Fresh produce fills school lunches in Washoe County

By Jackie Green, Reno Gazette-Journal

Each week, select Washoe County elementary schools receive a bounty of fresh produce, including apricots, grapes, squash and grapefruit, cut into snack-sized servings.

What started in 2002 as a way for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to boost produce consumption and help farmers has become a tool for the nation's schools to fight obesity and raise healthier students. The goal of the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program in Washoe County is to introduce children to a wider variety of fresh foods than they might ordinarily get the chance to try.

The program, first introduced in the district three years ago, this year has expanded to 21 elementary schools. The district's Nutrition Services department works with the University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension to provide nutritional and supplementary information about each week's snacks for classroom discussions.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Cell phones tucked in bras causing cancer

By Devra Lee Davis

For many young women today, tucking cell phones in the bra has

become a cool, hip way to have simple access to these essential devices. Most of us have no idea that cell phones are small microwave radios that should not be kept directly on the body.

The ways some people are using their phones today could increase their risk of developing breast cancer and other diseases tomorrow. A cell phone's microwave radiation seeps directly into soft fatty tissue of the breast.

It's too late for Andrea X, a young, active mother of three from Southern California. For more than six years, this vegetarian and runner drove her children everywhere, with her cell phone tucked snugly into her sports bra. She used her hands-free headset and was on the phone for four to five hours a day. Often her chest or ear would redden, but she thought little of it. This spring she developed a malignant tumor right where her phone had sat on her breast. No one in her family has ever had breast cancer.

Devra Lee Davis is an epidemiologist, author and public health advocate. Davis' new book is "Disconnect: The Truth About Cell Phone Radiation, What the Industry Has Done to Hide It, and How to Protect Your Family." To learn more, go to www.environmentalhealthtrust.org.

Read the whole story

Fortier, Davis, Swanson take over South Tahoe council

By Susan Wood

With all precincts reporting from El Dorado County at 1:30am Wednesday, Claire Fortier, Tom Davis and Angela Swanson have won the tight South Lake Tahoe City Council race consisting of 10 diverse candidates.

The trio going for the three seats vacated by City Councilmembers Jerry Birdwell, Kathay Lovell and Bill Crawford has name recognition – with Davis and Swanson already having served to mold public policy in a town that Fortier has declared is at "a tipping point." Davis served on the council for 12 years. Swanson held a seat on the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board.

Fortier – a former editor of the *Tahoe Daily Tribune* – is the top vote getter with 16.57 percent, or 1,283 votes. She's followed by Davis with 15.28 percent of the vote, 1,183 ballots; and Swanson at 12.05 percent or 933 votes.

All votes are preliminary and must be certified by the county. Final votes for all races are usually tabled within a few weeks. The council candidates will take office Dec. 14.

For a job that pays less than $500 a month, they are apt to be making pennies per hour.

They come in having to deal with two stalled construction projects – Lakeview Commons and the convention center. The latter is in bankruptcy court. They also must deal with a bankrupt transit system that is mired in lawsuits.

Unemployment is near 18 percent in the city, roads necessitate four-wheel drive without snow or mountain bike tires, storefronts are empty, the electorate angry.

Rounding out the council ballot are:

Joy Curry, 899 votes, 11.61 percent

Alice Jones, 877 votes, 11.32 percent

Elizabeth Hallen, 820 votes, 10.59 percent

Steve Kubby, 830, 10.72 percent

Adrian Gooch, 442 votes, 5.71 percent

Georg May, 205 votes, 2.65 percent

Clint Schue, 146 votes, 1.89 percent

Doug Cichowicz, 96 votes, 1.24 percent

Other Tahoe related issues

Measure E, the business tax fee hike for South Lake Tahoe, came in dead even with 1,462 for it and 1,462 against it. It needed to pass by one vote to proceed.

City Clerk Suzie Alessi and city Treasurer Dave Olivo had an easy Election Day – they ran unopposed.

Assemblyman Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, won both of his races – to retain his Assembly seat and in the special election against three others for the state Senate seat of the late Dave Cox. Gaines will face Democrat Ken Cooley on Jan. 4 in a run-off for the state Senate seat. If he wins, he will have to resign the Assembly seat, which means a special election to fill that vacancy.

Rep. Tom McClintock will easily retain his congressional seat that includes the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. He has nearly twice the number of votes as his Democrat opponent Clint Curtis.

D’Agostini surges ahead to take EDC sheriff’s race

By Kathryn Reed

After the initial results came in, John D’Agostini was surprised, but not worried. He felt confident the numbers would turn in his favor.

He was right.

D’Agostini is headed to be El Dorado County’s next sheriff. With 100 percent of the precincts reporting, he has a 51.16 percent lead over Craig Therkildsen who has 48.55 percent. There are 1,287 votes separating the men.



John
D'Agostini

“The first thing after the swearing in is getting to know everyone, getting to know folks, who has the best skills in what areas,” D’Agostini told *Lake Tahoe News* early Wednesday morning. “I will have to dive into the deficit head first.”

He praised interim Sheriff Fred Kollar for the job he has done tackling the budget to date.

The next sheriff takes over a department that has been accused of sexual misconduct by deputies, is facing $1.6 million in cuts for the 2011-12 budget, has already sustained staff cuts with more pending, and a structure that no longer calls for

having an undersheriff.

There is also the longstanding us vs. them mentality that divides the West Slope and Lake Tahoe.

D’Agostini campaigned on wanting to bring a change to the department. He said it remains at the top of his list after dealing with the budget.

“Then I make culture change with customer service. I do it by being an involved leader and setting an example, setting expectations and holding people accountable,” D’Agostini said.

D’Agostini and Therkildsen were the last two of six standing after the June primary.

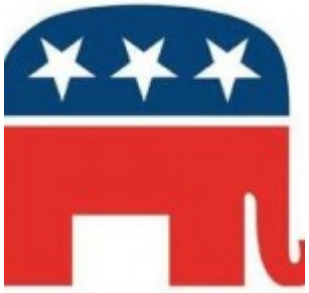
The choice voters had was someone from inside the department – Therkildsen, who is a captain; and someone from outside – D’Agostini, who has worked for the Amador County sheriff’s and district attorneys offices. One thing that separates them is D’Agostini has been elected before – to the school board for Pioneer Union School District.

The vacancy in the department was created when Jeff Neves quit last December. Undersheriff Fred Kollar took over. At that time the job of undersheriff was done away with by the Board of Supervisors. Kollar will retire in January when the new sheriff is sworn in.

National political balance shifts right

By Mark Z. Barabak, Los Angeles Times

Republicans seized control of the House on Tuesday and shrank the Democratic advantage in the Senate, dealing a major setback to President Obama and sweeping a number of “tea party” insurgents into power.



The nearly coast-to-coast blowout – a result of voters’ frustration and deep economic anxiety, promised to once more change the country’s political dynamic, presenting challenges to both parties in a newly divided government.

Obama, who pushed through the most expansive legislative agenda of any president in generations, could spend the remainder of his term just trying to preserve what he has accomplished. Republicans, with a measure of power, will share some responsibility for governing and may have to do more than simply thwart the president and his fellow Democrats – or face a similar repudiation by voters in 2012.

Read the whole story

DCSD trustees retain seats

By Stephen Ward

As the final votes are tallied, Douglas County School District trustee candidates can finally unravel their anxieties after a drawn-out period of uncertainty.

Voters are sending Sharla Hales and Tom Moore back to the board. Ross Chichester will take over Keith Roman’s seat. Roman did not seek another term.

In the race for Area 2, after being narrowly split for the

majority of the night, is expected to be seized incumbent Sharla Hales, who leads in the unofficial results by 43 votes. She has 8,479 votes, or 50.13 percent, compared to Scott Forvilly's 49.87 percent or 8,436 votes.



Hales told *Lake Tahoe News* as polls began to close that she has a tight focus on student achievement, along with the accountability of everyone.

"My priority in the coming year will be holding people accountable," she said.

According to Hales this is something she has done successfully in the past, mentioning her 2008 revision of superintendent examinations. Being instrumental in this initiative is what she considered as one of her biggest accomplishments.

"The old procedure was a big, general process," she said. "Now, it has a lot more to do with student numbers and how they respond to different aspects."

Results for Area 6 show incumbent Moore over challenger Wayne Archer with 8,086 votes (51.12 percent). Archer trailed by 354 votes.

Moore could not be reached for comment.

Area 7 of the Douglas County school board goes to Ross Chichester with 54.36 or 9,279 votes compared to Jeanette Turnbeaugh' 45 percent or 7,790 votes.

Chichester was excited by his lead when interviewed earlier in the night, and was quick to explain his objectives for the future.

"First and foremost, I think we need to reunite the school board," he said. "We need to make sure we do the right thing

for kids. The biggest challenge in the Legislature will be to act responsibly."

Former Area 7 Trustee Keith Roman is stepping down for personal reasons after 10 years. In an interview with *Lake Tahoe News*, Roman urged the new board of trustees to tailor students to the demands of the 21st century.

"We need to concentrate on educating kids by implementing media systems and preparing them for the 21st century," Roman said. "We also need to produce kids that know something, and who have an idea as to what they want to be when they grow up."

Douglas County commish seats go to McDermid, Bonner

By Stephen Ward

An incumbent and a challenger have won the Douglas County Commission seats.

Incumbent Nancy McDermid is the winner in the race for county commissioner of District 4, defeating challenger Lawrence Howell with 51.2 percent of the vote with all the votes counted. However, these are unofficial results until certified.

This District 4 seat is considered the Lake Tahoe seat even though the person does not have to reside at the lake. McDermid lives in the Carson Valley, while Howell lives in Stateline.



Nancy McDermid

This will be McDermid’s second term as county commissioner.

McDermid shared her appreciation with *Lake Tahoe News* after the final count came in.

“It’s been a long year,” she said. “I’m very honored and humbled to be elected once again to represent the people of Douglas County.”

The re-elected commissioner went on to discuss the parallels between her experience in the lodging business and the priorities she has for the coming term.

“Lodging properties provide the same amenities, so it really comes down to serving the people,” she said. “That’s what I’m here to do. We need to meet the challenges Douglas County faces and work together with the board, staff … to craft solutions to the problems we face.”

McDermid, 67, cites cooperation as the main reason she was able to balance the 2010-11 budget. She believes the county’s tourism infrastructure needs to be vastly improved and aspires to make public transit a vital component of transportation on the South Shore, even though the transit agency she was chairwoman of is now in bankruptcy.

McDermid spent the majority of her night making stops at various locations, such as the Republican headquarters and Doppelgangers Brewery and Grill in Carson City.

Lee Bonner has unofficially won the District 2 seat with 50.72

percent over incumbent David James Brady.

Bonner, a 51-year-old Minden resident for more than five years, told *Lake Tahoe News* he was pleased with the results as he arrived home after spending the night with roughly 60 supporters and close friends at the Tahoe Ridge Winery in Minden.

“First off, I’d like to say I’m very humbled the people of Douglas County have trusted me to be their commissioner,” he said. “It has meant a lot to me. I’ve only been here about five years, and to get the people’s vote … it means a lot.”

During the interview, Bonner also thanked Brady for the five years he spent as commissioner, wishing him the best in his future endeavors.

Bonner campaigned on creating jobs as a focal point, as well as promoting education and dealing with the state Legislature when it reconvenes in February.

Brady was appointed to the Douglas County Commission for District 2 in 2005 by the late Kenny Guinn, and was elected to the position in 2006.

The winners will take office in January.

Marijuana initiative being extinguished

By Anthony York, Los Angeles Times

California voters appear to have rejected Prop. 19, an effort to legalize marijuana and allow local governments to tax the

sale of the drug.



Prop. 19 received national attention, but relatively little money was spent on the campaign. While millions of dollars was spent on other ballot measures, the Prop. 19 campaign was modest by California political standards. Still, no issue received more attention around the state.

The measure was opposed by law enforcement groups and elected officials from both political parties.

U.S. Atty. Gen. Eric Holder had said the Obama administration would "vigorously enforce" federal drug laws against Californians who grow or sell marijuana for recreational use even if voters passed the legalization measure.

Read the whole story

Brown, Boxer keep California a blue state

By Stu Woo and Jim Carlton, Wall Street Journal

OAKLAND – California voters seemed to buck the national trend of anti-establishment anger on Tuesday by electing two Democratic stalwarts in the state's top-ticket races and adding to the state legislature's Democratic majority.

Former two-term Gov. Jerry Brown was projected to make a remarkable return to the governor's office, a post he first held 36 years ago. Mr. Brown was leading Republican Meg Whitman 50.9% to 44.3%.

Polls also indicated that Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer, 69 years old, would well fend off a feisty challenge from Republican Carly Fiorina, 56. The liberal icon was leading 48.8% to 45.6%.

The twin wins could reinforce a broader Democratic dominance of the nation's most-populous state. With Mr. Brown's win, and with their candidates leading the races for lieutenant governor and insurance commissioner, the Democrats are positioned to claim every statewide office—as long they win a down-to-the-wire attorney-general race.

The Democrats' staying power may also extend to the state legislature, where the party is expected to retain or enlarge its already-dominant majority. Democratic lawmakers are also expected to win their holy grail: a ballot measure that would allow them to pass a budget with a 50% majority-which is to say, without any GOP support.

Read the whole story

Reid retains Senate seat

By Anjeanette Damon, Las Vegas Sun

Harry Reid has defeated Republican Sharron Angle in his bid for re-election, according to the Associated Press.

At the convention center on the Strip, the room burst into chants of "Harry! Harry! Harry!" and yelps of glee as MSNBC announced Reid as its projected winner of the night. Any tension that had been in the room melted into shouts and hugs.

Earlier in the day after casting her vote in Reno, Angle said she was "cautiously optimistic" about her chances this

evening. But she added, when prompted by a reporter, that her campaign is prepared for a recount if that becomes necessary.



Harry Reid

“Whatever is necessary to do,” she said. “We have to be ready for any opportunity.”

In a reflection of the bitter destroy-the-opponent-at-all-costs ad war that characterized the Senate race, voters interviewed at polls across the state said they hated both of their choices.

Read the whole story