Truck driver killed on Mount Rose Highway from Carson Valley

The driver of the truck who died using the runaway truck ramp on Monday has been identified as Eric S. Holton, 31, of Gardnerville.

Holton was descending the Mount Rose Highway in Incline Village on April 23 at approximately 2:48pm when he used the ramp. Investigators still don't know why Holton used the ramp.

The vehicle was a 2006 gray Freightliner truck tractor pulling a 1989 flat bed trailer transporting composite decking materials traveling west on the two-lane highway



Crews look over the mangled truck near the intersection of highways 431 and 28. Photo/NHP

The truck and trailer stopped near the termination point of the ramp; however, the entire load of building materials shifted forward, crushing the entire cab and killing Holton.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Edgewood to begin S. Tahoe park; lodge project draft EIS out

By the end of July there will be another place to re-create in South Lake Tahoe.

The official groundbreaking of Bonanza Park is April 30 at 5:30pm at 1209 Bonanza St.

This will mark the start of turning what is now a vacant lot – but what was once a rundown hotel called the C&M Lodge – into a neighborhood park.



Bonanza Park will be open mid-summer in South Lake Tahoe.

The park is being built by Edgewood Companies. The Nevada-based company is doing this project in exchange for the right to transfer the use of the tourist accommodation units from

South Lake Tahoe to Stateline. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in its desire to control development in the Lake Tahoe Basin has made TAUs a commodity.

TRPA also limits free market by not allowing the owner of the TAU to use them where he wants. It’s up to the powers that be in the jurisdiction where the TAU resides to decide if they can be transferred.

Edgewood will use those TAUs as it goes forward with building the Edgewood Lodge near the lakefront of the Stateline golf course by the same name.

The draft environment impact statement for the lodge project is in circulation, with comments being taken until June 18.

The project will be before the TRPA Advisory Planning Commission on May 9 and on the Governing Board agenda on May 30.

For more information about the lodge and how to comment, contact Theresa Avance at the TRPA – (775) 589.5224.

As for the park, it will include a children’s play area, grass play area, picnic pods, basketball court, and a horseshoe toss. It will also include solar lighting, recycling containers, low flow irrigation and a native demonstration landscape planting material.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Activities for adults and kids center on wildfire awareness

Nevada Wildfire Awareness Week will kick off April 28 at Mills Park in Carson City.

The event runs from 10am to 2pm and gives people a chance to talk to local firefighters, learn how to use a fire extinguisher, discuss insurance questions and visit with vendors displaying products and services.

There will also be activities for children, including meeting Smokey Bear, visiting the Fire Safety House and playing at the Ember House, which illustrates how flying embers can be lodged in various places.

They can also explore firefighting helicopters and fire engines.

For more details about this and other Wildfire Awareness Week events, go online.

Crews making emergency

repairs to bridge in Truckee

Cold Stream Road is closed for emergency repairs at the bridge over Donner Creek in Truckee.

This closure is located on Cold Stream Road between Donner Pass Road and Deerfield Drive. Business affected by the closure include: Chevron Fuel Station; Sierra Sun, Taco Bell, Tahoe Truckee Rental Management, Truckee Donner Lodge, Union 76 Station, and Unwind Salon.

Officials are urging motorists to avoid travel in this area if possible. Construction crews will be working overnight in the area to assess the extent of the damage.

To access updates on the road closure check the town's website.

AT&T wields enormous power in Sacramento

By Shane Goldmacher and Anthony York, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO — As the sun set behind Monterey Bay on a cool night last year, dozens of the state's top lawmakers and lobbyists ambled onto the 17th fairway at Pebble Beach for a round of glow-in-the-dark golf.

With luminescent balls soaring into the sky, the annual fundraiser known as the Speaker's Cup was in full swing.

Lawmakers, labor-union champions and lobbyists gather each year at the storied course to schmooze, show their skill on

the links and rejuvenate at a 22,000-square-foot spa. The affair, which typically raises more than $1 million for California Democrats, has been sponsored for more than a decade by telecommunications giant AT&T.

At the 2010 event, AT&T's president and the state Assembly speaker toured Pebble Beach together in a golf cart, shaking hands with every lawmaker, lobbyist and other VIP in attendance.

The Speaker's Cup is the centerpiece of a corporate lobbying strategy so comprehensive and successful that it has rewritten the special-interest playbook in Sacramento. When it comes to state government, AT&T spends more money, in more places, than any other company.

It forges relationships on the putting green, in luxury suites and in Capitol hallways. It gives officials free tickets to Lady Gaga concerts. It takes lawmakers on trips around the globe and all-expenses-paid retreats in wine country. It dispenses millions in political donations and employs an army of lobbyists. It has spent more than $14,000 a day on political advocacy since 2005, when it merged with SBC into its current form.

A handful of labor unions and trade groups have spent more on a combination of lobbying and direct political giving, but state records show that in the last seven years, no single corporation has spent as much trying to influence lawmakers as AT&T. At the same time, a tide of consumer protections has ebbed and the company has been unshackled from the watchful eye of state regulators.

Efforts to force phone companies to be more transparent about fees on cellphone bills died; so did an attempt to end monthly charges to unlist a phone number. The charge for that kind of privacy rose sixfold in a three-year period, and those fees generate $50 million annually for AT&T, according to a 2009

legislative analysis.

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Another South Lake Tahoe business has closed – Mt. Tallac Brewing Company. No more beer.

• The South Shore's Deirdre Faegre had a chance earlier this month to skate at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena with Dorothy Hamill, the 1976 Olympic ladies' singles champion.

• Parents of the sixth-grade students and volunteers who participated in this year's Drug Store Project have until midnight Friday to complete this survey.

• Meyers is in a movie. Check out "Cali Rush" online.

• Sugar Bowl Resort has adjusted lift operations for the remainder of the season. Lifts start at 8:30am and close at 2:30pm. Sugar Bowl will remain open for skiing and riding daily through April 29.

Opinion: Government wants to regulate too much information

By Christopher Wolf

Should Congress be in the business of deciding what people can share through social media? That is the question considered at one of only three hearings so far by the Senate Judiciary Privacy Subcommittee. The three senators at the hearing each suggested that without legal restrictions, people might over-share information about what streaming videos they watch online. That is, the senators are worried about TMI – too much information.

For some, regular sharing is TMI. For others, it is part of proactively shaping their online identities and an essential way to spread their ideas. Social media provides a wonderful opportunity for free expression and connection, but users need to be sensitive of the risks of TMI. In short, we need cyber-education, parental guidance and self-editing. But do we need a federal law limiting how much users share about their online movie watching?

The Senate Judiciary Privacy Subcommittee took up the issue as part of its review of the 1988 Video Privacy Protection Act. The act was passed in reaction to a newspaper reporter obtaining the video rental records of then-Supreme Court nominee Judge Robert Bork, and it restricts sharing rental records without a person's permission. Some read that law though as to prevent the use of automatic sharing tools that many Facebook users employ to share the music they listen to on the streaming music service Spotify, or the news articles they read on the Washington Post online. That reading of the law has inhibited the launch of a Netflix "frictionless" sharing tool, and there are calls for an amendment to the act to specify that frictionless sharing is illegal.

Netflix is not the only online streaming video service whose users may be foreclosed from sharing their viewing experiences. Amazon, Blockbuster, Hulu and Vudu offer streaming video services and their users (and those of services yet to be launched) also stand to be affected by a law that prohibits consumers from choosing to share their online viewing choices.

Christopher Wolf is the founder and co-chair of the Future of Privacy Forum.

Read the whole story

Study: Cyclists will come if there are bike lanes to ride in

By Brad Plumer, Washington Post

Is there anything cities can do to encourage cycling? Portland, for instance, has twice as many bike commuters per 1,000 people as Washington. But maybe that's just because Portland has nicer weather or more young people. It's not clear that there's an actual policy issue here.

Yet in a new study in the journal Transport Policy, Ralph Buehler and John Pucher suggest that cities might actually be able to influence how many cyclists are on the road. Perhaps all they have to do is — and this shouldn't come as a huge surprise — build more bike lanes and bike paths.

Buehler and Pucher found that the presence of off-road bike paths and on-street bike lanes were, by far, the biggest determinant of cycling rates in cities. And that's true even after you control for a variety of other factors like how hot or cold a city is, how much rain falls, how dense the city is, how high gas prices are, the type of people that live there, or how safe it is to cycle. None of those things seem to matter quite as much. The results, the authors write, "are consistent with the hypothesis that bike lanes and bike paths encourage cycling."

Read the whole story

So much great writing about California – what should you read?

By Allen Pierleoni, Sacramento Bee

Everybody knows California is a nation unto itself, culturally and geographically unique. From Gold Rush argonauts to Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, we've always been at the forefront of daring and innovation.

Hey, we invented the movie industry, hard-boiled noir fiction, Mickey Mouse and the digital age.

It follows that we literate Californians owe it to ourselves to cherry-pick from the millions of California-centric books available to us and take a look – even if it's just to remind ourselves of how special we are (or think we are).

But which ones? What would a "dream list" of California

reading look like?

We asked a group of book-savvy Californians to come up with their best recommendations of books we Californians should have read or should read, along with their brief comments. Think of their choices as a sampling of the Golden State itself – full of predictable and surprising entries.

Read the whole story

Nevada officials holding on to Whittemore-related money

By Martha Bellisle, Reno Gazette-Journal

Members of Nevada's congressional delegation and one candidate quickly announced that they would get rid of or give to charity all donations given by Harvey Whittemore after an FBI investigation into his campaign contributions surfaced in February.

But a review of their first-quarter campaign finance reports reveals that that's not exactly the case, though some money was donated to charities and a small sum went to the U.S. Treasury.

Some of the recipients now say they'll hold onto the money until the investigation is complete. If the funds are found to be legal, they'll keep them.

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has given a portion back, but about $100,000 of Whittemore-related funds remain in his coffers, according to a Reno Gazette-Journal analysis of his federal campaign spending reports.

In early February, FBI agents visited the homes and businesses of about 30 Whittemore associates and served subpoenas to testify before a federal grand jury. Several secret meetings have been held with the grand jury in Reno, but the U.S. Attorney's office in Las Vegas has yet to announce an indictment or cleared Whittemore.

Of special interest was more than $120,000 given to Reid by a list of Whittemore friends, colleagues and family on a single day in 2007. Skirting campaign finance laws by using "conduits" is a felony that potentially carries some serious prison time.

Read the whole story