their businesses. Over the past month, we have seen the limitations of our local infrastructure and have directly watched portions of it fall apart. When we say infrastructure we mean more than roads, although roads are the most obvious weakness with potholes growing by the day. Infrastructure includes drainage systems, flood control, trails, sidewalks, recreation facilities and snow removal. It's the hard infrastructure and the equipment, staff and other resources necessary to operate and maintain the capital investments. As we all know, financial resources are at the heart of every infrastructure discussion and are a significant challenge for the South Shore.

With that being said, it is imperative that the city develops, communicates and implements a comprehensive and transparent infrastructure financing plan. We believe the foundation of the plan should be identifying the financial resources necessary to construct, operate and maintain critical infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, trails, snow removal, facilities and parks over the long term. Furthermore, the plan should clearly articulate how existing revenues are used and what shortfalls exist. From there, the city should work collaboratively with the business community, property owners, and others to identify a comprehensive solution to fill shortfalls.

The one-off financing approach of the past two decades is not sustainable and makes the planning process for businesses nearly impossible because each year there seems to be a new uncoordinated request for additional taxes or fees.

Second is economic vitality, specifically creating an atmosphere which encourages existing businesses to invest, grow and attract new business and capital to our community. In order for this to happen the city needs to continue to make strategic and policy decisions that provide fair, timely and predictable outcomes. Only when decisions, policy, and interpretations of the general plan and code are fair, timely and predictable are businesses comfortable with taking a risk and making investments. The willingness of our Members to invest in the South Shore is based in large part on the ability of the city to perform this function. For more information about the Tahoe Future vision, go **online**.

Jason Drew, chair Tahoe Chamber board of directors

Back country skier safe after injuring leg



Search crews retrieve an injured skier near Emerald Bay on Feb. 26. Photo/EDSO

A 56-year-old Truckee woman had to be evacuated from Desolation Wilderness on Sunday night after sustaining an injury.

She was skiing with a group near Eagle Buttress, which is north of Eagle Lake. The leg injury prevented her from getting out of the back country on her own.

The wind was so strong on Feb. 26 that a helicopter could not be used.

El Dorado and Douglas counties search teams skied and snowshoed to her. They used a cascade toboggan to get her to safety; then she was transported to Barton Memorial Hospital.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

I-80 to have delays as Caltrans makes improvements

Expect delays on westbound Interstate 80 northeast of Colfax on March 1 from 8am-6pm as Caltrans performs a number of maintenance operations.

The left lane of Interstate 80 from just east of Secret Town to Colfax, approximately seven miles, will be closed to perform guardrail repair and maintenance as well as other maintenance tasks. Because there are only two lanes on this length of Interstate 80, motorists are likely to experience traffic delays and are encouraged to plan for additional travel time through the area.

California Highway Patrol will be escorting traffic through the work zone .

Weather or unexpected events may delay or prolong the work.

Taxes on table to fund California roads

By Jim Miller

The way California raises money to maintain and repair state highways and local roads has largely been the same for more than two decades.

Gov. Jerry Brown and Democratic legislative leaders want to change that, and Californians would pay more as a result.

In what would be the biggest shakeup of state transportation funding since the early 1990s, they are trying to craft a package that would raise billions of dollars for road upkeep, goods movement and public transit, mostly through a mix of higher taxes and fees.

Read the whole story

Go bald for kids' cancer foundation

The 6th annual St. Baldrick's Celebration in South Lake Tahoe is March 3.

Local children affected by childhood cancer will be honored at this year.

The Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation has raised more than \$2.1 million at local head shaving celebrations and shaved 3,282 heads. The group is the region's only local nonprofit solely dedicated to serving local children and their families affected by childhood cancer.

Those who are going to shave their heads must preregister **online**. Choose the South Lake Tahoe Celebration, create a team (or sign up as an individual), then start collecting pledges. Participants are asked to raise a \$50 minimum to shave at this event.

The event will be from 5:30-8:30pm at Heavenly Mountain Resort's California Lodge.

Nevada may end presidential caucuses

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Republicans and Democrats could scrap Nevada's caucus system in favor of a presidential primary under a bill to be considered in the state Legislature.

The bill, to be introduced by the Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections, would leave it to the state central committees to request that a secret-ballot primary be held in February in presidential election years.

The legislative committee had a meeting on the Senate floor Thursday and voted to introduce the bill, likely next week.

Read the whole story