

TTUSD rescinds layoff notices

Layoffs at Tahoe Truckee Unified School District have been rescinded by a unanimous vote of the board.

The tentative agreement between the district and the Tahoe Truckee Education Association allowed for the vote to go forward April 25.

The new agreement includes provisions for an early retirement incentive and two to three furlough days next year. The agreement also includes a reduction of six teaching positions – a result attributed to enrollment decline that will likely be absorbed by the retirements.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

‘Walking the West’

“Walking the West”, a documentary about the Pacific Crest Trail, will be shown at Lake of the Sky Outfitters in South Lake Tahoe on April 30 at 7pm.

“Wallking the West” is an adventure documentary about a New Zealander and an Irishman who quit their jobs and walk 2,626 miles from Mexico to Canada along one of the longest foot trails in the world, the Pacific Crest Trail. This documentary shows the changes that occur when two urbanites escape civilization, venture into the wilderness and push their bodies and minds to the limits of their endurance.

RSVP to (530) 541.1027.

Firefighters ready to deal with what's expected to be busy season

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Fifteen thousand firefighters are ready to deal with what's expected to be a busy season for wildfire, with Nevada and the Sierra among areas in the country at high risk this year, two top cabinet officers said Thursday.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar headed up a telephone news briefing on the 2012 wildfire outlook, predicting fire activity similar to last year, when more than 74,000 fires burned some 8.7 million acres nationwide.

"We believe we are prepared," Salazar said of the coming fire season.

Much of the drought-stricken Southwest is at high risk of fire, as are the western slopes of the Rockies, said Ed Delgado of the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho.

A near record-dry winter also put the interior mountains of California, including the Sierra, and the Western Great Basin of Nevada at high potential for dangerous fire.

Representatives of the Western Great Basin Predictive Services Center recently predicted more than 600,000 acres of Nevada will likely burn during this year's fire season.

They said fire conditions typically found in mid-summer exist

already. The Reno area was hit with two unseasonable fires in November and January, burning more than 5,000 acres and 50 homes.

Read the whole story

Report: Nevada tax system good for small businesses

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – A new business index evaluating the states on the effects of their tax systems on entrepreneurship and small business ranks Nevada third behind South Dakota and Texas.

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council's "Business Tax Index 2012" pulls together 18 tax measures, and combines them into one tax score that allows the 50 states and District of Columbia to be compared and ranked.

Raymond J. Keating, chief economist for the SBE Council and author of the report, said: "All taxes matter, whether imposed at the federal, state or local level of government. They matter to consumers, entrepreneurs, investors and businesses. State and local levies matter in terms of a state's competitiveness. And they matter when it comes to economic growth and job creation."

Among the measures used to create the rankings are each state's top personal income tax rate, top individual capital gains tax rate, top corporate income tax rate, property taxes, sales and excise taxes and unemployment taxes.

Nevada does not have either a personal or corporate income tax

and was rated highly in these categories. The state did not do as well in the property tax ranking, coming in 33rd as a share of personal income, 47th on sales and excise taxes and 36th on unemployment taxes.

S. Tahoe celebrates Earth Day a week late

South Tahoe Earth Day is returning to the Bijou Community Park in South Lake Tahoe on April 28 from 10am-4pm.

This year's free Earth Day event includes a speakers' stage with talks on aquatic invasive species, the history of Lake Tahoe, the story of Tahoe Tessie, and edible plants of the Sierra.

The Kid Zone area will be full of recycle-themed arts and crafts, such as milk-carton wallets and sun print papers, and the Bounce House will help kids bounce out that extra energy.

A variety of events will be happening throughout the day, highlighted by the Sugar Pine Foundation's native tree planting at 11:30am and the "Ballad of Aquatic Invasive Species" sing-along at noon.

Incline condo fire blamed on discarded ashes

A fire that broke out in Incline Village on April 26 was caused by improper ash disposal, according to North Lake Tahoe firefighters.

Crews responded to 978 Glenrock Court at 2:30am Thursday. Units 52 and 53 have extensive damage.



A condo fire
April 26 in
Incline left
five people
homeless.

Photo/NLTFPD

Five people are without a home. No one sustained injuries.

“Improper ash disposal is a common cause of structure as well as wildland fires. Whether fireplace or barbecue ashes, it is important to understand that embers in an insulating bed of ash can remain hot up to a week or more,” Tia Rancourt, with North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, said in a statement.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Heavenly to host 2013-2014 U.S. Freestyle Championships

The U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association announced Thursday that the U.S. Freestyle Championships will return to Heavenly Mountain Resort for the 2013 and 2014 seasons.

Heavenly will play host to men's and women's aerials, dual moguls and moguls events March 29-31, 2013.

Heavenly last hosted the championships in 2004 and is one of only a handful of resorts to do so two years in a row.

Aerials competitions will again be at night under the lights while the competition finish lines will sit in direct view of the California Lodge.

Because the U.S. Championships event falls after the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, spectators will also have the opportunity to watch U.S. Olympic athletes compete after they return from the Games.

U.S. Freestyle Championships

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Future of death penalty to be decided by California voters

By Maura Dolan, Los Angeles Times

California is set for a major debate on the death penalty following qualification Monday of a November ballot measure that would replace capital punishment with a life term without possibility of parole.



If passed, the measure would make California the 18th state in the nation without a death penalty. During the last five years, four states have replaced the death penalty and Connecticut is soon to follow.

Growing numbers of conservatives in California have joined the effort to repeal the state's capital punishment law, expressing frustration with its price tag and the rarity of executions. California has executed 13 inmates in 23 years, and prisoners are far more likely to die of old age on death row than by the executioner's needle.

November's ballot measure would commute the sentences of more than 700 people on death row to life without possibility of parole, a term that would then become the state's most severe form of criminal punishment.

Most death row inmates would be returned to the general prison population and be expected to work. Their earnings would go to crime victims.

Read the whole story

California lawmakers want minimum wage tied to CPI

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

Gasoline was selling for \$3.33 a gallon, Jerry Brown was attorney general, and California was bracing for a budget crisis when the state's hourly minimum wage rose to \$8 in early 2008.

Fast forward to now, and much has changed: Gas is almost a dollar higher, Brown is governor, and the state is reeling from years of red ink. But the minimum wage hasn't budged a cent.

New legislation would change that, ensuring future increases for the state's lowest-wage workers while letting lawmakers evade political heat by taking the hot-button issue out of their hands.

Assembly Bill 1439 by Assemblyman Luis Alejo would prohibit the minimum wage from being lowered as consumer prices fall but would mandate increases as prices rise. The indexing would

be expected to hike the minimum wage about 14 cents next January, but more importantly, it would set the stage for what could be annual hikes in years to come.

Alejo, D-Watsonville, bills his measure as a way to boost the economy by putting more money in the pockets of workers struggling to provide food, clothes and housing for their families.

“When minimum-wage workers have more money to spend, they spend it,” he said. “They can’t afford to save it. That is good for all businesses.”

The state Chamber of Commerce has labeled AB 1439 a “job-killer” bill. Other opponents range from the California Restaurant Association to the California Farm Bureau Federation.

“Now is not the time to increase the cost of doing business in California, when businesses are just now showing signs of recovery,” said Jennifer Barrera, a chamber lobbyist.

AB 1439 puts the minimum wage on “autopilot,” Barrera said, “which we don’t think is appropriate.” Lawmakers should not simply let statistics dictate rates without considering other factors, she said.

Read the whole story