

Lawsuit could prevent loop road ballot question

By Kathryn Reed

A lawsuit has been filed to stop the loop road from ever going on the ballot.

Jason Collin, director of Home Health & Hospice for Barton Health and likely candidate for South Lake Tahoe City Council, filed the lawsuit last week. The city of South Lake Tahoe received notice late July 18; with council members then being notified.

Also named in the suit are Bill Crawford, Bruce Grego (also a presumptive council candidate), Laurel Ames and John Cefalu. Those four are the leaders of a movement to get an initiative on the Nov. 8 ballot regarding the loop road.

Today is the deadline for the council to decide whether to approve the ballot measure. The discussion will not begin until at least 2pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

The council today will not be able to discuss the lawsuit because it is not on the agenda. A special meeting could be called, but that takes 24 hours' notice at a minimum. Today the electeds have the choice to approve the language as is and adopt it as policy, request a financial study or place it on the ballot. Insiders say the latter is most likely to happen – despite the lawsuit.

It will then be up to a judge to decide if the question ever sees the light of day in November.

The four individuals and the city have 30 days from July 14 to respond to the suit.

Collin could not be reached late Monday, nor could City

Attorney Tom Watson.

There had been speculation all along that the measure would face a legal change, though many figured it would not occur until after the vote had been taken.

At issue is whether any entity can prevent the council from doing its job.

The question **loop road opponents** want voters to decide is whether the council should be able to take action on the project without constituents first voting on a preferred alignment.

The loop road project would realign Highway 50 near the state line so it goes behind Harrah's-MontBleu, starting at about Pioneer Trail. The current highway through the casino corridor would then become a city-Douglas County road.

Ultimately, the opponents want to derail the project.

It is Tahoe Transportation District that is spearheading the highway reconfiguration.

The suit calls the defendants' initiative "flawed", says it would "violate state law", is "unconstitutionally vague" and that it would "strip the duly elected South Lake Tahoe City Council of its authority to take action, even administrative action, with respect to certain land use matters."

There is also the question of whether the initiative by the four individuals violates the state Streets and Highways Code.

The suit goes on to say, "It would impermissibly hold hostage the city on all matters related to the loop road – binding the city's hands until and unless the votes approve a General Plan amendment."

Editorial: What would legal pot do for Nevada's economy?

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the July 15, 2016, Las Vegas Sun.*

By legalizing recreational marijuana, Nevada voters would spark \$7.5 billion in economic activity in the first seven years of sales.

That's the biggest number in an extensive report released this week by RCG Economics and the Marijuana Policy Group, but it's not the only eye-popping figure.

With voters poised to decide a ballot measure on the issue in November, here's a by-the-numbers look into some of the researchers' other findings and projections:

- \$1.7 billion: Total wages and business owner income that would be generated in the first seven years after legalization.

Read the whole story

Amazon's old-school book reviewers influence what we

read

By Ángel González, *Seattle Times*

In a company driven by engineers and run by algorithms and metrics, Amazon's small group of book editors is an anomaly of sorts. But through the Amazon Book Review and other methods, it's trying to build Amazon's presence and influence in the world of literary culture.

Within the highly automated folds of Amazon's online bookstore, there's a small team of literary types whose main job is rather old school. They read books, write about them and rank the works according to their qualities, helping readers sift through thousands of offerings while also planting the tech juggernaut's flag in the world of literary culture.

In an engineer-driven company ruled by algorithms and metrics, the Amazon book editors are rare birds. Once in a while, they're misunderstood by authors and publishers who retain a deep suspicion of Amazon.com after years of clashes over the book industry's future.

Read the whole story

Property crime spiking in South Lake Tahoe

There have been more than three property thefts a day in South Lake Tahoe this month.

Of the 54 thefts reported, 61 percent were a result of

unsecured and/or unattended property. This is from vehicles, residences and at public places.

The theft locations include:

- 17 unattended/unsecured property (usually from public places)
- 10 unlocked vehicles (six in the last two days)
- 6 property stolen from business storefronts.

Tips not to be a victim:

- Install a vehicle alarm or mechanical lock for the steering wheel or ignition.
- Lock the doors and leave the windows rolled up.
- Activate any alarms or anti-theft devices.
- Keep valuables out of sight and/or remove them from the vehicle. Expensive items in full view invite theft even if the vehicle is locked.
- Do not leave money, checkbooks, or credit cards in the vehicle at any time.

Preventing bicycle theft:

- Keep bicycles locked any time they are unattended with a good "U" type lock that cannot be cut. Another choice would be a good casehardened padlock and thick cable. Be sure the "U" lock or cable goes through the front wheel, rear wheel and the frame, and secure it to a fixed object.
- Check the lock by pulling on it to make sure it is secure.
- Purchase Anti-Theft Dots from a local bike shop. Register the serial number with Anti-Theft Dots and add photos of your bike.
- Be sure to retain all evidence of purchase, including the serial number and have them available if your bike

is stolen.

- Avoid parking a bicycle in a deserted or poorly lit area.
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Unlocking the West's weather maker

By Matt Weiser, Water Deeply

One thing the drought has brought to wider attention is the role of so-called atmospheric rivers in the state's weather and water supply.

An atmospheric river is a narrow band of high-speed wind that sweeps across the Pacific Ocean, often dragging vast amounts of tropical moisture with it. Sometimes dubbed a "horizontal hurricane," just a handful of these storms can bring California half of its annual rainfall every year. Indeed, an absence of very wet atmospheric rivers over the past few years is one reason California has experienced such a severe drought.

Atmospheric rivers are also responsible for the state's worst flooding events.

Their influence on water supply and flood risk depends largely on where they make landfall, and for how long. But until recently, very little research has been devoted to understanding atmospheric rivers. These storms can lash around like an uncontrolled fire hose, and the mechanisms responsible for that behavior have been poorly understood.

Read the whole story

Top gaming companies not generous to presidential candidates

By Ben Botkin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada's largest gaming companies so far haven't given heavily to presidential candidates or the political action committees that support them, Federal Election Commission filings show.

Records show just a smattering of relatively minor contributions to back presidential candidates, most of them candidates who have since dropped out of the race, including Republicans Carly Fiorina and Chris Christie.

So far, the gaming industry's giving to presidential candidates and super PACs is low-profile, reaching only \$113,261.

Read the whole story

Firefighters pounce on two small blazes

Two small fires on the South Shore this weekend are still under investigation.

Without any lightning, it is clear they were human caused.

"We've had an exceptionally windy summer and people need to remember if they don't properly maintain and extinguish their campfires or if they carelessly smoke in the forest, it's easy for a wildfire to get started and spread under these warm and dry conditions," Kit Bailey, fire chief with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The National Weather Service in Reno issued a red flag warning for today in the basin because of the threat of fire.

The fire in Round Hill started about noon July 17. It was across from the Tahoe Douglas fire station. Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District and the Forest Service responded and the fire was knocked down quickly. It was about one-tenth of an acre.

One of the **Alert Tahoe cameras** captured the smoke from that fire.

The other fire was near the Forest Service office behind Ross in South Lake Tahoe. The fire was approximately 5 feet by 5 feet.

"I'd also like to add folks need to remember the Lake Tahoe Basin is in fire restrictions and that means campfires are only allowed in approved locations and smoking is restricted to enclosed vehicles, buildings or exempted recreation sites," Bailey said.

More info about fire restrictions is available **online**.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Pianist Jimmy Hopper will be at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe on July 20, performing at 7:30pm and 9:30pm. Tickets are \$29 **online**.
 - The fourth annual Lake Tahoe Reggae Festival at the Hard Rock Lake Tahoe is Aug. 20. For more info, go **online**.
 - The Wildland Firefighter Foundation is having a fundraiser July 29 from 4-8pm at Red's Old 395 in Carson City to raise money for the families of firefighters killed in the line of duty. The donations will come from \$1 raffle ticket purchases and beard contest entries. For more information, contact Lindy McDonald at 775.220.7185.
 - Tahoe Sierra Century is Sept. 17. More info is available **online**.
 - The 31st annual Autumn Food & Wine Festival at Northstar is Sept. 9-11. It includes farm-to-table dinners, celebrity chefs, cooking demos, food, wine, beer and spirits. Each day has something special such as the progressive picnic or blazing pans mountain cook-off. The festival caps off with the Sunday culinary competition and grand tasting pitting regional chefs in a head-to-head chef-off pairing each dish with a choice wine or brew judged by industry experts and event attendees. For more info, go **online**.
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Vail Resorts ends Park City

trademark quest

By Daphne Chen, Deseret News

PARK CITY – Vail Resorts announced Saturday that it is dropping its controversial application to trademark the name “Park City.”

Bill Rock, Park City Mountain Resort’s chief operating officer, said the dispute had “clearly become a distraction that is pulling our collective focus away from the important work that lies ahead for our city on critical issues, such as affordable housing, parking and transit among others.

“As such, we have decided to withdraw our trademark application in an effort to move beyond this concern,” Rock said in a prepared statement.

The resort’s effort to legally claim the name was met with backlash from the ski town, with government leaders and residents expressing concerns that the resort could use the trademark to force local businesses to change their names.

Read the whole story

Meeting in Incline about future bike path

The Nevada Department of Transportation will host a public information meeting on July 26 to provide information about the Stateline-to-Stateline bike path that will be built over the next two to three years in Incline Village.

The meeting will update the community, and provide information on the project construction schedule and traffic impacts.

The project is a three-plus mile shared-use path from the south end of Incline Village to Sand Harbor State Park. An underpass will be constructed beneath the highway to bring the path from the east to west side of the road near the Flume Trail. Two new parking areas will be constructed near the Ponderosa Ranch and Tunnel Creek Café.

Centerline rumble strips and emergency roadside turnouts will also be added to Highway 28.

In addition, water quality improvements such as enhanced roadside drainage inlets, sediment filtration systems and erosion control will be installed to help preserve the quality of stormwater entering Lake Tahoe.

The meeting will be held from 4-7pm at the Chateau, 955 Fairway Blvd. in Incline Village, with an informational presentation at 5:30pm.