USFS to resume burning in the basin

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews expect to continue prescribed fire operations beginning April 7.

Recent rain and snow made conditions too wet for burning this past week, but fire management staff expect conditions to dry out next week. Burning may take place on Spooner Summit, in the Luther Pass Campground off of Highway 89, and on the west side of Highway 89 near Tahoma. Operations are ongoing and may continue through the week and next weekend if weather, staffing, and conditions allow.

Forest Service staff will post road signs around the areas affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2600, No. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

El Dorado County Grand Jury needs members

El Dorado County Grand Jury is looking for members for 2014-15.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, at least 18 years of age, have resided in the county for at least one year at the time of the swearing-in date, and cannot hold an elected office. Final selection will take place in late June. Jurors serve for a period of one year commencing July 1.

The grand jury is an investigatory body created for the protection of society and the enforcement of the law. It is an arm of the court and a representative of the public. The Grand Jury acts as an investigative body to ensure that county, special district, and city government is being effectively run.

Applications are available at 2850 Fairlane Court, Suite 110 (Building C), Placerville, or call 530.621.7414. The deadline to apply is May 2.

Online poker revenues lagging

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Internet poker hasn't proved so far to be the bonanza some had hoped for.

The first monthly report on online poker gaming win showed it exceeded only bingo compared to other casino games, slot machines and sports betting.

The state Gaming Control Board this week approved applications from six companies to extend their internet poker, licenses which were to expire if the companies did not start the games online in Nevada within six months.

Read the whole story

Remembrance for Tim Smith

Patty Smith will be remembering her son Sgt. Timothy Michael Smith on April 7.

It has been six years since Smith was killed in action in the Mideast.

The remembrance is a potluck at the Smith house, 848 Placer Ave., South Lake Tahoe from 5-8pm.

There will be a tree planting in his honor. People are invited to bring an ornament or keepsake to place around the tree.

Motel to be replaced with spa, restaurant, gym



Highland Inn will soon no longer be a

lodging establishment in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

The 27-unit Highland Inn next to Applebee's in South Lake Tahoe is about to be transformed.

When the owners are done it will no longer be a motel, but instead will be a restaurant-bar, spa and gym.

Moe Rahmani, who represents owners the Rahmani Family Trust, was not available for comment.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has already signed off on converting the one residential unit and 27 tourist accommodation units to commercial floor area.

The project goes to the South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission on April 10 for design review and a special use permit.

The plans call for a 3,851-square-foot restaurant and bar; 1,783-square-foot gym; and 3,352-square-foot spa.

The exterior will be remodeled to include changes to the roofline, stonework and wood siding. Fences will be replaced and exterior lighting improved.

The 960-square-feet of retail at the front of the building will be retained.

If this is approved, the next step is to get a building permit. That could take three weeks.

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Notes:

• Planning Commission meets April 10 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

• Other agenda items include final map review to subdivide existing 15-unit mobile home park at 1025 Shepherds Trail; and to grandfather in the sign for Heidi’s restaurant.

Police looking for missing Truckee man



Duane Colin

A 60-year-old Truckee man has been missing since March 28.

Duane Colin is 5-feet, 11-inches tall, 170 pounds, gray hair and brown eyes.

His vehicle is at his residence. It is not known what he was last wearing.

Anyone with information, is asked to call 530.550.2320.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Teachers’ pension fund gap getting bigger

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

CalSTRS said Thursday that its long-term funding shortfall has risen to $73.7 billion, a stark reminder of the financial issues facing the teachers’ pension fund.

The newest tally reflects CalSTRS’ financial condition as of last June 30. The pension fund said the shortfall grew by $2.7 billion in the 12 months since the previous valuation of June 30, 2012.

CalSTRS’ latest calculation comes as the Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown continue to debate how to fix the teachers’ retirement fund. Brown originally said the Legislature could enact a funding plan for CalSTRS in 2015, but he also supported the decision by Senate and Assembly committees to hold hearings last month on the issue.

Read the whole story

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2 El Dorado County women

accused of tax fraud

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

A federal grand jury in Sacramento returned a 28-count indictment Friday against two El Dorado Hills women, accusing them of preparing bogus tax returns and receiving illegitimate refunds.

Barbara Antonucci, 49, and Sherry Taggart, 54, are charged with conspiracy to file false claims, filing false claims and aggravated identity theft, according a federal Department of Justice news release.

Court documents say that starting in March 2008 and continuing through March 2014, Antonucci and Taggart obtained the names, Social Security numbers and additional identifying information of other people. The women allegedly used the personal information to file federal tax returns in their own names and those of other taxpayers.

Read the whole story

Study: Morning light can help reduce body fat

By Karen Kaplan, Los Angeles Times

To maximize your chances of fighting flab, new research offers some simple advice: Wake up early and go outside.

People who loaded up on light exposure at the beginning of the day were most likely to have a lower body mass index,

according to a study published Wednesday in the journal PLOS ONE. That relationship between morning light and BMI was independent of how many calories the study participants consumed.

It may sound crazy, but there is sound scientific evidence to back up the link. Circadian rhythm plays an important role in regulating metabolism, and studies have shown that exposure to morning light can influence body fat and the hormones that regulate appetite.

Read the whole story

NSA reforms don’t protect journalists

By Cora Currier, Columbia Journalism Review

Last week the Obama administration set forth a proposal to reform one part of the National Security Agency’s surveillance program: the indiscriminate collection of American phone records.

Under the president’s proposal, the government would no longer collect call data in bulk but would be allowed to ask for it from phone companies with court approval, and only for numbers linked to terrorism.

But the White House proposal leaves plenty of room for reporters’ information to be caught up in the NSA’s—albeit smaller—dragnet: The government would still be allowed to collect data for numbers “two hops,” or degrees of separation, from the targeted number, down from three. And once the

government has that data, there are few restrictions on what they can do with it. In other words, the proposed reforms don’t appear to do anything to address journalists’ concerns about this administration’s crackdown on national security leaks.

“Journalists are at risk if they communicate by phone with potential NSA targets – or even if they simply talk with others who happen to speak with those targets,” said Patrick C. Toomey, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union’s National Security Project, in an email.

For example, Katherine Hawkins, a researcher who has studied Guantanamo Bay prison, noted in August that it was no stretch of the imagination to think that former Guantanamo detainees might be NSA targets. The relatively small community of lawyers, rights activists, and any of the journalists who cover Guantanamo Bay (myself included) would then be easily within “two hops,” even if they’ve never spoken to the target.

Read the whole story