# Calif. Assembly refuses to make public its members' salaries

**By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee**

The California Assembly says the public has no right to see lawmakers' current office budgets and spending projections, documents that could show whether punishment is doled out for key votes.

Assemblyman Anthony Portantino raised the issue last month, saying that his budget was slashed shortly after casting the lone Democratic vote in the Assembly against this year's controversial budget.

Portantino, the *Bee* and other media outlets submitted Legislative Open Records Act requests seeking, among other things, current office budgets for each Assembly member and any changes to them.

The answer came Monday: No way.

The Assembly Rules Committee, under the control of Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez, said that such documents are exempt under a provision covering "preliminary drafts, notes or legislative memoranda" and correspondence to lawmakers' offices.

"Therefore, records relating to budgets and changes to budgets of the members of the Assembly and Assembly Committees are not subject to mandatory production," said the Assembly's written response.

**Read the whole story**

# Roethlisberger civil case to be heard in Reno

Douglas County District Court will not be the venue for the civil sexual assault case against Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger.

The accusations against Roethlisberger stem from when he was on the South shore in 2008 for the American Century Celebrity golf tournament. A woman working for Harrah's Lake Tahoe at the time accused Roethlisberger of rape.

Now it will be up to a Washoe County jury to hear the case. That decision was made today by the Nevada Supreme Court.

Also named in the suit are Harrah's employees.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# USPS studying thousands of offices for possible closure

The Postal Service has named 3,655 offices to study for possible closure next year.

It has asked Congress to allow it to cut back to delivery five-days-a-week and to ease the requirement for an annual $5.5 billion payment to fund future retiree health benefits. Neither has been acted on, which is prompting the current

action.

Currently the post office operates more than 31,000 local offices, branches and stations, down from 38,000 a decade ago.

Of the 1,400 offices announced for review in January, 620 are still in the review process and 300 will move to the new review list.

For communities currently without a postal retail office and for communities affected by these retail optimization efforts, the Postal Service introduced the Village Post Office as a potential replacement option. Village Post Offices would be operated by local businesses, such as pharmacies, grocery stores and other appropriate retailers, and would offer popular postal products and services such as stamps and flat-rate packaging.

“Today, more than 35 percent of the Postal Service’s retail revenue comes from expanded access locations such as grocery stores, drug stores, office supply stores, retail chains, self-service kiosks, ATMs and usps.com, open 24/7,” Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said in a statement. “The Postal Service of the future will be smaller, leaner and more competitive and it will continue to drive commerce, serve communities and deliver value.”

Here is the current list of offices studied for Nevada and Northern California:

**City** **ZIP**

**New study or currently being studied**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Baker | 89311 | New |
| Deeth | 89823 | New |
| Denio | 89404 | New |
| Gabbs | 89409 | New |
| Golconda | 89414 | New |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Glenbrook | 89413 | Currently in Study |
| Lund | 89317 | New |
| Manhattan | 89022 | New |
| Montello | 89830 | New |
| Mountain City | 89831 | Currently in Study |
| Nixon | 89424 | Currently in Study |
| Paradise Valley | 89426 | New |
| Fallon – Pony Express Stn | 89406 | New |
| Ruth | 89319 | New |
| Schurz | 89427 | New |
| Silverpeak | 89047 | New |
| Reno – Sun Valley Stn | 89433 | New |
| Tuscarora | 89834 | New |
| Valmy | 89438 | Currently in Study |
| Wadsworth | 89442 | Currently in Study |
| Yerington – So. Valley Stn | 89447 | Currently in Study |
| **Northeastern California Offices** | | |
| Calpine/Sattley | 96124 | Currently in Study |
| Davis Creek | 96108 | New |
| Eagleville | 96110 | New |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Herlong | 96113 | Currently in Study |
| Fort Bidwell | 96112 | New |
| Homewood | 96141 | Currently in Study |
| Lake City | 96115 | Currently in Study |
| Likely | 96116 | New |
| Madeline | 96119 | Currently in Study |
| Milford | 96121 | New |
| Ravendale | 96123 | New |
| Sierraville | 96126 | New |
| Topaz | 96133 | New |

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# Vigil planned for dead Incline bear

**By Faun Kime, KOLO-TV**

INCLINE VILLAGE – NDOW has a three-strike policy for what it calls”urban bears” that cause problems in town for people. For a bear that some residents in the area called Charlie, one recent Sunday at the Raley’s shopping center was his last offense and Charlie was euthanized.

Madonna Dunbar, Incline Village’s General Improvement District Resource Conservationist, points to some bushes. “They tranquilized the bear in the shrubbery and then the bear ran under the culvert and came out in the back of the complex

where the tranquilizer took effect and the bear collapsed."

Franny Bryan, an Incline Village resident, is organizing a vigil this Saturday night at 7pm in front of Ace Hardware. She says, "the bear doesn't know it's three strikes, 'oh my gosh, I went to the garbage three times, the next time I'm going to be killed', I mean, they don't know that."

Madonna Dunbar says, "it's not necessarily a bear problem, it's a human problem." Primarily, it's humans not managing their trash and a few people even feeding the bears. Signs everywhere warn against this. "A fed bear is a dead bear."

**Read the whole story**

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# Family festival in Truckee benefits KidZone Museum

The 2011 Tahoe Family Festival, benefiting KidZone Museum, a nonprofit children's museum, is an event full of activities for families looking to play, discover, explore and have fun.

This year's Family Festival is Aug. 28 from noon-6pm at the Truckee Regional Park. There will be live music, food, cycling, face painting and more. Kids are free. Adults are $5.

In two years the event has raised more than $16,000 for programs at the museum such as free bus service for 30 to 50 families from Kings Beach and Truckee to visit the museum and participate in science and art through the museum's nationally recognized program KidsReach.

For more information, email director@kidzonemuseum.org, or call (530) 587.5437.

# TAMBA trail work day

TAMBA’s Aug. 20 trail day will be work on the Christmas Valley trail. Work will include rounding turns, enhancing flow, bashing down square edge rocks, and fixing drainage problems.

Lunch and post work barbecue with drinks will be provided to all volunteers – plus some goodies to give away.

Meet at 9am at the lower parking lot on South Upper Truckee in Meyers.

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# Ballet benefit performance

A special performance by Tahoe Youth Ballet at Sugar Pine Point State Park is designed to raise money for the ballet and Sierra State Parks Foundation.

The Aug. 17 event begins at 6pm. Tickets are $25 in advance, $30 that day. Call 800.838.3006 for tickets.

Bring a chair, picnic dinner or buy food-wine at the event.

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# Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Brian Uhler is the police and fire chief of South Lake Tahoe. He was at the Aug. 2 City Council meeting reading up on fire law. Lorenzo Gigliotti, whose official leave date is Sept. 1, is using his vacation time.

• Homeland Security officials are on the South Shore this week checking on legal status of employees, making sure employers have I-9s on file.

• Barton Home Health and Hospice has moved its office in Minden to 1503 Highway 395 in Gardnerville. The phone number is the same.

• Carson City District Judge James Wilson this week said Nevada's bear hunt can go on. The season is Aug. 20-Dec. 31.

• A Placerville woman wed her Army husband who is stationed in Afghanistan via telephone.

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# Carlile delivers eclectic selection of music to adoring fans

**By Kathryn Reed**

STATELINE – A combo of Johnny Cash and Joan Jett is how my friend Kim described Brandi Carlile after seeing her at MontBleu on Aug. 2.

Carlile is hard to pigeonhole into a particular genre of music. It's a little of this and little of that, making it all

Carlile. The energy of this 30-year-old is only overshadowed by her incredible vocal range.

To hear her live in her prime is phenomenal. She sounds so humble and real. Stardom does not seem to have struck this Seattle singer-guitarist-pianist.



Brandi Carlile plays to an appreciative MontBleu audience Aug. 2. Photo/Kathryn Reed

She was complimentary of the near-full crowd at the Stateline showroom, changed up the song lineup to accommodate requests and sent more picks into the audience than are the norm.

A cellist, female drummer, a pair of twins and a guy dividing his time between guitar and piano make up the band that brings her music to life.

And, yet, she could probably do without them because of her stellar musical abilities. She might do like Jewel did at the same venue four summers ago and just bring a guitar on stage with her next time.

While their music is not the same, and Carlile has a bit of maturing to do on the stage, she is well on her way to leaving her mark on the music world.

After all, in 2005, Carlile was named one of *Rolling Stone's* "10 Artists to Watch." She had signed with Columbia Records the year before.

While she doesn't have any more Nevada tour dates for this year, she will be in California in September.

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# Sierra fire crews on guard despite long, wet spring

**By John Holland, Sacramento Bee**

Clifford Parker was on patrol when all hell broke loose near Highway 50 in September 1992.

He was working as a recreation technician in the Eldorado National Forest when the Cleveland fire erupted. It would grow to 22,485 acres over 13 days.

"I have never witnessed anything so devastatingly powerful either before or since," Parker, now a Modesto-area resident, recalled in an e-mail this month. He told of how pine trees "popped and exploded as the moisture from within was released with the thunderous roar of lightning cracking."

Yet again, the Sierra Nevada had caught fire. At times, a single fire has brought tremendous losses – 280 homes destroyed or damaged in the 2007 Angora fire in South Lake Tahoe, a 145,980-acre expanse of timber and brush burned in the Stanislaus complex fire of 1987.

The Sierra fires have not killed a lot of people, unlike the 25 lost in the Oakland hills blaze of 1991 or the 15 in a San Diego County fire in 2003.

But foresters and fire officials warn that it can happen. They point to the many homes mixed into the woods, the poor roads in some places and state budget cuts that have shrunk Cal Fire engine crews to three from four this year.

Then there’s all that grass and woody fuel, drying more slowly this year because of the cool, wet spring, but drying nonetheless.

“We have uncharacteristic fuel loads, so when fire does enter the ecosystem, there are hotter temperatures, longer flame lengths and greater environmental consequences,” said Bob Mion, communications director for the California Forestry Association.

The Sacramento-based group represents timber industry people who would like to increase logging to help reduce the fuel.

Forest thinning has support from many environmentalists and Sierra residents. They might differ on the total volume or how many big trees to leave, but they agree that the woods need to better resist fires.

**Read the whole story**