

NHP beefing up enforcement on highways

More than two dozen law enforcement agencies throughout Nevada will be joining forces to crack down on drivers exceeding speed limits or driving too fast for road conditions now through June 30.

Speeding is a contributing factor in approximately one-third of fatal crashes on the nation's roadways, according to officials. Exceeding the speed limit is considered aggressive driving just as weaving in and out of traffic and failing to yield to other motorists.

The Nevada Highway Patrol will be increasing its staffing around the clock for this event. Troopers will be looking for a variety of traffic related violations to include speeding and aggressive driving.

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the consequences of driving too fast include:

- Greater potential for loss of vehicle control
- Reduced effectiveness of occupant protection equipment
- Increased stopping distance when the driver perceives a danger
- Increased degree of crash severity leading to more debilitating injuries
- Unexpected economic and psychological implications of a speed-related crash.

Joining Forces enforcement is paid for by Nevada Department of Public Safety.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- The California Tahoe Conservancy board on June 16 agreed to spend \$116,000 to buy two parcels that are in stream environmental zones. One is on the banks of the Upper Truckee River in El Dorado County and the other along Snow Creek in Placer County.
- Sherry Miller is leaving South Lake Tahoe to become the airport manager for Chico.
- The Douglas County Public Library in Zephyr Cove will be closed June 25. It will resume its regular schedule June 29 at 11am.
- Wanderlust returns to Squaw Valley July 14-17. For more info, go **online**.
- Here is the Sierra roadwork schedule for the week from Caltrans.

Scavenge event benefits Humane Society

Elevated Fitness in South Lake Tahoe is putting on a Celebrity Scavenger Charity Dash.

The beneficiary is the Lake Tahoe Humane Society.

Participants will race with or against MTV celebrities. Teams

will solve clues, scavenge items, complete challenges, all while discovering a bit of Tahoe.

The event starts at Elevated Fitness on July 8 at 4pm.

Cost is \$60 per person or \$100 for a team.

For more info and to sign up, go **online**.

Douglas sewer conundrum in holding pattern



Douglas County commissioners are not all in agreement in how to handle the sewer district issue. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

By Jessie Marchesseau

STATELINE — A possible ordinance dissolving the Douglas County Sewer Improvement District was by far the most popular item on the agenda for Thursday's Douglas County Board of County Commissioners meeting.

So much so, the fire marshal was actively turning people away at the door because attendance exceeded the maximum capacity,

set at 98 people, for the two front rooms at the Tahoe Transportation Center in Stateline. An estimated 50 or so people were directed to the judicial court across the street where the meeting was streamed live on TVs.

The state of the DCSID has been a hot topic since May 23 when Douglas County District Attorney Mark Jackson brought to light a handful of questionable practices at an open meeting in Gardnerville of county commissioners.

At the May 23 meeting, Jackson alleged corruption, illegal collusion and political malfeasance on the part of DCSID board members. Jackson played audio recordings from recent DCSID board meetings to support his accusations. The meetings were supposedly open to the public; however, no citizens were present.

In these recordings, board members can reportedly be heard discussing the need to find someone to file an ethics complaint against Planning Manager Hope Sullivan as part of their efforts to convince county commissioners to approve their plan for two lined effluent holding ponds, a gravel mining operation, and concrete and asphalt plants in the East Valley. The gravel mining, concrete and asphalt plants were included to subsidize the cost of building the ponds, board members said.

A few months later, the Ethics Commission received the aforementioned ethics complaint from Don Miner, a former Douglas County commissioner and personal friend of the DCSID engineer and one of the board members. DCSID board members said they were aware that Miner was filing the complaint, but it was not at their request.

The recordings were not played again at Thursday's meeting, and Jackson said his charges are not focused specifically on the gravel pit or holding pond issues. The tapes were used as an example of the conduct of the DCSID board, these just

happened to be the topics the board was discussing last November through February.

He pointed out DCSID is a public entity, but has not had an election in more than 30 years. Something Jackson said is a violation of Nevada state law. He also accused the board members of not being qualified to run a sewer district.

The DCSID board currently consists of three board members who run some of the largest corporations in Stateline and none of who lives within the district he is serving. Chairman of the DCSID board is Mike Bradford, CEO of Lakeside Inn & Casino, also on the board are John Koster, chief of operations for Harrah's in Northern Nevada, and Steve Johnson who runs Edgewood and is overseeing the new Edgewood Lodge development.

Jackson cited Nevada statutes which outlawed local improvement districts like DCSID nearly 50 years ago, which require all improvement districts to abide by state election laws and which also require board members to reside within the district.

Severin Carlson, attorney for the district, said DA Jackson is not reading his statutes correctly and these laws do not apply as Jackson is indicating. Carlson did not make a formal presentation during the meeting, but did make some remarks during the public comment portion.

Since the BOCC was only considering whether or not to introduce the ordinance to dissolve the DCSID on June 16, meaning they would start considering the issue, but not actually make a decision until later, the district attorney was only tasked with presenting them with sufficient reasons to look into the matter further.

He enlisted the assistance of Carl Ruschmeyer, Douglas County director of public works, to present to the commissioners an analysis of the current workings of DCSID and identify possible inefficiencies. He pointed out how Incline Village

GID operates more facilities than DCSID, is subject to the same environmental issues, and runs with fewer full-time employees. IVGID also performs cleaning and maintenance of their systems in-house, something DCSID contracts out for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Ruschmeyer also compared DCSID to Douglas County Sewer Utility. It also operates with fewer employees than DCSID. His calculations indicate DCSU spends an average of about \$73,000 per full-time employee. DCSID, however, spends more than \$130,000, he said.

Ruschmeyer concluded that by allowing Douglas County to run the DCSID for a period of time, they could restructure it to run more efficiently, reduce the number of employees, cut back on the number and cost of contracted services by using Douglas County engineers, and save DCSID about \$900,000 per year.

"It's not just about those that are in control or believe that they're in control. It's not about the directors or trustees of the districts up here at the lake, or about those staff members that may possibly not have a job in the future," Jackson said. "At the end of the day, it's about the ratepayers."

Jackson indicated Douglas County running the district would not be for the long term. They would work to return control to more qualified lake residents as soon as possible.

After a question and answer session between Jackson and the commissioners, the room was opened to public comment, and ratepayers had their say.

Several stepped up in support of the board, mostly emphasizing how much they like their low rates and don't want them to go up, something they fear will happen if Douglas County or another entity were to take over. Few, however, offered opinions as to whether or not they believed the board was lawful or ethical.

Some called it just another lake versus valley dispute.

Several expressed support for DA Jackson, disgruntled with the DCSID board for what they saw as conflicts of interest, willfully disobeying laws and unduly influencing the system for their own benefit.

Assemblyman Jim Wheeler, R-Minden, let everyone know the Legislature would likely be discussing the issue at their next meeting in August.

The DCSID board members also had a chance to say a few words.

Koster explained when he was transferred by Harrah's to Lake Tahoe in 2007, he was told he must join the DCSID to replace the outgoing Harrah's representative. He said he had no idea at the time what running an improvement district was even about. He admitted their meetings are very informal and apologized for the off-color jokes he was heard making on the recordings.

Bradford, chairman of the DCSID board, said they are and always have been committed to their ratepayers. He took a moment to express how much he appreciated the friendship of some of the commissioners and other Douglas County political figures. One of the benefits of a small town, he said. He was disappointed the issues weren't brought to him on a personal level before it blew up in public.

Board member Steve Johnson was not able to attend, however he submitted a letter which Commissioner Doug Johnson read to the room. In it, he said DCSID ratepayers are happy, and dissolving the district is not necessary, nor is it beneficial to anyone.

All board members indicated a willingness to work with the county to correct the issues at hand.

After another short question and answer session between the

BOCC and the district attorney, Commissioner Greg Lynn motioned to table the ordinance pending an opinion from Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske. He also added into the motion that all interested parties, including existing GIDs at the lake, DCSID and Douglas County Board of Commissioners, work together to resolve the issues in question.

Commissioner Johnson reiterated that voting to introduce the ordinance, did not mean they were taking one side or another, but simply agreeing to look into the issue further and would prevent it from dragging on too long.

In the end, after nearly four and a half hours of discussions, the BOCC voted 4-1 in favor of Lynn's motion, with Johnson in opposition. So DCSID returns to business as usual for the time being.

The BOCC plans to actively pursue an opinion from the secretary of state.

Opinion: Martis Valley West is a bad idea

By Ann Nichols

It was a full house, around 250 people attended the Placer County Planning Commission meeting at Granlibakken on June 9.

Placer County staff requested approval of the contentious Martis Valley West project, which consists of a gated community of 760 units (1,900 new folks at least) and 6 acres of commercial plopped in the forest on top of Highway 267.

Never mind that the Truckee Tahoe Airport, Tahoe Area Sierra

Club, Mountain Area Preservation, North Tahoe Preservation Alliance, Friends of the West Shore, Sierra Watch and the League to Save Lake Tahoe all requested denial of the project.

Forty members of the public spoke, but only two said they were in favor: the wife of the developer and Eugene Roeder, who is a member of the North Tahoe Regional Municipal Advisory Council. Additionally, over 5,000 petition signatures have been collected and delivered, requesting no Tahoe basin or ridgeline development.

To paraphrase:

The meeting lasted 6.5 hours, yet around 100 passionate Tahoe lovers stuck it out the entire time. Yes, it was painful especially when the developer's attorney and other representatives had the final word after public testimony.

The spin narrative was continued and they failed to answer the Planning Commission's legitimate concerns: Oh, no sir, you won't see Lake Tahoe from 75-foot-tall condominiums on the Tahoe basin boundary line.

Right commissioner, we won't build affordable housing on site, we'd rather contribute money into a fund to build it somewhere else.

The project site isn't appropriate for affordable housing. Absolutely, we will pay into a fund to add two more lanes on Highway 267 that is currently inadequately funded. No worries sirs, there is a plan to evacuate the east side of Placer County ... everyone leaves on Highway 267.

Once again the developer, Mountainside Partners, formerly East-West Partners, downplayed its current additive application for the 550-space adjacent [proposed] Brockway Campground. Which, when you add the 550 spaces (870,000 square feet of soil disturbance) to the 760 units (11 million square feet of disturbance) there really is no reduction in potential

development.

June 9 was a red flag day for fire danger, and conspicuously absent at the meeting were representatives of the fire departments. The evacuation study by LSC claims 1.3 to 1.5 hours to evacuate the project in case of fire; however, the document doesn't consider in the mix if Kings Beach and Incline Village have to evacuate at the same time.

The questionable emergency preparedness study done by Mountainside Partners also claims everyone evacuating will be directed by their staff turn left from the project toward Truckee. Their staff will have to be extremely brave souls. The emergency preparedness study by Mountainside Partners assumes just one fire scenario and doesn't consider a wind-driven event, which makes their plan useless.

At the end of the hearing, the commission elected to delay approval until they could have a hearing attended by Caltrans, U.S. Forest Service and the North Tahoe and Northstar fire districts.

They considered not allowing public comment. Wow. Larry Severson, commissioner, tried to orchestrate an approval anyway which deferred the issues of fire evacuation and traffic congestion until later subsequent project approvals.

Luckily for Lake Tahoe/Truckee, that idea didn't succeed. These significant environmental impacts must be sorted out now.

By the way, Mountainside Partners claims it won't consider a smaller project. They must build 760 units or the project won't be financially feasible due to high infrastructure costs.

Hmmm, maybe the project concept of building in the middle of the forest on a ridge far from any existing development or infrastructure is a bad idea. What do you think? There's a

concept for you.

Contact Gov. Jerry Brown, maybe he'll listen if Placer County won't:

Subject: Martis Valley West Project

Governor Jerry Brown, c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173, Sacramento, CA 95814; phone – 916.445.2841; fax – 916.558.3160; email – <https://govnews.ca.gov/gov39mail/webmail.php>

Ann Nichols is a 39-year North Lake Tahoe resident and is president of the North Tahoe Preservation Alliance.

Are you using sunscreen correctly?

By Daniel Victor, New York Times

Look, we're not here to nag. We all know we're supposed to use sunscreen more reliably than we probably do.

Instead of hounding you again, we asked experts for tips on skin cancer prevention and using sunscreen that you're less likely to have heard: the counterintuitive, the new or the little-known.

Depending on your body size, experts recommend using enough lotion to fill a shot glass, or an ounce, when you're at the beach. Even if people are smart enough to apply sunscreen, they may not use enough, said Jerry Brewer, a dermatologic surgeon at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Even if the bottle says the lotion is waterproof, beachgoers should reapply after swimming.

If you're not swimming, you should reapply every two hours, regardless of the SPF count.

Read the whole story

Truckee man dies in ATV accident

A Truckee man drowned Thursday when the all-terrain vehicle he was driving flipped near Prosser Creek Reservoir, trapping him in the water.

The name of the 52-year-old has not been released.

A passer-by came across the accident scene on June 16 about noon and then notified authorities.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Gas line relocation work in South Lake Tahoe is anticipated to be completed by the end of July.
- Hailing from the high desert of Utah, psychedelic

rockers Crook & The Bluff will be in South Lake Tahoe on July 16 at 9pm at Himmel Haus.

- Tahoe Cross Country Ski Education Association needs ride leaders for the Junior Mountain Rider Program. For more info, email andrews@tahoexc.org.

- Tahoe Derby Dames go up against Woodland Roller Derby on June 18 at 6pm at Bijou Community Park. It's free. Bring lawn chairs.

- Cathy Kope is interim executive director of the St. Joseph Community Land Trust. The nonprofit's mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals and families who cannot otherwise afford housing.

Dems bullish in efforts to regain Nev. Legislature

By Michelle Rindels, AP

Democrats have been itching to regain their majority in the Nevada Legislature since 2014's conservative red wave swept them out of power, and they say the results of Tuesday's primary gave them a bit more encouragement they'll succeed.

Three Republicans who last year voted for Gov. Brian Sandoval's tax package toppled in their primaries against anti-tax challengers. It was a better outcome than it could have been for moderate Republicans, with seven other tax-supporting incumbents surviving such challenges. But every seat matters for a GOP that holds a 25-17 Assembly majority and is already expected to lose ground in a presidential

election cycle.

Republicans' inability to save tax-supporting incumbents P.K. O'Neill and Glenn Trowbridge in their primaries sent a message that their message and values aren't resonating with people, Democratic Assemblywoman Irene Bustamante Adams said.

"That gave me a boost of confidence that the majority is ours to take back," she said.

Democrats are well-poised to turn out their voters thanks to a new level of coordination between legislative and congressional campaign organizations, Bustamante Adams said. And internal divisions among Republicans will weaken them in their quest to retain power, she said.

Republicans are fresh off a bitter primary season that pitted moderates against anti-tax purists led by freshman Assemblyman Brent Jones. Most Jones-backed candidates lost, but Jones narrowly won a primary – meaning Republican leaders will have to mend fences with him to have a chance at keeping that Democratic-leaning district.

"The path to the majority runs right through that district," Assembly Majority Leader Paul Anderson said. "We're going to have to figure out how he can appeal to a wider audience."

Assembly Republicans already expect to lose three heavily Democratic districts that they won in 2014. But they're fighting to avoid losing any more, including Democratic-leaning districts held by vulnerable freshmen David Gardner and Derek Armstrong.

That means being more organized and strategic than in years past.

"I think we're still the underdog, but that plays into our favor," Anderson said. "They may not see us coming or understand our strategies."

On the Senate side, Democrats who were in a 10-11 minority last session hope to flip seats in their favor and get back in the driver's seat. The breakdown will depend on a handful of Senate races in swing districts.

Democrats need to hold on to a Henderson-area district held by Joyce Woodhouse, a retired educator who breezed through her primary but faces a tougher challenge from Republican charter school principal Carrie Buck.

They're also watching a Reno-area race between Democratic attorney Devon Reese and Republican former lawmaker Heidi Gansert, who defeated anti-tax challenger Eugene Hoover; and one in Las Vegas between Republican incumbent Sen. Scott Hammond and Democratic challenger Alexander Marks.

But perhaps the most watched will be one in a Las Vegas-area Senate district that's held by Republican Mark Lipparelli, who's not seeking re-election. Republican Erv Nelson, who was backed by GOP Senate leaders and supported Sandoval's tax plan when he was in the Assembly, lost badly in a brutal race against anti-tax Assemblywoman Victoria Seaman.

Seaman painted Nelson as a carpetbagger and a liar, fighting back when his campaign put out literature that highlighted an obscure tax cut but didn't mention the more obvious tax hikes and extensions the Legislature approved.

"We take an aggressive posture ... no issue is too small to respond to," said her campaign consultant, Ryan Hamilton, who called Seaman a vigorous campaigner and the strongest Republican for the general election. "She appeals to nonpartisans, she appeals to conservatives, and she's the hardest worker."

Seaman faces Democrat Nicole Cannizzaro, a Clark County prosecutor who didn't have a primary, in a district with a narrow Democratic registration advantage.

“I think the contrast is going to be readily apparent,” Democratic Senate Minority Leader Aaron Ford said. “The people of District 6 are ... more accustomed to interacting with someone like Nicole Cannizzaro who is thoughtful, who is cordial and who is interacting on issues that are important for them, and not bombastic and offensive.”

Book review: Not for the faint of heart

By Kim Wyatt



“The Vegetarian”

By Han Kang

Hogarth, 192 pages, \$21

One-line Review: “The Vegetarian” is a dark and wild ride, and the best book I’ve read this year.

Yeong-hye is a “completely ordinary wife” who in becoming a vegetarian upends her family and dismantles their lives. Yet “The Vegetarian,” a novel by South Korean writer Han Kang, is no simple morality play: Yeong-hye is the ultimate culture jammer, indicting a violent, repressed society on her journey to become a plant.

“The Vegetarian,” winner of this year’s Man Booker Prize, is a story in three acts. Told from the point of view of Yeong-hye’s crummy husband, obsessive brother-in-law and dutiful sister, we see how her decision upsets them. She only exists as a vessel for their desires, projections, frustrations and failures, which are now played out on her body. Nature, sex and art are vehicles for breakthrough, but not in the way the characters intend. Ultimately, it’s not Yeong-Hye’s vegetarianism that fractures her family; rather, it’s her assertion to do as she pleases.

Upon learning of her plant-based diet, her father tries to shove sweet and sour pork into his daughter’s mouth. As she identifies more and more with plants, the violence against her body escalates. Yeong-hye’s body is her only weapon in conformist South Korea—paradoxically, this could apply to any culture in which we mutilate and silence ourselves to belong.

The matter-of-fact language in this beautifully translated book heightens the characters disconnect until the elegiac third act when Yeong-hye determines to become an ecstatic tree, subsisting only on water and light, which begs the question: Is mental illness an appropriate response to a sick society?

The spare language and wild imagery echo Haruki Murakami; at other times, it’s Kafkaesque. There was a dream. Some confusing things happened. There was blood, meat, an open refrigerator. A woman turns into a plant. Down the rabbit hole I went, where I finished the book in one sitting. For days, I couldn’t stop thinking about it.

"The Vegetarian" is slim, subversive volume, a sly little bomb that explodes in your brain. No one is safe from the implications in this elegant, disturbing slip of a book. It's the "The Yellow Wallpaper" for a new generation trying to break free from the prison of roles and expectations.

Originally released as linked novellas in South Korea in 2007 and translated to English by Deborah Smith, "The Vegetarian" is a reminder that I need to read more widely. And I can't wait to read it again.

Kim Wyatt is the owner of Bona Fide Books.