

Upper Truckee Marsh off-limits to dogs

The California Tahoe Conservancy's annual seasonal dog closure at the Upper Truckee Marsh is in effect now through July 31.

The purpose of the closure is to keep dogs out of critical breeding habitat for special, threatened and endangered species.

Beginning Aug. 1, dogs will again be permitted access to the Upper Truckee Marsh provided they are on leash.

The Conservancy-owned Cove East property, west of the river, remains open for year-round, leashed dog access.

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office enforces county and city ordinances and Conservancy staff monitors for compliance.

Lab expands shared work space concept in SLT



Mountain Lab in South Lake Tahoe is bringing different businesses under one roof. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Working in isolation is not always an ideal situation. But renting office space in a prime location is expensive. Then there are all the other costs – utilities, snow removal, signage. And on the South Shore parking can be a problem.

Mountain Lab is the answer. (They've let the Tahoe in the name go to give them marketing opportunities in other locations in the future.)

Ginger Nicolay-Davis of Help U-Sell Real Estate is already in her space, as is the *Tahoe Daily Tribune*.

"I love the Mountain Lab concept. I am so excited to go to work in a place surrounded by like-minded professionals," Nicolay-Davis told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I truly feel energy begets energy and I think the Mountain Lab is going to be the business center of the community."



**Companies renting space
at Mountain Lab:**

Admios

Aliens From the Future

BL Friedman Creative

CB Umbrella Group

Century 21, Tahoe
Paradise

Climate Parents

Code for America, Tahoe
chapter

Cooperative Tahoe Inc.

Darke Marketing

Enovity

Filament

Gringos

Handelin Law

Help U Sell Lake Tahoe

Inka Direct

Lake Tahoe South Shore
Chamber of Commerce's
Tactical Team

Lara Miller PR

Level Frames

RO Anderson

Sage Engineering

Satin Legal
SMG
Tahoe Daily Tribune
Tahoe Heritage
Foundation
TCS Digital Marketing
Waddell & Reed
Wells Fargo
Wildscape Engineering.

Source:

Mountain Lab

Nineteen of the 24 private office spaces have been rented.

David and Jamie Orr are relocating the Ski Run business they opened a couple years ago to the old *Tahoe Daily Tribune* building that they bought. It will officially open May 15.

They have partnered with Bernard and Cristi Creegan. Bernard Creegan is the general contractor. It will be Cristi Creegan and David Orr running the day-to-day-operations.

For anyone who has been in the building that fronts Highway 50 and Harrison Avenue they won't recognize the inside. The main entrance is to the left of the building when facing it, at the back end of the city owned parking lot. David Orr admits the parking lot – which the Lab's clientele may use – was a huge draw.

The old front entrance leads to where the shared work areas are. This is for regulars and drop-ins. About 30 percent of the Lab's business on Ski Run had been people working there on an irregular basis – people on vacation, here seasonally, or needing a place to bring clients/customers.

The old back entrance on the right that the editorial staff used will be how people enter to get to the 49-person

conference room. This can be used by those already in the building or rented by an outside entity.

The façade has been overhauled. The old *Tribune* sign will be going to the Lake Tahoe Historical Society. The morgue – newspaper speak for where archives are kept – had been in a dingy upstairs location. Much of the material is with the historical society. The space no longer exists, instead there are high ceilings. Some of the infrastructure of the building will remain exposed.

This old building had been renovated a few times – at least in the late 1980s and 2003. It still needed help.

Insulation has been added, more windows installed and single pane ones replaced with double pane. Large ceiling fans are on a sensor to push the warm air down. Lights are new, too. The hope is the energy efficiency will drop utility bills in half.

The drywall is quiet rock, which is designed to control sound. Floors are stained concrete.

Included in a business' rent are utilities and Internet. It's up to them to pay for a landline.

Individual offices range from 93- to 230-square-feet. The *Tribune* takes about 2,500-square-feet. That is about what the total space of the Ski Run location had. This building is about four times the size of that one.



Bernard Creegan is one of the four owners of Mountain Lab as well as the contractor on the renovation. Photo/LTN

Brenda Knox with Waddell & Reed Financial Advisors said the space and location will be great for clients. She is also “looking forward to the energy of working in a collaborative space with other business people.”

Everyone has access to shared areas. The break room, so to speak, is what the general public enters through first. The south facing entrance is bright and airy with plenty of natural sunlight. Old books from Ken Smith, one of the first doctors on the South Shore, fill one section. Wall art is more than just something to look at. It is made out of recycled cotton, which absorbs sound instead of merely deflecting it.

One thing the Orrs learned from the Ski Run site is there has to be a separation between work and social spaces.



Jose Ribera-Quinonez, Rafael Ayon-Meza and Ceja Gonzalo create a new look for an old building. Photo/LTN

When people walk through the doors toward what used to be the front of the building, it is considered a quiet zone. This doesn't mean it will be library quiet, but there will be a sense of respect that work is taking place, people are on the phone, clients may be in the building and professionalism should be the norm.

There are shared spaces in the work area too. A hallway will have white boards on it; a setting for impromptu brainstorming sessions.

Another thing the Orrs learned is people want a shower at work. This is because so many of these workers are living the Tahoe lifestyle – meaning they may bike to work, ski part of the day or play outside midday. But they want to be clean at work.

“The Mountain Lab is about selling a lifestyle and community in many ways,” Orr said.

Community is a big part of the concept – with people mentoring each other, helping and collaborating. Many also socialize together.

Opinion: Drought isn't over, so don't relax

By Peter Hanlon, High Country News

California's State Water Resources Control Board recently indicated that mandatory water restrictions could be lowered in some parts of the state later this spring. Such a move would come just one year after the wise decision that encouraged residents to save water in the midst of a severe, multi-year drought.

Regardless of the board's decision, Californians need to shift permanently toward water conservation and efficiency. In fact, that's not a bad idea for all Americans.

There's no denying it: There was a lot more rain and snowfall in California this past winter than we've seen in recent years, especially the last five. Unfortunately, when it comes to the drought, a closer look at recent rain and snow trends

makes it clear that saying “things are better” is a long way from knowing that “the drought is over.”

Read the whole story

Mixed earnings report for Caesars

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Caesars Entertainment, the casino giant behind many resorts on the Las Vegas Strip and two at Lake Tahoe, reported its first quarter earnings Thursday.

Revenue of \$1.2 billion is an increase of 6.7 percent from the first quarter of 2015. However, that doesn't include results from Caesars Entertainment Operating Co., or CEOC, the company division that filed for bankruptcy in January 2015. Including that division, Caesars had net revenue of \$2.3 billion, up 4 percent.

The company reported a net loss of \$308 million, compared to reported earnings of \$6.8 billion in the first quarter of 2015.

Caesars CEO Mark Frissora said on a conference call with analysts that growth in his company's interactive business was a highlight of the quarter, as was a “strong increase in lodging revenues,” specifically at the Linq hotel.

Read the whole story

Racial slurs by cops becoming more unacceptable

By Cindy Chang and Alene Tchekmedyian, Los Angeles Times

In Santa Clara County, jail guards sent text messages using racial slurs to describe African Americans, Jews and Vietnamese Americans.

In San Francisco, as many as 19 police officers have been implicated in a texting scandal involving racial and homophobic insults.

Recent controversies over emails and texts show how the intense scrutiny currently faced by police officers has extended beyond their actions on patrol and into communications that some thought were private.

The shift has come as police departments nationwide are trying to address the attitudes of officers before problems on the streets arise. Among other things, agencies have adopted training that examines implicit biases and have pushed to hire more minority recruits.

[Read the whole story](#)

Drought-stricken **Calif.**

boosts conservation

By Scott Smith, AP

Residents of drought-stricken California doubled their water conservation efforts in March compared with the month before by turning off their sprinklers when the rain fell and changing habits, officials said Tuesday.

Cities and businesses used 24.3 percent less water compared with the same time in 2013. That's twice the saving from the dry month of February, when the savings hit an all-time low of 12 percent, water regulators announced at a meeting in Sacramento.

"This is the most welcomed news I've had in a long time," said Felicia Marcus, chair of the State Water Resources Control Board. "In the rain, people know to turn off their sprinklers."

March was a cooler and wetter month, and officials also credited Californians with changing their habits, especially when it comes to watering their outdoor landscaping, which consumes half of a home's water use.

Conservation since mandatory cutbacks began in June 2015 has saved enough water to serve 6.5 million people for one year, or 17 percent of the state's population, officials reported.

March is the first month under relaxed conservation requirements. Californians are expected to use at least 20 percent less water, a break from the previous nine months ending in February when Californians were under stricter orders to conserve by 25 percent.

A nearly average amount of rain and snow this winter has eased California's dry spell, filling key reservoirs in Northern California. Officials warned, however, that the state remains

in a drought.

This month state regulators in Sacramento are busy writing a new method for conservation in the five-year drought that will be implemented in June. They have said requirements could be reduced in some areas and maintained in others.

The easing drought has prompted many local water districts to say they want to set their own conservation targets. Other water districts say the state should completely drop the drought emergency because key reservoirs in Northern California are nearly full.

New regulations, however, will likely keep in place some level of conservation requirements, officials said.

“Californians have risen to the occasion and acquired habits and skills to conserve,” said Jelena Hartman, a state water board senior scientist for climate change. “I believe this is showing the commitment Californians have for conservation.”

Run to benefit Wildland Firefighter Foundation

Registration is open for the Northern Nevada Wildfire Awareness Half Marathon and 5K Trail Run in Reno.

The May 29 event is hosted by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension’s Living With Fire Program in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and Desert Sky Adventures. All proceeds from the race will be donated to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation.

The half marathon and 5K run start at 8am at Rancho San Rafael

Regional Park, 1595 N. Sierra St. in Reno. The race is limited to 300 participants. Cost is \$40 and includes a tech T-shirt, goodie bag, finisher's medal, snacks and refreshments. To register or for more information, go **online**.

Participants will run through some of Nevada's most infamous wildfire fuels, and there will be a variety of fire engines and displays of educational information.

The Wildland Firefighter Foundation is a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to fallen firefighters' families and to firefighters injured in the line of duty.

4 ways to put your tax refund to good use

By **Odysseas Papadimitriou**

California has a tax refund problem. But probably not the kind you think. Despite facing the country's 11th highest tax burden, Golden State residents receive the 10th largest average annual refund, at roughly \$2,900. That might at first seem like a good thing, but you have to consider where the money is going.

For starters, that hefty refund is proof California taxpayers give the federal government an annual interest-free loan of nearly \$40 billion, according to IRS data. Not only that, but you're also paying into an especially inefficient state bureaucracy, as California boasts the country's sixth worst taxpayer return on investment, according to WalletHub research.

So step one in approaching this year's refund should have nothing to do with spending. Rather, it should be to make the arrangements necessary to avoid one next year. Beyond that, there are a number of great ways to put Uncle Sam's giveback to good use. We'll highlight some of the best options below.

1. **Pad your safety net:** Far too many Americans have far too little saved to withstand job loss, a major emergency expense or an economic downturn. In fact, 92 percent of Americans fall short of even the most conservative age-based savings targets, according to the National Institute on Retirement Security.

As a result, the best application for your tax application is to stash it away for a rainy day (even though the real thing is few and far between for Californians). Such a financial safety net will act as insurance against unfortunate events and can be easily converted to retirement savings if they don't come to pass.

2. **Pay off collection accounts:** The newest credit-scoring models stop considering collections accounts, both medical and otherwise, once they've been paid off or otherwise settled to the collector's satisfaction. So if you have a mortgage or auto loan in your near future, or otherwise need the best possible credit, biting the bullet and getting such accounts off your plate could produce immediate credit-score gains and thereby save you a lot of money on future borrowing.

3. **Reduce your credit card debt:** Nationwide, credit card debt is reaching dangerous levels reminiscent of the Great Recession. We racked up \$71 billion in credit card debt during 2015 alone, including a monster \$52 billion fourth-quarter buildup that dwarfed the totals for 2010 and 2011 combined, according to CardHub data.

Things aren't quite as bad in South Lake Tahoe, as the average resident with a credit card balance owes "just" \$5,576,

compared to the national average of \$7,879. But that Lake Tahoe figure still generates hundreds of dollars in interest each year and should therefore be dealt with as soon as possible.

Your tax refund can take a chunk out of what you owe, itself producing considerable savings, and a zero percent balance transfer credit card can keep the saving-train going if you have good or excellent credit. Offers for 15-month zero percent financing with no transfer or annual fee exist, for example.

4. **Invest in your credit score:** The average South Lake Tahoe resident sports a credit score of 661.02, which is only in the 37th percentile nationally but is still considered “good.” But good is not excellent, and your monthly mortgage, car loan, car insurance and credit card payments are the proof.

Investing some time, effort and money into your score will not only help you save on all of the above, but it could even pave the way to a new job or apartment. Paying off collection accounts, getting current on delinquent payments and making sure you always pay your bill by the due date here on out will all aid your efforts.

At the end of the day, it’s important to wisely allocate tax refund money. But it’s also important not to be too hard on yourself if you don’t. California is the 25th most financially literate state in the country, according to WalletHub, so you’re generally in good financial shape.

Odysseas Papadimitriou is CEO of the personal-finance website WalletHub, which offers free credit scores, full credit reports, 24/7 credit monitoring and customized money-saving advice.

Lawsuit goes after Whittemore's Glenbrook house

By Siobhan McAndrew, Reno Gazette-Journal

In a lawsuit filed Friday, three days before Harvey Whittemore's release from serving a sentence for breaking campaign finance laws, the Nevada lawyer and lobbyist and his wife are being sued by Bank of the West.

Filed in Reno's Second Judicial District Court on April 29, the lawsuit accuses Annette and Harvey Whittemore of creating shell companies to hide assets, including the family's Glenbrook home.

Calls to the Whittemore family were not immediately returned.

Read the whole story

SLT cops looking for suspects in double stabbing

Two South Lake Tahoe men were stabbed Wednesday night near the bike path behind Meek's Lumber in the center of town.

The names of the victims – ages 31 and 43 – have not been

released.

They were found at the corner of Highway 50 and Al Tahoe Boulevard about 11:20pm May 4. One had a slash on the side of his abdomen, the other had been stabbed in the chest. One has been released from Barton Memorial Hospital, the other is expected to survive.

Neither victim was able give officers exact details other than to say they encountered their assailants on the path, an argument ensued and then a sharp weapon was drawn.

The suspects are described as males about 5-feet-10, 160 pounds.

Anyone with information is asked to call 530.542.6100 or Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report