

How tourist destinations deal with era of crisis events

By Chris Kudialis, Las Vegas Sun

Security experts from across the world discussed the components of a robust tourism industry, including safety, health and enjoyment Tuesday at the International Tourism Safety Conference in Las Vegas.

“Tourism security means economic well-being, health well-being and safety well-being,” said renowned tourism security scholar Peter Tarlow.

The event drew more than 320 participants from law enforcement and the hotel, security and tourism industries, representing 20 countries, including Israel, China, Brazil, Cuba, Switzerland and Nigeria. The two-day conference concludes today.

Tarlow is a nationally renowned Texas-based scholar and author whose tourism security projects include working with police for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and last year’s Summer Olympic Games.

[Read the whole story](#)

Trump budget would crush weather data program

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A trove of nationwide weather data that keeps wildland firefighters safe and helps farmers plant crops is in jeopardy under the budget proposed by President Trump.

Regional Climate Centers, a little-known network of weather data gathering and processing centers, face an existential threat in the form of a recommended 82 percent budget cut in Trump's proposed budget.

Centers manage weather information that helps fire managers battle wild land fires, helps farmers decide where and when to plant crops and helps engineers design dams and bridges that can stand up to extremes.

Operators of the climate centers, including the Western Regional Climate Center in Reno, say if Trump's vision becomes reality the centers would run out of money in March.

Read the whole story

Pro-union workers against SLT Whole Foods

By Kathryn Reed

A labor union is trying to derail the Whole Foods project in South Lake Tahoe.

While the fight fizzled with the city, proponents are now taking their case to the California Tahoe Conservancy.

Local resident Donna Gilpin had filed an appeal challenging the Planning Commission's May 11 decision to approve what is locally known as the Whole Foods project. The project is

formally called the Bijou Creek Watershed Project. It involves tearing down the Knights Inn on Highway 50.

Gilpin works for Safeway and is part of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union. Besides Safeway, UFCW represents employees at CVS, Rite-Aid, Kroger, Fred Meyer, Ralphs, King Soopers, Albertsons, Vons and other businesses. And like most unions, it tends to dislike non-union competitors.

Whole Foods workers are not unionized.

UFCW and other unions have a history of trying to block projects they don't want based on challenging aspects of the California Environmental Quality Act, while at no time stating the truth about the union issue.

"This is an abuse of the environmental process," City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

UFCW could not be reached for a comment, and Gilpin did not return multiple calls.

The union had people handing out anti-Whole Foods propaganda in residential areas.

In order to challenge a project a local person who could be affected by it has to file the paperwork. That's where Gilpin came in.

The city on June 12 received Gilpin's four-sentence letter addressed to Kevin Fabian in Development Services saying she was withdrawing her appeal: "As we discussed I am not opposed to the city's Whole Foods project. Therefore, I hereby withdraw and disclaim my appeal and the attached letter. I agree that the project will ... improve the environment and am satisfied that the reasons for the appeal have been adequately addressed by the mitigated negative declaration for the project. After reconsideration I do agree that the Planning

Commission acted appropriately in approving the project.”

This is an about-face to what she said in her appeal where she cited five reasons she disagrees with the Planning Commission’s decision; most having to do with the mitigated negative declaration.

In other locales this deceptive union tactic has cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees. Even South Lake Tahoe sought outside legal counsel when the appeal was filed.

There is a group on Facebook called Keep Lake Tahoe Local which is opposed to the Whole Foods 365 being built near the corner of Ski Run and Highway 50. That page is wanting people to sign a petition and to go to Thursday’s California Tahoe Conservancy meeting. That board is considering allowing the city to manage seven parcels that it owns in the Bijou watershed project area. Those parcels would be part of the stream environmental zone restoration process.

The mitigated negative declaration is also on the agenda.

Despite the roadblocks being presented, the project is moving forward. The now former owner of the Knights Inn and his family should be moving out next week. Demolition of the asbestos-ridden hotel is expected in mid-July.

The city owns the property and by the end of the month should close escrow with Halferty Development to acquire the land. That company also owns the parcel at 50 and Ski Run and will be developing the two sites in unison.

Men and suicide: Breaking the silence in EDC

By Laura Walny

Suicide in men has been called a silent epidemic around the world because of limited awareness. Yet according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, men die by suicide 3.5 times more often than women and account for the majority of suicide deaths in most nations, including the United States.

El Dorado County is no exception. A study of health data in El Dorado County between the years 2005 and 2015 showed that 347 people died from suicide in the county, and 78 percent of these deaths were among males. In addition, 73 percent of the suicide deaths were among people aged 40 or older.

As a community, we need to be talking about suicide. It's important that everyone knows the risk factors and signs to look for, as well as protective factors that can help reduce the risk of suicide.

When it comes to suicide and suicide attempts, there are some big differences between men and women. Research shows that while females tend to make more suicide attempts than males, their methods are generally not as lethal as men. Men, by and large, tend to act more quickly on suicidal thoughts and to use more lethal means, such as firearms. Of the 347 suicide deaths in El Dorado County between 2005 and 2015, over half (54 percent) were committed with a firearm.

Risk factors and warning signs

Certain factors tend to put individuals at risk for suicide. These include social stressors such as social isolation, family breakdown (divorce or separation), overwork, and

employment insecurity. These stressors can be especially difficult for men because they often do not have the same social supports as women. In addition, men may be less likely than women to seek out help when they are depressed or experiencing emotional problems. The stigma males may feel in asking for help with mental health problems can be very powerful.

In addition to social stressors, a history of alcohol or other drug use can be a significant risk factor for suicide. Social factors are often combined with alcohol or drug abuse, particularly in men. In fact, many suicides are committed while the individual is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

As men age, their risk for suicide can also increase. Risk factors, warning signs and symptoms of suicide and depression can look different for older people than for young adults. Some risk factors increase with age, such as chronic health conditions; disabilities; limited mobility and access to services and activities; substance abuse; and fear of prolonged illness. Older adults face challenges such as coping with retirement, smaller budgets, health concerns, and loss of friends and family. Symptoms of depression in older adults (such as loss of appetite, changes in sleep and disinterest in activities once enjoyed) can often be mistaken for “normal” signs of aging.

The most critical warning signs of suicide are:

- Talking about wanting to die or about suicide
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Looking for ways to kill oneself.

If you are concerned about someone, don't ignore those feelings. Talk to them and ask direct questions. Call the Friendship Line at 800.971.0016 or National Suicide Prevention

Lifeline at 800.273.8255 and talk with a trained counselor who can provide additional tips.

Protective factors

Research shows that there are certain protective factors that can help to reduce the risk of suicide. These include having a strong social circle of friends, engaging in meaningful activities such as volunteering or taking up a hobby, and staying as physically active as possible.

Major protective factors to help reduce suicide include:

- Effective behavioral health care
- Connectedness to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
- Life skills (including problem solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change
- Self-esteem and a sense of purpose or meaning in life
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide.

Ideally, a person will have multiple protective factors. If someone is severely depressed, it is important to reach out for help to a mental health professional or trained counselor.

Learn more

El Dorado County Behavioral Health and partner agencies offer trainings on suicide prevention. For questions about local suicide prevention trainings, call 530.621.6130. Behavioral Health also operates a 24-hour mental health crisis line at 530.622.3345 in Placerville and at 530.544.2219 in South Lake Tahoe for residents experiencing a mental health crisis. In an emergency, call 911.

Laura Walny is the program manager with the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency.

The infamous ‘spring chicken’ of Truckee



Carrie Pryor was a character in Truckee in the late 1800s
Photo/Truckee-Donner
Historical Society

By Abby Stevens, Moonshine Ink

On April 13, 1873, the *Daily Alta Newspaper* reported “that Carrie Pryor has acquired an unenviable reputation in Truckee ... She is a dangerous woman and it is high time this community were rid of her presence.” This wasn’t the first time Pryor had been written up in a newspaper – her name was splattered across police logs from Virginia City to Truckee.

Truckee has always drawn a crowd of freewheeling and independent people. As the town began to establish itself in the Wild West, the list of characters who showed up grew. Among them, during this period, there stand a few outliers – people with the same wild spirit, but one big difference – they were women, not men.

1870s Truckee was a rough town. The rowdy town had little

place for women, but among the brave who held their own was Carrie Smith Pryor, known to most as “Spring Chicken.” She perplexed lawmen and vigilantes alike with her unbreakable spirit and propensity for getting into trouble. Pryor made her living working on Jibboom Street as a “lady of the night,” but her exploits did not stop there; she had a reputation for stirring up trouble in town.

Read the whole story

Top 100 workers cost EDC \$20M in compensation

By Kathryn Reed

Four people on El Dorado County’s payroll in 2016 made more than \$300,000 in wages and benefits. Two work for mental health and two for the sheriff’s department.

Another 43 workers have packages valued at more than \$200,000. The 100 highest compensated employees in 2016 accounted for \$20,202,036 of the budget.

This is in a county that has about 183,000 residents.

Auditor-Controller Joe Harn released the figures on June 12. Information for the past two years is available **online**.

The mental health director’s total compensation was \$364,850, while in 2015 it was \$412,523.

According to Harn, it is not unusual for mental health workers, psychiatrists in particular, to be the highest paid county employee. This is because throughout the United States

there is a shortage of this specialty and they can command a higher wage. Doctors at county-run hospitals often have the highest salaries.

El Dorado is getting ready to adopt its next fiscal budget. The 2017-18 budget released by CAO Don Ashton is \$536 million, with the General Fund being \$284 million.

This is his first budget on his own; he came in last year having to pick up the pieces from the previous county leader.

While he boasts of eliminating 40 full-time positions, what wasn't disclosed in a press release from his office is that the bulk of those are through attrition – either no one has been in the position for a while or those leaving are not being replaced.

The main real loss in terms of staffing in the next budget cycle is to senior legal. This disclosure came just weeks after Ashton was in South Lake Tahoe at a joint meeting with the city at the local senior center. At that time, he professed there would be no cuts affecting seniors.

Ashton in his **June 6 column on *Lake Tahoe News*** said residents – aka taxpayers – can expect services to be cut or taxes to increase: “If the residents of El Dorado County want increased discretionary services, e.g., libraries, veterans, better roads than what the state is willing to provide, and the high quality of service to our seniors, while maintaining the high quality of public safety provided in El Dorado County, we need to offer additional shopping venues – which typically requires larger populations obtained through residential development – or increase the tax rates. If we aren't willing to do either, we must accept that the current level of services to our discretionary but essential services will be reduced.”

He has not offered to make a true reduction in county staff.

In looking at the stats Harn released, the top 100 highest

paying positions in the county based on salary and benefits made at least \$142,000 in 2016. Of those, the lowest salary alone was \$108,508/year for the deputy director of information technologies.

The undersheriff's package was \$515 more than his boss' at \$306,542. However, in 2015 the sheriff has the No. 2 spot on the list at \$314,738 and the undersheriff was No. 3 at \$298,279.

The chief investigator for the District Attorney's Office compensation was \$267,016, while the district attorney's was \$256,868.

"Posting the list to the county's website is part of the ongoing effort to increase transparency in our county government," Harn said. "The best government transparency involves placing all financial information online in a readily understandable manner. Government transparency allows taxpayers to see how our county is spending tax money, and gives El Dorado County citizens the ability to hold us accountable. The internet is a great place to enhance transparency."

Study: When childhood ends, Nev. youths at high risk

By Camalot Todd, Las Vegas Sun

In terms of harmful disruptions during the average childhood, the United States ranks 36th out of 172 countries, falling between Bosnia and Russia and lagging well behind France, Norway, the United Kingdom, Lithuania and Greece – some of

which have experienced far more economic instability and a slower recovery from the recession than the U.S.

Domestically, Nevada is among the bottom 10 states (No. 42) where childhood is most threatened, according to Save the Children's 2017 End of Childhood Report.

The report compares states across five societal problems – infant mortality, child suicide/homicide, child food insecurity, adolescent motherhood and failure to graduate from high school. Nevada ranks in the bottom half for four of these indicators.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Democrats mobilize to 'fire' McClintock

By Meghan Herbst, Moonshine Ink Staff

On Feb. 4, constituents of California's 4th congressional district spilled into the streets of Roseville to attend a much-anticipated town hall with Rep. Tom McClintock. Growing discontent over the Republican's ultra-conservative policy positions surged after he began vocalizing his support of the Trump administration.

McClintock drew ire from town hall attendees for fielding only 12 questions and then receiving a police escort out of the building instead of engaging with attendees, who he later called "anarchists" to regional news sources.

The next congressional election for District 4 is in November 2018, but the turbulent political atmosphere is inspiring

local Democrats to mobilize earlier than ever, and prospective candidates are already building momentum.

District 4 encompasses 10 counties from the Sierra to Fresno, all of El Dorado County, and portions of Placer and Nevada counties and the town of Truckee. Historically in this region of eastern California, Republican representatives have enjoyed a solid hold over the constituency – 44 percent of the district’s voters are registered as Republican. In contrast, the town of Truckee has the largest percentage of Democratic voters in the district: 43 percent of voters are registered as Democrats, while 22 percent are registered Republican. Area Democrats are looking to wield a greater influence on the 4th District.

Six potential Democratic candidates are campaigning across the district: Regina Bateson, Roza Calderon, Rochelle Wilcox, Jessica Morse, Chris Drew, and Charles Brown, who mounted a campaign against McClintock in 2008 in an uncommonly close race.

[Read the whole story](#)

Property owners, developers may be mandated to pay for affordable housing in Placer County

Publisher’s note: This is one in a series of stories about affordable housing in the Lake Tahoe-Truckee region. All articles may be accessed via the home page under Special

Projects, 2017 Affordable Housing.

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – Placer County knows it needs more housing that the “average” worker can afford to buy or rent. Getting more inventory is the problem.

In the last 10 years 400 new housing units have been built in eastern Placer County. The need is for 2,000 units in the North Lake Tahoe-Truckee area, according to officials.



The county is contemplating restructuring fees for those who build in the county. It could be that the eastern and western sides of the county would have different programs.

“The purpose of the studies is to establish the reasonable relationship – nexus – between new residential and non-residential development and the demand created for additional affordable housing, and to determine the maximum justifiable affordable housing fees and present options for possible adoption of fees,” according to the county.

Consultants looked at adding a 2 percent fee to all residential property that changes hands. Commercial property could face a fee too.

Cathy Donovan, housing specialist with the county, last week went over the draft of the Nexus-based Workforce Housing Fee Study that was prepared by MintierHarnish and Hansford, two consulting firms.

The Board of Supervisors in July is scheduled to hear a presentation on the report. Board action is possible in the

fall. Right now staff does not know what it will recommend to the electeds.

What is being looked at is fees for market rate properties, but not those wanting to build work force-affordable housing.

“Right now only certain projects are required to pay for affordable housing,” Jennifer Merchant, Placer County deputy CEO based in Tahoe, said.



The Domus development is the newest affordable housing development in Kings Beach. Photo/LTN

People at the meeting expressed frustration with some projects that were built, but neglected to construct the mandated work force housing.

Consultants are trying to make a case that any new development impacts workforce housing.

Fees collected in the past were able to be used to help build the 77-unit Domus affordable housing complex on Highway 28.

In lieu fees have been part of the county's culture for at least a dozen years. The current requirement on new

development mandates building on-site or off-site employee housing, dedicating land for future affordable housing, or paying an in lieu fee.

What the study looked at is how there is an affordability gap between what people can pay and what it costs to build market rate housing. The gap equals the subsidy that would be required to build the project.

“The fee (charged to developers) would go to a housing trust fund and the county can leverage that,” Donovan said at the meeting in Kings Beach.

In this region the stats for the number of units sold in 2015 that were built in the last five years show there were zero at \$500,000 or less, 13 in the \$500,000-\$1 million range, 30 in the \$1 million-\$2 million category, and 53 were greater than \$2 million.

Clearly, housing for the worker making minimum wage or thereabouts is not part of the mix.

A real estate agent at the meeting said Kings Beach will lose about 100 affordable units in the next year because an investor is coming in to eliminate what exists and doesn't plan to replace it with the same type of housing.

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Notes:

· Comments on the study may be sent to Shawna Purvines at spurvine@placer.ca.gov.

Measuring the snowpack goes high-tech

By Joseph Serna, San Diego Union Tribune

Every year for almost half a century, California snow surveyor Pat Armstrong has trekked the rugged Sierra Nevada with three simple tools: a snow core tube, a scale and a notebook.

For as long as he can remember, state water officials have relied on the accuracy of those tools to deliver crucial data on the size of the Sierra snowpack and its ability to sustain a growing population.

“It hasn’t changed in a hundred years,” Armstrong said of the survey.

But there is a growing belief that this low-tech process alone is becoming too unreliable to accurately manage California’s water needs.

Read the whole story