Douglas County bucks state trend – people are moving in

By Northern Nevada Business Weekly

The number of people moving into Nevada has slowed after 24 years of high inbound traffic, finds an annual study of moving trends by United Van Lines.

United Van Lines' 34th annual migration study, which tracks interstate household moving patterns among the 48 contiguous states, shows that 1,761 households used United Van Line services to move into the state in 2010, while 1,451 households contracted with United to leave the state. The 54.8 percent of incoming shipments to the state is just a hair under the benchmark of 55 percent that denotes high-inbound traffic.

In Northern Nevada, neighboring states accounted for a large portion of the relocation business.

Of the 313 households that used United Van Lines to move out of Washoe County in 2010, the overwhelming majority headed to California (54), Arizona (15) and Washington (28), or to heavily populated states such as Florida (18) and Texas (31). Those same states accounted for 128, or 46 percent, of the 277 households that moved into the county last year as well.

Read the whole story

Investors shun coal, turning to cleaner energy

By Steven Mufson, Washington Post

The headline news for the coal industry in 2010 was what didn't happen: Construction did not begin on a single new coal-fired power plant in the United States for the second straight year.

This in a nation where a fleet of coal-fired plants generates nearly half the electricity used.

But a combination of low natural gas prices, shale gas discoveries, the economic slowdown and litigation by environmental groups has stopped – at least for now – groundbreaking on new ones.

"Coal is a dead man walkin'," says Kevin Parker, global head of asset management and a member of the executive committee at Deutsche Bank. "Banks won't finance them. Insurance companies won't insure them. The EPA is coming after them. . . . And the economics to make it clean don't work."

From 2000 to 2008, construction started on 20 units in 19 plants, according to Edison Electric Institute. Last year, utilities and power-generating companies dropped plans to build 38 coal plants while announcing that they would retire 48 aging, inefficient ones, according to the environmental group Sierra Club.

Although 2010 saw the collapse of climate legislation in the Senate, the Sierra Club is trumpeting such statistics as a sign that "coal is a fuel of the past."

The battle over coal plants could sharpen in 2011, as the Environmental Protection Agency deploys regulations to improve

the efficiency – and lower the greenhouse gas emissions – of big power plants.

Read the whole story

‘Sound of Music’ on South Shore

“The Sound of Music” will be performed Jan. 27-30 in the South Tahoe Middle School multipurpose Room.

Performances begin at 7pm. Thursday-Saturday, with a matinee on Jan. 30 at 2pm.

The cast is composed primarily of South Tahoe High School students, with the addition of several talented younger students cast as the Von Trapp children.

Tickets will be available at the door for $12; seniors and students cost $6.

The production is at the middle school while the high school theater is under construction.

Ski report: Sun and fun



It is Martin Luther King Jr. weekend and the Brotherhood of Skiers is in town.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Warm weather cancels GS World Cup in Slovenia

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Ski Team

MARIBOR, Slovenia – Poor course conditions due to warm weather forced race officials to cancel the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup giant slalom in Maribor after 25 racers.

With temperatures reaching close to 60 degrees Fahrenheit, the snow softened causing challenging conditions. At the time of cancellation, Olympic champions Lindsey Vonn of Vail and Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley were in 12th and 19th with four-time Olympian Sarah Schleper of Vail in 25th. Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg was leading the race.

"We knew it was going to be a tough one with the temperature and weather conditions. We are hoping it will get colder so the snow freezes. As for right now everything is still on," said Head Coach Alex Hoedlmoser of the GS cancelation and Sunday's slalom race. "We just have to stay positive. Even if conditions aren't great we have to be ready when they say racers are off. We have to be up there and charge."

The women are scheduled to race slalom on Sunday. A decision about the slalom will be made shortly before the race.

Truckee's Harvey second in snowboardcross

By Kade Krichko, U.S. Snowboarding

MT. HOOD MEADOWS, Ore. – The U.S. Revolution Tour wrapped up its competition at Mt. Hood Meadows, Ore., with the men's and women's snowboardcross and skicross. Hunter Murphy of Deephaven, Minn., and Celine Valentine of Simsbury, Conn., were able to win the men's and women's snowboardcross. Randy Detrick of Saylorsburg, Pa., and Tania Prymak of Goshen, N.Y., took home first place in the men's and women's skicross.

After a brief burst of sunshine in the morning practice runs, the rain returned to challenge all of Friday's riders in the preliminary rounds and the finals.

On the women's side Valentine took the snowboardcross crown. Finishing second was Kristen Harvey of Truckee, with Meghan Graham Minnetonka, Minn., in third.

The U.S. Revolution Tour's next stop is Boreal Feb. 6-11.

Official Results, U.S. Revolution Tour, Mt. Hood Meadows, Ore.

Snowboardcross

Men

1. Hunter Murphy, Deephaven, MN

2. Michael Perle, Saddle River, NJ

3. Ryan Stassel, Anchorage

Women

1. Celine Valentin, Simsbury, CT

2. Kristen Harvey, Truckee, CA

3. Meghan Graham, Minnetonka, MN

Skicross

Men

(complete results delayed)

1. Randy Detrick, Salorsburg, PA

Women

1. Tania Prymark, Goshen, MA

2. Stephanie Lawee, Canada

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• It’s time to comment on the initial phase of the proposed Stateline-to-Stateline bike path.

• 2011 is being hailed as World Veterinary Year because the world’s first veterinary school was founded in 1761 in Lyon, France.

• Heather Allison Smith, director of sales and marketing at the Ritz-Carlton at Northstar, is on the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International's eighth annual "who's who" list of the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Hospitality and Travel Sales and Marketing.

• This from the *Sacramento Bee* about how Gov. Jerry Brown's budget may affect the average person.

• January is national mentoring month.

History: Salvaging red barn at Sierra House

Publisher's note: ***This is from the September 1973 Lake Tahoe Historical Society newsletter.***

By Bill Hauck

Recently two afternoons were spent at the Sierra House Elementary School site salvaging portions of the old red barn for the Historical Society.



On Saturday afternoon, August 25th, Henry Newburgh, Mike Magliari, Ed Laine, and I ripped off the exterior siding [of obviously later vintage] and removed the original wide siding boards [up to 24 inches wide] from both sides of the barn. Ed Laine and a friend took many interior photographs also.

On Sunday afternoon, August 26th, Phil Greuner, Henry Newburgh, Merritt Hollingsworth, Dick Hargrove, Brian Hayes, and I sawed off the rafter poles, peeled off the adjacent end

siding, and removed the side wall framing from the south side, disassembling it and marking its uprights, braces, etc.

With the exception of the almost 30 foot long top beam, which was left at the school site out of the construction area [along with the two Sierra House sheds donated by Bohannon], the siding and the rest of the framing was taken to Mrs. Hazel Taylor's, where she kindly provided inside storage for it.

Gaines wants to change special elections rules

State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, has introduced a bill to help cut the cost of special elections in small California counties.

Senate Bill 109 would give counties with populations of less than 400,000 the option to only have vote-by-mail special election.

"My bill will help cut the costs counties incur to conduct special elections by eliminating the mandate to open polling places and hire staff for these elections," Gaines said in a press release.

The average cost of an election in El Dorado County is roughly $300,000.

"Should Senate Bill 109 become law, I estimate a savings of about $50,000 – and that is on the conservative side," El Dorado County Registrar of Voters Bill Schultz said in the same release. "It comes down to not just saving money, but also avoiding the issues our smaller foothill communities face

during elections held in the winter months. Delivery of equipment, transportation issues – all those are negated with the ability to vote by mail."

Gaines was part of special election this month when he successfully ran for the Senate. Twelve counties had to pay for the election. This spring four counties will pay for a special election to replace Gaines in the Assembly.

Report: State needs to crackdown on wasteful water use

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

California should more aggressively enforce the state's ban on wasteful water use and crack down on inefficient irrigation practices, a state watermaster recommends.

In a report that will be presented next week to the State Water Resources Control Board, Delta Watermaster Craig Wilson wades into a potentially explosive area of water law: the "reasonable use" doctrine in the state Constitution.

The principle, reinforced in statute and court decisions, holds that a water right does not include the right to waste water and mandates that "the water resources of the state be put to beneficial use."

Read the whole story