

Pedestrian killed on Hwy. 50 identified

The pedestrian killed in Stateline in the early morning of New Year's Day has been identified as Alex M. Moore, 21, of Walnut Creek.

He was pronounced dead at the scene.

According to the Nevada Highway Patrol, the victim was walking in the left eastbound lane of Highway 50 near Lake Village when the accident occurred. He was wearing jeans and a black jacket. Moore was struck by a California Highway Patrol vehicle driven by Officer Joshua J. Varanini, 38 of Truckee.

"Evidence at the scene shows Officer Varanini applied the brakes of his SUV and steered the vehicle to the right to avoid striking the walker. The left front portion of the patrol vehicle struck the man who was forced into the opposing westbound travel lane," NHP Trooper Chuck Allen said in a press release.

The pedestrian was then struck by the undercarriage of a shuttle van. There were no passengers on the bus and the drivers of both vehicles were not injured.

Witnesses or anyone with additional information, is asked to contact Trooper Eric Gallagher at (775) 689.4661.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Truckee man missing after canoe overturns on Donner Lake

A 24-year-old Truckee man is presumed dead after the canoe he was in with a friend capsized on a windy Donner Lake Monday.

His name is being withheld pending notification of family.

A 19-year-old Truckee woman called police about 6:30pm Jan. 2 to report she had been with a friend in a canoe on Donner Lake when it capsized. While swimming to shore, the female lost contact with her friend and he was presumed to still be in the water, according to officers.

Police and fire officials, including a dive team, searched the water with the assistance of CareFlight and California Highway Patrol helicopters to no avail.

The canoe was recovered near the shore of the Tahoe Donner Marina as well as some clothing items believed to have belonged to the female swimmer.

The woman was uninjured.

The search was suspended at about 9:30pm and resumed this morning at about 6:45.

It is not known if the canoeists were wearing life jackets.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Thousands of Nevada groups lose federal nonprofit status

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – More than 2,300 Nevada nonprofit groups have had their tax exempt status revoked by the Internal Revenue Service.

The revocations run the gamut from the Edgewood Tahoe Men's Club to the Lovelock Alfalfa Seed Growers. Most of the revocations occurred in 2010 but were just posted by the agency last year.

The IRS in June 2011 released a list of more than 275,000 nonprofits nationwide that had their tax-exempt status automatically revoked due to failure to file annual returns.

The revocations mean the nonprofits are no longer exempt from federal income tax, and will have to pay corporate income tax on annual revenue. Organizations may also be subject to back taxes for failure to pay from the date of revocation. It also means donors will not be able to receive tax deductions for their gifts to the groups after the revocation date.

[View Nevada organizations losing tax-exempt status.](#)

The revocations were an automatic action taken after the passing of a Pension Reform Act in 2006. Nonprofit organizations are required to file paperwork with the IRS each year under the requirements of the law, and those that do not file anything for three consecutive years get their status revoked.

Many of the organizations are believed to no longer exist but others were caught by surprise.

Phil Johncock, interim executive director of the Alliance for

Nevada Nonprofits, said many of the groups listed are likely no longer in operation. The group also made a big push in 2010 to notify the operating nonprofits of the new rules, particularly in the arts arena, he said.

But the contact information for the groups is limited, and so there may still be a number of nonprofits that remain unaware of the new requirements, Johncock said.

"You would think we would have access to emails for all of these nonprofits but the IRS only provides us with names and addresses, so some we couldn't reach," he said. "We have not heard from any of those organizations that have lost their status. Our guess is a significant number of them are probably not in business now."

ANN has information on how to restore nonprofit status.

One group taken by surprise was the C-Hill Foundation, a group formed in Carson City after the 2001 terrorist attacks to install a large U.S. flag on "C" hill in the capital.

The IRS reports that it revoked the nonprofit status of the group in May 2010, and posted the information in June 2011. The group is registered with the Nevada Secretary of State's Office as a domestic nonprofit.

Sarah Buscay, secretary of the foundation, said she was not aware of the revocation. The group isn't overly active right now, but that could change if a plan under discussion to illuminate the flag moves forward.

"I did not know about that," she said. "I'm sure I would have heard something if anybody knew about it."

Buscay said the group would have been in a tough situation if it had gone forward with a fund-raising event without knowing of the revocation.

"We will definitely need that status," she said.

Johncock said it is surprising to him that his organization has not been contacted by more groups, given the number of nonprofits that have lost their status. Most of the nonprofits on the list are 501(c)3 groups, which are charitable organizations that can receive donations, he said.

Moving forward there could be more nonprofits that lose their status because of the reporting requirements, he said. ANN is offering to help nonprofits fill out the required form at no cost, Johncock said.

“We hope that we’re not in a position ever again to lose nonprofits, or that they would lose their status, because it’s expensive,” he said. “It can be quite pricey.”

It cost ANN \$750 to file its application, Johncock said.

Wealth gap widens between Congress and constituents

By Peter Whoriskey, Washington Post

BUTLER, Pa. — One day after his shift at the steel mill, Gary Myers drove home in his 10-year-old Pontiac and told his wife he was going to run for Congress.

The odds were long. At 34, Myers was the shift foreman at the “hot mill” of the Armco plant here. He had no political experience and little or no money, and he was a Republican in a district that tilted Democratic.

But standing in the dining room, still in his work clothes, he said he felt voters deserved a better choice.

Three years later, he won.

When Myers entered Congress, in 1975, it wasn't nearly so unusual for a person with few assets besides a home to win and serve in Congress. Though lawmakers on Capitol Hill have long been more prosperous than other Americans, others of that time included a barber, a pipe fitter and a house painter. A handful had even organized into what was called the "Blue Collar Caucus."

But the financial gap between Americans and their representatives in Congress has widened considerably since then, according to an analysis of financial disclosures by The Washington Post.

Between 1984 and 2009, the median net worth of a member of the House more than doubled, according to the analysis of financial disclosures, from \$280,000 to \$725,000 in inflation-adjusted 2009 dollars, excluding home equity.

Over the same period, the wealth of an American family has declined slightly, with the comparable median figure sliding from \$20,600 to \$20,500, according to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics from the University of Michigan.

The comparisons exclude home equity because it is not included in congressional reporting, and 1984 was chosen because it is the earliest year for which consistent wealth statistics are available.

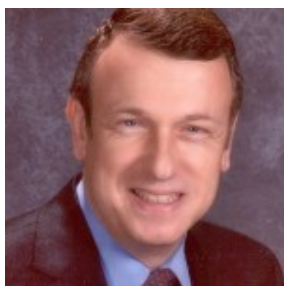
The growing disparity between the representatives and the represented means that there is a greater distance between the economic experience of Americans and those of lawmakers.

Read the whole story

TTUSD hires superintendent from Southern California

Rob Leri has been selected as the next superintendent of Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, with the board of trustees expected to vote on the contract Jan. 4.

Leri is currently deputy superintendent of educational services at Arcadia Unified School District. Prior to that he was director of assessment, technology and information services there, and has also been a principal and classroom teacher.



Rob Leri

Superintendent Steve Jennings announced his retirement last summer. His last day will be March 1.

Leri will begin April 1.

Wednesday's board meeting starts at 5:30pm at the TTUSD boardroom in the district offices, 11603 Donner Pass Road, Truckee.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevadans wake up to new rules to live by

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – The crackdown starts today on motorists who use their cellphones while on the road, and the state starts planning to inspect boats for a fee to keep Nevada waters clear of such invasive species such as quagga mussels and algae known as rock snot.

Law enforcement is developing a system to quickly find people with Alzheimer's disease or dementia who wander away from their residences or rest homes.

The mining industry will lose \$48 million over the biennium in tax deductions it enjoyed.

Those are just some of the 32 bills passed by the 2011 Legislature that become law in full or in part on Jan. 1.

The bill to prohibit drivers from using cellphones became effective in Oct. 1, but law enforcement authorities could only issue warnings until today. Now, a motorist caught using a phone will face a \$50 fine for the first offense. The second offense carries a \$100 fine and the third a \$250 penalty.

Read the whole story

Judge invalidates part of

California's greenhouse gas law

By John Ellis, Fresno Bee

A Fresno federal judge on Thursday dealt a setback to California's landmark global warming law, which went into effect last year with the goal of reducing the state's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

U.S. District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill ruled that California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard violated the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause.

The standard aims to gradually cut the carbon content in gasoline 10 percent by 2020 and replace up to 20 percent of the total gasoline used annually in the state with renewable fuels such as ethanol.

Several groups – including the Fresno-based Nisei Farmers League and the Fresno County Farm Bureau – filed a lawsuit in December 2009 that challenged the state regulation, saying it violated the Commerce Clause by seeking to regulate farming and ethanol production practices in other states.

A similar suit that involved oil production was filed last year by groups including the National Petrochemical Refiners Association and the American Trucking Association. It was later consolidated with the first lawsuit.

It was clear Thursday that O'Neill's ruling will be appealed. But what will happen to the state's greenhouse gas law wasn't clear – representatives of both sides of the debate were still digesting O'Neill's complicated ruling.

Read the whole story

CHP officer involved in fatal accident on Hwy. 50

Updated: Jan. 1 2pm.

By Kathryn Reed

A 21-year-old Walnut Creek man died early New Year's morning when he was struck by two vehicles on Highway 50 in Stateline.

The name of the victim is not being released pending notification of next of kin.

A California Highway Patrol vehicle first struck the man. The force sent the person into the westbound lane where he was lodged in the undercarriage of a Reno-Tahoe Transportation van. The man was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officer Joshua J. Varanini was traveling home to Truckee after working New Year's Eve on the South Shore. CHP in the Truckee office could not say whether Varanini would be placed on administrative leave while NHP investigates the accident.

NHP Trooper Chuck Allen told *Lake Tahoe News* that Varanini swerved to try to avoid hitting the victim.

The accident occurred at 12:44am Jan. 1.

Allen did not know if the pedestrian was trying to cross the street or was wandering in the highway. He said the victim appeared to have alcohol in his system.

There is no crosswalk in this area of the four-lane highway east of Kingsbury Grade near Lake Village. And it is dark, with minimal or no lighting.

Other law enforcement news:

The names of the Incline Village residents who were killed Friday walking across Highway 28 have been released. They are husband and wife – 46-year-old Robert C. Mathis and 46-year-old Linda Mathis.

Officers on the South Shore are reporting most of the New Year's Eve revelry in the casino area and at the SnowGlobe Music Festival at Lake Tahoe Community College being uneventful from a law enforcement perspective.

About 30,000 people were in the casino area, down from previous years. This is attributed to the nearly 10,000 who were at SnowGlobe New Year's Eve. (More than 9,500 attended the first night and more than 10,000 the second night.)

Highway 50 in front of the casinos was closed about 10:30pm, as is customary. But the masses did not fill the roadway until just before midnight when people streamed out of the casinos. The road reopened about 12:30am.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies arrested 10 people in casino area on charges of battery, domestic battery, battery on a peace officer, disorderly conduct, trespassing, minor consuming alcohol and civil protective custody. One person was arrested outside the casino core area on driving under the influence charges.

South Lake Tahoe officers arrested two people for public intoxication and El Dorado sheriff's deputies made four public intoxication arrests – all in the Stateline area.

Four people were also arrested at SnowGlobe Saturday night for public intoxication.

"The two nights before there were some drunk cases – nothing really significant or unexpected," South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News* of SnowGlobe. "The

entire three days the crime levels were minimal.”

The promoters of SnowGlobe do face criminal charges for going beyond the time limit of their permit on the second night. Uhler said they have been cited and his department will follow up with the El Dorado County District Attorneys Office.

Ruling clears way for CalPERS fraud suit against Stateline resident

By Marc Lifsher, Los Angeles Times

SACRAMENTO – A federal judge has approved a plan to liquidate the estate of Stateline resident Alfred J.R. Villalobos, former board member of the California Public Employees’ Retirement System, the state’s biggest public pension fund.

The action by a U.S. Bankruptcy Court judge in Reno ended an 18-month bankruptcy proceeding and cleared the way for the state to pursue a fraud lawsuit against Villalobos, who the state alleges plied pension fund officials with luxury trips and gifts to influence investment decisions.

Villalobos, who also served a short stint as deputy mayor of Los Angeles under Mayor Richard Riordan in the 1990s, was paid

more than \$47 million by private investment fund managers to help them win CalPERS business.

The judge on Friday approved a petition from Villalobos and three companies he controls to pay about \$17 million to dozens of creditors, including lawyers, accountants, banks, the Internal Revenue Service and Lake Tahoe gambling casinos.

Read the whole story

2 Incline pedestrians killed; Grass Valley man arrested

Two Incline Village residents were killed in a crosswalk by a driver who officers say was under the influence of drugs.

After the 8pm Dec. 30 accident, Christopher Torii Smith, 25, of Grass Valley was booked into the Washoe County Jail on two counts of driving under the influence causing death and failure to yield to a pedestrian. Bail was set at \$60,200.

Nevada Highway Patrol officers said the two pedestrians, whose names have not been released, were crossing Highway 28 just south of Village Boulevard when they were struck by the pickup driven by Smith, who was headed south.

The male pedestrian was pronounced dead at the scene and the female pedestrian died en route to Renown Medical Center in Reno.

Highway 28 was closed in both directions for nearly four hours.

Trooper Mike Stapledon is the lead investigator for this

incident. Witnesses or anyone with additional information is asked to contact him at (775) 689.4623.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*