

Gaines slams Legislature's high-speed rail vote

Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Rocklin, vice chair of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, criticized the California legislature's vote to authorize approximately \$8 billion for California's High Speed Rail Project last week.

"The Democrats just passed another budget that is billions of dollars out of balance and now they are threatening to cut billions more from our schools unless they get a massive tax increase in November," said Gaines in statement. "And they think this is the appropriate time to sink a fortune into a high speed rail project that is doomed to failure? Those half-empty train cars will be a monument to misplaced priorities and fiscal recklessness."

The bill passed the Assembly on Thursday and passed in the Senate on Friday, with all 15 Republican senators voting against the measure.

"This project will push California over the fiscal cliff and it will be a legendary waste of taxpayer money," said Gaines. "It will require endless subsidies and will blast a massive hole into our budget. Our dollars would be better spent on our schools, public safety, or more effective infrastructure projects."

Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of El Dorado and Placer counties.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Real estate the big addition to Northstar this season

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – A ski slope out the back door. That is how the eight townhomes under construction at Northstar are being sold.

East West Partners, which has come out on the other side of bankruptcy, is back in the game at this Truckee resort. While the developer has the rights to more than 1,000 units, build-out isn't even in sight.

On the other side of the ski hill is Martis Camp, a private gated community on 2,177 acres that accesses the ski resort by the private Martis Camp Express Lift. DMB/Highlands Group is the developer on this project.

Vail Resorts put in \$30 million worth of improvements that skiers could use last ski season, but does not have any capital upgrades for the upcoming season.



Plenty of windows let in natural light in the Home Run townhomes.

Photo/Provided

Instead, it's all about developers creating homes for potential skiers to live in.

The remaining 58 cabin home sites at Martis Creek were released this summer; ranging from \$500,000 to \$2.8 million.

Before those lots went on the market, 75 houses were under construction and 80 were being designed. Nearly \$28 million in real estate transactions occurred in Martis Camp in the first half of 2012. Last year set a record for deals at \$90.2 million trading hands.

The East West townhomes range between \$1.645 million and \$2.295 million. That includes the structure – not just a plot of dirt.

Called Home Run because the homes sit on the ski run by the same name, these eight are in various stages, with two models having just opened. All will be done this month. Two people from the Bay Area and one from Florida have already bought three of the larger townhouse.

The townhomes range from 1,900-square-feet to 3,200-square-feet. Vaulted ceilings provide an airiness. Oversized sliding doors give the feeling of being outside.

Alder is throughout.

"There are a lot of darker woods. There was a shift in design five or six years ago," Sue Hyde with East West told *Lake Tahoe News* on a recent tour of townhomes.

Flooring is rustic oak wood and wool carpet, with hydraulic heating. Appliances are all Bosch.

The selling point for these eight – eventually there will be 16 units – is the ski-in, ski-out capability. Riders will be able schuss to the Ritz-Carlton gondola to be whisked to mid-

mountain.



The gondola going to the Ritz-Carlton goes through the Home Run development.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

These homes are being built to LEED silver specifications, just as East West did with the Village at Northstar. The LED lighting, insulation, appliances, reduced construction waste, location, and lack of need for a vehicle once on site are components of the energy efficiency.

Up the road a bit Q&D Construction crews are putting in infrastructure for the 25 home sites that are all about 1 acre. This is another East West project. Bridges have been built for vehicles, which will be tunnels for skiers. Ski ways have been incorporated throughout the area.

It will be a gated community. Hyde said she expects everyone to be second homeowners.

The home sites will go on sale after the first of the year. A price has not been established.

Nevada Democrat aims to certify pot dispensaries in state

By KCRA-TV

CARSON CITY – A former chairman of Nevada's Democratic Party wants to license farms where marijuana can be grown legally and certify pot dispensaries for the first time for the thousands of registered medical users in the state.

Medicinal marijuana use was legalized in Nevada in 2001. But Assemblyman Tick Segerblom says the law has never provided any legal way for medical card holders to obtain the drug.

The Las Vegas Democrat who is running for the state Senate says he asked for a bill draft that would set up the certification process, allow Nevadans to obtain medical marijuana from dispensaries in neighboring California and impose an unspecified tax on the pot.

Nevada had more than 3,000 registered users as of 2011, including people with glaucoma and cancer patients who suffer loss of appetite because of chemotherapy, said Segerblom, who was the chairman of the state Democratic Party from 1990-94.

[Read the whole story](#)

Blistering heat wave expected to break in much of U.S.

By Reuters

Another day of scorching temperatures blanketed the United States from Iowa to the East Coast on Saturday, but forecasters said some of the areas hit hardest by the prolonged heat wave would soon get relief.

The National Weather Service issued excessive heat warnings for cities including Washington, where temperatures reached 103 Fahrenheit (39 Celsius) by 1 p.m., New York and Philadelphia, where temperatures hovered near or at triple digits.

"It's hotter than hell," said John Ghio, a tourist from St. Louis after visiting the White House. "We're going to get a cold drink, catch the subway and go back to our hotel to cool down."

Nearby, a family from China posed for photos in front of the U.S. Treasury. They were debating whether to go on to the Washington Monument or wait until the sun went down.

"Too hot," said Xiao Duan, 30, of Beijing. "My father says it's like we're being burned by flames."

A cold front from Canada was expected to move south and break the record-setting heat and drop temperatures to below average levels over much of the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states by Monday, the weather service said.

[Read the whole story](#)

Olympic hopefuls turn focus on attracting other ski events

By Anne Knowles

Members of groups working to attract the Olympics to Lake Tahoe said they will continue efforts to attract major ski events to the area even though the 2022 Winter Olympics is now off the table.

“It’s always been part of our original charter to attract national and international events in both alpine and cross country,” Andy Wirth, president and CEO of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows and the chairman and president of the Lake Tahoe Winter Olympic Committee Board of Directors, told Lake Tahoe News. “We can try to do that as individual resorts but it we would accomplish more if we are organized.”

Wirth said he wasn’t surprised by the U.S. Olympic Committee’s decision, announced this week, to not submit a bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics and instead focus on either the 2024 Summer Olympics or the 2026 Olympics.

“The USOC staff was in constant contact with us and we were very appreciative,” said Wirth. “The decision was quite understandable, logical and rational.”

Wirth said the board has assembled a lot of “engaged and passionate people,” and would continue its efforts to bring sports tourism to the area.

“We’ll capitalize on work done to date for any potential bid

opportunities,” he said.

“The decision is not one we had hoped for but one we understand,” said Nevada Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki, who is chairman of the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition. “We respect their decision. And I believe the Lake Tahoe region is a marvelous bid possibility going forward.”

The USOC said it is now looking into whether to bid for the summer games to be held in a dozen years or the winter games in 2026, and will likely announce that decision in December.

If the USOC opts for the 2024 Summer Olympics, then the 2026 winter games will be again off the table.

How to survive ‘Internet Doomsday’

By Will Oremus, Slate

If you want to make sure you’ll still be able to use the Internet when you wake up Monday morning, go to this website right now, click “Detect,” and follow the instructions from there.

That’s the website of the DNS Changer Working Group (DCWG), set up by court order to fix a bunch of servers that had been taken over by an Estonian crime ring. The ring, which was busted last November, had been using the servers to redirect millions of Internet users to rogue websites when they tried

to visit normal websites. The FBI took over the servers and cleaned them up, but it doesn't particularly want to be in the business of running DNS servers permanently—so it's shutting them down on July 9.

The date has been dubbed "Internet Doomsday" because everyone still using those servers will lose pretty much all access to the Web once the FBI takes them down. The name is a little hyperbolic, given that only a few hundred thousand people are still on the servers. Still, it's probably best to make sure you aren't one of them.

[Read the whole story](#)

USFS fuels reduction project starts near Camp Richardson

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit said it has begun work on the South Shore Fuel Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project that will thin trees and brush on more than 10,000 acres of national forest system land from Cascade Lake to the Nevada state line.

Crews are working on Highway 89 near Camp Richardson and will move to the Osgood Swamp area near Nez Perce Drive and the area southeast of the Sierra Tract near Barbara Avenue in August or September.

"We have a limited operating season, so we're not able to treat all 10,000 acres at once," said Duncan Leao, forester, in a statement. "The units we chose give us the flexibility to move around the various areas of the project in order to get work done as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Overall thinning and follow-up fuels treatment including prescribed fire may take approximately eight years to complete.

The Camp Richardson area will be thinned by hand and machine while the Osgood Swamp area will be hand and mechanically thinned and the area off of the Sierra Tract will receive a combination of whole tree and cut-to-length mechanical treatments.

For public safety, there will be temporary forest closures, which will be posted on the USFS website. For detailed project information, including a map of treatment areas, go online.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

El Dorado merchants less likely to let minors buy tobacco

A recent survey conducted in El Dorado County showed that fewer merchants are willing to sell tobacco products to minors compared to just two years ago. Of the 100 tobacco retailers surveyed countywide, only 11 stores sold tobacco products to youth, resulting in a sales rate of 11 percent. In March of 2010, a similar survey resulted in a sales rate of 14.5 percent.

The Youth Tobacco Purchase Survey, conducted by the El Dorado County Tobacco Use Prevention Program in partnership with the Sheriff's Office, Placerville Police Department and South Lake Tahoe Police Department, was designed to see how easily minors

could purchase cigarettes and chewing tobacco from local retailers. Youth volunteers aged 14-17 years old from the Sheriff's Explorer Post 457 and the police departments were trained in the survey protocols prior to their participation.

California law prohibits the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 18. Tobacco retailers are required to check identification to verify age and to post state-mandated age-of-sale warning signs.

"We're pleased with the results of the survey," said Christy White, Project Director with the El Dorado County Tobacco Use Prevention Program, in a statement. "We've shown that merchant education and compliance activities encourage merchants to comply with the law."

To report illegal sales to minors, members of the public can call (800) 5-ASK-4-ID (527.5443).

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

First commercial crayfish harvest permit granted for Lake Tahoe

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Nevada wildlife officials have issued the first ever commercial permit for crayfish harvest in Lake Tahoe, allowing

the Tahoe Lobster Co. to go after some of the 220 million crustaceans living in the lake.

The fishing is expected to be a boon for the economy, tourism, cuisine and lake clarity. Waste products from the nonnative crayfish – or crawdads – foster the shallow-water algae growth that clouds the lake's crystalline waters.

The crayfish will be sold for local eating, replacing other, less-reliable supplies and possibly imports from China, such as those used at Isleton's Cajun Festival in June.

"Nothing's more local than Tahoe," said Ben Deinken, a chef for the Brewer's Cabinet in Reno. "We want to get ahold of that."

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Discovery could hold key to beginnings of universe

By Dennis Overbye, New York Times

ASPEN, Colo. – Physicists working at CERN's Large Hadron Collider said Wednesday that they had discovered a new subatomic particle that looks for all the world like the Higgs boson, a potential key to an understanding of why elementary particles have mass and indeed to the existence of diversity and life in the universe.

The British physicist Peter Higgs arrived at CERN's headquarters on Wednesday.

"I think we have it," Rolf-Dieter Heuer, the director general

of CERN, said in an interview from his office outside Geneva, calling the discovery “a historic milestone.” His words signaled what is probably the beginning of the end for one of the longest, most expensive searches in the history of science. If scientists are lucky, the discovery could lead to a new understanding of how the universe began.

Dr. Heuer and others said that it was too soon to know for sure whether the new particle, which weighs in at 125 billion electron volts, one of the heaviest subatomic particles yet, fits the simplest description given by the Standard Model, the theory that has ruled physics for the last half-century, or whether it is an impostor, a single particle or even the first of many particles yet to be discovered. The latter possibilities are particularly exciting to physicists since they could point the way to new deeper ideas, beyond the Standard Model, about the nature of reality. For now, some physicists are calling it a “Higgslike” particle.

Read the whole story