Poll: Majority of Californians support legal online gambling

By Laurel Rosenhall, Sacramento Bee

A majority of California voters – especially those under age 40 – would like to see the state tax Internet poker and make the game legal, according to a Field Poll released today.

Among all age groups, 53 percent of voters support the idea, the poll says, while 41 percent oppose it. Among voters under age 40, however, support grows to 73 percent.

The Legislature has been discussing proposals to make online gambling legal in California for the past two years. The bills stalled as various gambling interests fought over who would be able to profit from the endeavor.

Parties involved in the debate – owners of Indian casinos, card rooms and race tracks – are supposed to meet this fall to hash out a compromise proposal for the Legislature to consider next year. Lawmakers who support Internet gambling have said it could bring hundreds of millions to state coffers.

The potential for the state to make money by taxing Internet poker is the main reason Irene Woods of Fair Oaks said she wants California to permit Internet gambling.

“It would be another source of revenue for the state, and we’re in dire financial problems,” said Woods, 79, who participated in the survey.

“I don’t see anything immoral about gambling anyway. What’s the difference if you go to Tahoe or Reno, or if you do it online?”

Poll respondent Timothy Dwyer of Stanislaus County saw it another way. He said the potential for the state to make money isn't worth the risk to players who could wind up gambling too much.

Read the whole story

Mutt Strut returns to South Lake Tahoe

The 7th annual Mutt Strut is Oct. 9 in South Lake Tahoe.

The 1.2 mile walk involves trying to build the best poker hand as you and your four-legged friend meander around the South Shore.

Registration begins at 11am at Lake Tahoe Psychic, 3131 Harrison Ave.

For more information about this fundraiser for Animal Coalition of Tahoe, click on Mutt Strut.

Reno-Tahoe, Denver try to convince USOC to go after

2022 Games

By Brian Gomez, Gazette

COLORADO SPRINGS – Nearly 40 years ago, Denver gave away the Olympic rings. Now, it wants them back.

The U.S. Olympic Committee has had preliminary talks with Denver about the chance of a bid for the 2022 Winter Games, USOC chief executive officer Scott Blackmun said Friday after his keynote address during the U.S. Olympic Assembly.

It's still undetermined whether the Colorado Springs-based USOC will enter the fray for 2022 – with Reno/Lake Tahoe, Salt Lake City and Bozeman, Mont., also weighing bids – or throw its weight behind a bid for the 2024 Summer Games, in which possibilities are Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia and Tulsa, Okla.

If the USOC tries for 2022, bid books outlining a city's plan for the Games, that would detail whether Olympic competition and practice venues are targeted for the Springs, would be due to the USOC in 2013, when the USOC also would offer an applicant city to the International Olympic Committee. The IOC will announce its short list in 2014 and pick the 2022 Olympic host in 2015. At least 15 other nations have shown interest, the strongest contenders including Barcelona, Spain; Berne, Switzerland; Munich; Oslo; and Ostersund, Sweden.

"I think 20 years is long enough," Blackmun said in reference to the U.S. last hosting the Olympics in 2002 in Salt Lake City. He added: "It's important that we host the Games in the United States as a way to keep Americans connected to the team. . . . I don't think there are limitations on our ability to participate in a 2022 bid right now."

Bid leaders from Denver and Reno/Lake Tahoe are in town for the Olympic Assembly, the USOC's annual gathering of 400

attendees that ends today with a USOC board meeting.

Read the whole story

Marathon to impact motorists on Sunday

The Sept. 25 Lake Tahoe Marathon will mean delays for motorists as runners take over highways in the basin.

Caltrans says expect 10-30 delays from 6:30am-1:30pm from the junction of highways 89 and 28 in Tahoe City to Spring Creek Road for those headed south.

The northbound lane of Highway 89 will be closed during that same time period.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Straw Hat Pizza's newest location is inside Harveys casino in Stateline.

• Design Workshop, an international landscape architecture, land planning, and urban design firm with six offices in the U.S., promoted Stephanie Grigsby to principal and Micah Langdon to associate in its Lake Tahoe office.

• A free health van will be in the parking lot at Tahoe Tot Spot in South Lake Tahoe on Sept. 26 from 10am-1:30pm. Click on flyer for more info.

• Beth Peterson of Stateline won a trip to next month's 40th Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Her name was drawn from more than 12,000 sweepstakes entries.

• Ex-Placerville Mayor David Machado's arraignment has been moved from this month to Oct. 18. El Dorado County District Attorney's Office alleges Machado hid ownership of property within the city's Redevelopment Zone in violation of disclosure laws.

• Here is Caltrans' Sierra roadwork schedule for next week, as well as the El Dorado-Tahoe schedule.

History: Remembering summers at the Tallac House

Publisher's note: ***This is reprinted with permission from the August 1976 Lake Tahoe Historical Society newsletter.***

Several months ago, our newsletter carried a report of Linda Mendizabal's interview with Mrs. Meliba Vallet Meier, whose father was chef at Tallac House some 65 years ago and whose playmate at the time was Gladys Comstock. Since that time we have had correspondence from Velma C. Eden further commenting on the time of which Mrs. Meier spoke. From her letters, we quote:

January 30, 1976

I was interested in reading your article about Mrs. Meier in the current issue of your publication. I was Velma Comstock, and my sister was Gladys. We were both born at Tallac, and lived there until the year 1913. Gladys was married to Maillard Bennett, had two daughters, and helped her husband manage Brockway both before and after our father died, and also, in the winter, they lived in Arizona and managed the Arizona Inn in Tucson. Gladys died very early in 1961 of a brain tumor.

I belong to your Society and, in fact, made a talk on the old Tallac about a year or so ago. I am interested in Mrs. Meier's recollections and find them very interesting. However, we have some variations.

My mother was called 'Dell' or 'Delly', not Virginia. Also, she was a remarkably healthy woman who never seemed to have a cold, an upset stomach, or a headache. However, she was a very private person in the mornings and never appeared in public until the lunch hour when she would be all put away in whatever the fashion of the day was. A breakfast tray would be sent over to her from the hotel. No doubt a young girl would have assumed her to be an invalid. My mother loved the social life and could play poker like a pro. She could bowl and, on occasion on the fourth of July, could take off her silly high heeled shoes and do a sprint in the women's races. No, she was not a sickly woman. However, she was no athlete and did not ride well.

I remember Alice Vallett very well indeed. Alice had studied classical Parisian-type French and this is one of the main

reasons that she cared for us. Earlier my father and mother had engaged French women from France who spoke no English and we just had to learn to talk French willy-nilly. (Eventually), as we got older, this was increasingly hard to accomplish, and also we were less inclined to speak a steady diet of French and nothing else. One of our constant companions at this period was the house doctor's young son, Stewart Manson. Also, my cousin Clarisse O'Brien came often to visit. We all rode horseback a great deal, sometimes went to play on the beach, although I do not remember that we were able to swim. I do not remember Alice's sister by the name of Meliba; it seems to me we had some other name for her. I can also remember Alice warning me not to copy the kind of French she spoke to her parents, as it was a patois which I was not supposed to learn.

I can remember my sister and I conceiving the idea of trading muffins and cookies which we snitched from our table to the Indians for pine nuts. My parents did not believe in an allowance so we were figuring out a way to provide ourselves with forbidden luxuries. My mother thought everything to do with the Indians apt to (be) rather dirty, although she was very good to them.

I think there were more roads than Mrs. Meier remembers. Besides the saddle horses, there were several carriages and horses who took people on trips to Cascade Lake, Fallen Leaf Lake, and around to Bijou and Al Tahoe. I often made the same trip that Mrs. Meier remembers with my family from the Pasadena area, by train to Truckee, then by the narrow gauge railroad to Tahoe Tavern, then by boat to Tallac. Usually we came very early in April and the roads (were) not open to Tahoe. However, in the fall of the year, from 1908 on, we would return by car. My father would have someone drive it up from (the) Los Angeles area when the snow was off.

I do not know about the tea being served every day at 4:00 p.m., probably because we would not have been allowed to go to it. The side dining room she refers to was known by the quaint

old name of “The Ordinary”, which is a kind of New England word for an every day eating room.

Yes, I remember being able to imitate bird calls when young, but I lost the ability when I was older to a great extent. Stewart Manson and I were very fond of hunting birds in the Tallac marshes, a sport which Gladys never cared very much for.

I do not remember a Mr. Brockway at all. We had many visitors to Tallac and no doubt it was one of these she remembers.

I remember the power plant which supplied Tallac with water power electricity. It was located on the outlet of Fallen Leaf Lake, which gave the water quite a drop. There was a huge pipe on a scaffolding which carried it down to the power house. Gladys and I loved to walk on this, which, of course, my mother did not know abut. The soda pop was made here by the men who tended the power plant. It was mostly automatic and they had much time on their hands. Also, at this point the water was very find and pure. Often we would stop there to have a soda as the men were happy to provide us with one each and talk to someone.

I remember when the Valletts left for Castle Hot Springs and we continued to correspond for a time. They sometimes sent us boxes of cactus candy, a luxury which we had never heard of before that time.

When my sister was still very young, somebody gave her a Brownie camera and she loved to take pictures. At an early age she began to keep an album and put in her pictures and any that were given her. I am enclosing two of these pictures from her old album which I still possess. Gladys never lost her interest in photography. One of her very fine pictures adorns E.B. Scott’s Saga of Lake Tahoe, No. 1, with a picture by Ansel Adams on the rear dust cover, her on the front. The first time Ansel ever took a back seat to anyone.

Send me back the pictures sometime. I dug them out from Gladys' old album. It was interesting to red Mrs. Meier's recollections. I am a widow and live in Sacramento year round.

Opinion: S. Tahoe's business model doesn't work

To the community,

The city manager on the issue of snow removal is irrational, and it goes hand-in-hand with keeping a 25 percent general fund reserve at this time. It's like a miser who hoards money when his house badly needs repair.

The city manager is in the process of revealing his true self. He is an arrogant, haughty man. Thus, he dictates. Temps will be hired as the



Bill Crawford

council wrings its hands.

The city manager's business model is a hypothesis that cannot be tested for validity. It is only an idea that is subjective. Who will measure its success or failure?

What's going on in our city government is like a soap opera.

You cannot believe it.

Oh, well, rage is dead.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Truckee embraces its haunted past with walking tour

It is time to get spooked during the third annual Historical Haunted Walking Tour in downtown Truckee on Oct. 20 and Oct. 21.

Old-timers will tell historic tales of the Wild West, ladies of nocturnal delight will sing a tune and entertaining characters will share titillating folklore along the nearly two-hour walk. Covering Truckee's most historic sites, the tour will entertain guests from near and far with spooky legends and unsolved mysteries. Find out what loggers loved most about Jibboom Street, the first road built in Truckee.

Learn how the Truckee Regulators administered justice years ago. Discover the never-told-before story of the world's most famous Lilliputian in this old railroad town.

The Richardson House was a favorite site on the 2010 tour. Built by a lumber baron for his wife in the late 1880s, the house featured a performance by Maggie Richardson's "ghost."

Maggie, the first wife of the house, was tormented by her son's death, and her story, like each memorable performance along the guided tour, was captivating.

The tour benefits the Truckee Donner Historical Society and

Trails & Vistas, two well-respected, Truckee-based nonprofit organizations.

For more information, go online or call (530) 305.4231.

Nevada receives DOE grant for energy retrofits

By Nevada News Bureau Staff

CARSON CITY – Nevada has been approved for a U.S. Department of Energy competitive grant to assist in energy retrofits across the state.

The grant will help commercial buildings develop energy efficient retrofit projects, making it easier for businesses, contractors and energy suppliers to undertake these efforts.

The $765,000 grant will be augmented with a $250,000 in-kind match from NV Energy.

“We are one of only five states to be awarded this grant and we should be encouraged about the fact that DOE feels confident that we can carry out the grant program successfully,” Gov. Brian Sandoval said. “Through this grant, we hope to provide a consistent set of resources and policies to develop a sustainable industry for contractors and energy professionals for the long-term, thereby creating jobs as the retrofits are accomplished.”

Nevada Energy Director Stacey Crowley said, “We have assembled a great team anchored by our office, UNR and NV Energy. We will work to address the importance of energy efficiency to add value to our state’s industries and accelerate economic

development.”

The team, which also includes the Nevada Association of Associated General Contractors and the Office of Economic Development, plans to address the challenge of increasing commercial building energy retrofits at two levels: by better aligning Nevada’s energy policy – particularly those aspects dealing with energy efficiency – and economic development policy; and addressing the specific financial barriers hindering energy efficiency upgrades in commercial buildings.

TRPA switches leadership on Regional Plan update – again

By Anne Knowles

STATELINE – The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has someone new shepherding its long overdue Regional Plan update.

Harmon Zuckerman, the former Douglas County principal planner hired by the agency two years ago to oversee the RPU, resigned on Monday, a few days shy of the end of his contract. Arlo Stockham, a planning consultant who previously worked for the city of Reno and the Truckee Meadows Planning Agency, has replaced him as the TRPA’s RPU coordinator.

“I was surprised to hear that Harmon is leaving the agency, that’s unfortunate,” said Shelly Aldean, Carson City supervisor, TRPA Governing Board member and member of a newly formed TRPA committee to expedite the RPU. “But I am sure his successor will be equally capable.”



Harmon Zuckerman was brought in to the save the Regional Plan, but his contract was not renewed.

“Harmon brought the plan up-to-date and created a set of documents for the next phase,” Jeff Cowen, TRPA spokesman, said. “We’re in a new phase and need new leadership.”

But that is also what the agency said when they brought Zuckerman in.

Stockham was involved in the contentious 2002 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, which ended up in court, as well as the overhaul of Reno’s zoning codes to promote smart growth.

“Reno and Washoe County had different ideas and in the end it was litigated,” Stockham said of the 2002 regional plan. “But we worked through the issues and were able to reach good consensus. I’ve gained a reputation of being pretty good at consensus building around important and controversial issues. I work hard to minimize points of disagreement.”

Stockham said he previously worked with John Hester, TRPA planning manager, who contacted him about the position.

“I’ve worked with John in the past and this seemed like a good fit,” Stockham said.

Calls for comment to Joanne Marchetta, TRPA executive director, and Hester as well as an email to Zuckerman were not returned.

Stockham said he was getting up to speed on the RPU and wasn't ready to speak to the details of the plan.

"It's premature to discuss content," he told *Lake Tahoe News* this week. "This is all quite new. I had an initial meeting with some of the key planning people (Tuesday)."

Stockman said he also couldn't comment on exactly how he will coordinate with the new TRPA committee formed last month to ensure adoption of the stalled update.

That six-member committee is chaired by Clem Shute, a California lawyer and a member of the TRPA Governing Board appointed by the governor of California. The other committee members, all Governing Board members, are Robin Reedy, vice chair of the committee and a governor of Nevada appointee; Aldean; Mara Bresnick, a California Assembly Speaker appointee; Steve Robinson, representing the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; and Larry Sevison, appointed by the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

Reedy thinks the committee will focus more attention on the RPU than the Governing Board has been able to in the past. The RPU was supposed to be done in 2007, with latest release date set for late 2012.

"We're a smaller group of people with passionate ideas," Reedy said. "A lot of us are new to the board."

Aldean agreed. Aldean said she was involved in an earlier committee to redefine tourist accommodation units, the size of a one-bedroom unit for development and redevelopment purposes, which never reached a consensus.

"At the end of the day we agreed to disagree," Aldean said.

“But we have new players. Clem Shute was not on the board. We have new people with new outlooks.”

The TAU definition is one of several issues confronting the committee. Another is the transfer of land coverage between hydrologic basins.

The TRPA would also like to change land coverage policy. Land coverage – the square footage allowed to be built on a parcel determined by environmental impacts – is required to build in the Lake Tahoe Basin and can be banked and sold, but cannot be moved between water sheds. The TRPA would like to allow land coverage available in one watershed to be used in another.

The inability to relocate land coverage, says Cowen, has hampered redevelopment of outdated sites like the recently approved Boulder Bay project at the Tahoe Biltmore in Crystal Bay.

Many in the conservation community oppose both ideas as allowing excessive and destructive growth in the basin. The League to Save Lake Tahoe, arguably the TRPA’s biggest critic, though, is in flux right now after Rochelle Nason, its executive director of nearly 20 years, resigned last week.

“It remains to be seen whether their overall approach will change,” Cowen said of the League.

The RPU is at the center of complaints about the TRPA, especially from Nevada, which passed a bill during its recent legislative session to withdraw from the bi-state Compact if certain reforms were not made to the agency. During discussion of the bill, the agency’s inability to adopt an RPU, which updates a plan that expired nearly five years ago, was repeatedly cited as an example of the TRPA’s failures.

Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller, a member of the Governing Board, for example, called out the RPU as the prime reason for changing the board’s voting structure.

The new RPU committee is scheduled to meet monthly until it is expected to deliver a feasible plan to the entire Governing Board for a vote by the end of 2012.