Incline honoring part-time resident who died in Vegas

Stacee Etcheber, who was a part-time resident of Incline Village, died in the gun rampage in Las Vegas. She was 50.

In honor of her memory, the annual United Blood Services and Incline Village Recreation Center blood drive on Oct. 13 is being dedicated in her memory.



Stacee Etcheber

The community remembers Stacee as a loving wife, dedicated mother and loyal, caring friend.

SFPD Police Chief William Scott on the department's Facebook page said, "Stacee was taken in a senseless act of violence as her husband, SFPD Officer Vinnie Etcheber, heroically rushed to aid shooting victims in Las Vegas on Sunday. Stacee was a beloved mother of two young children and a well-loved hair stylist in Marin County. As we grieve, we ask the public to keep the Etcheber family in their thoughts, along with all the victims of this tragic incident."

Stacee was a master hair stylist, having worked in Novato for more than 20 years.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "She was tough, her family

said, someone who knew how to pull horse trailers with a truck, a real cowgirl as well as a devoted soccer mom. She was a hairstylist who took care of her husband's aging parents and someone the grocery store clerk remembered as funny and kind, even after seeing her just a few times."

Stacee was one of 59 people who died in the country's worst mass shooting, where more than 500 others were injured.

A **GoFundMe** account has been set up for the family. She is survived by her husband, a 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son.

The blood drive in Stacee's name will be from 8am-4pm in the gymnasium of the Incline Village Recreation Center, 980 Incline Way in Incline Village.

United Blood Services reports that Las Vegas is currently doing well with their blood supply; however, they are concerned that in the wake of this event, they will see a tremendous response at first, then a dip in donations in the weeks to come. In emergencies, it is the blood on the shelves that save lives.

To schedule an appointment, call 800.696.4484 or go **online**. Use sponsor code INCLINEREC.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. regulator admits to anxiety as legal pot nears

By Michael R. Blood, AP

California’s emerging marijuana industry is being rattled by an array of unknowns, as the state races to issue its first licenses to grow and sell legal recreational pot on Jan. 1.

“We all have anxiety,” top state pot regulator Lori Ajax told an industry group Thursday. “It’s not going to be perfect.”

California voters in 2016 approved Proposition 64, which legalized recreational pot use for adults in the nation’s most populous state. It takes effect in 2018, when the new economy will unite recreational sales with the state’s two-decade old medicinal pot market.

Read the whole story

Caesars emerges from bankruptcy with $2B in cash

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Caesars Entertainment has completed the bankruptcy process, the company announced Friday, ending two-plus years of legal and financial uncertainty.

As part of the post-bankruptcy restructuring, Caesars Entertainment has finished its merger with Caesars Acquisition Company and has announced a new board of directors.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah’s Lake Tahoe and Harveys in Stateline.

Read the whole story

SLT pot shop owner faces felony tax fraud charges

By Kathryn Reed

Cody Bass, the owner of Tahoe Wellness Cooperative, is accused of felony tax fraud.

A criminal complaint filed in El Dorado County Superior Court alleges Bass filed false income tax returns with the California Franchise Tax Board for calendar years 2012 and 2013, and that he failed to file a personal state tax return in 2014. Those are felony offenses. A misdemeanor allegation is for failing to pay state income tax in 2011.



Cody Bass has been a controversial figure in South Lake Tahoe since opening his medicinal marijuana shop. Photo/LTN file

Bass did not respond to an inquiry from *Lake Tahoe News.*

His medicinal marijuana shop in the Bijou Center of South Lake Tahoe was **raided in June 2015.**

At the time El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Jim Clinchard told *Lake Tahoe News*, "The investigation relates to tax evasion and possession of marijuana for sale."

On Oct. 6 Clinchard said, "As this is a pending case, we have no further comment."

Even though marijuana of any kind is not recognized by the federal government to be legal, the IRS still mandates taxes be paid. It has strict regulations as to what can be taken as a deduction, which can result in businesses needing to pay a higher percentage of taxes than other industries.

What happened to the "marijuana for sale" part of the investigation is unknown.

For years the city has alleged Bass was doing more than providing medical marijuana, saying that millions of dollars in weed are filtered through the Tahoe shop that have nothing to do with medicine.

While South Lake Tahoe police detectives were integral to the case, the police chief did not respond to an inquiry from *LTN*. Nor did the city manager or city attorney.

Assisting with what was described as a long and ongoing investigation were the now defunct South Lake El Dorado Narcotics Task Force, El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, state Board of Equalization and the Employment Development Department.

For now, the shop remains open and Bass is not behind bars.

Persistent dryness to elevate fire danger across Calif.

By Renee Duff, AccuWeather

A continued dry spell and strengthening winds will set the stage for an enhanced risk of wildfire ignition across California into the middle of October.

Little to no rain is expected across the state through at least the second week of October. Low humidity combined with the lack of rainfall into next week will continue to dry out vegetation and add fuel for ongoing or future blazes.

“As temperatures climb and an offshore wind picks up, especially (today) and Saturday, the fire danger will remain high,” AccuWeather meteorologist Ryan Adamson said.

Read the whole story

Loop road design elements being sought

By Kathryn Reed

Better flow and access to the Stateline area for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists are major components of the proposed loop road. But with any endeavor there are consequences.

“We walk and bike a lot. The (new) highway would separate where we go,” Caroline Fallu told *Lake Tahoe News.*

She and her husband, Matt Asher, bought their home on Cellador Drive in South Lake Tahoe nearly three years ago. The real estate agent mentioned the loop road, but not to the extent it could impact their lives.

To get to the commercial area near the state line – be it California or Nevada – they will have to cross Highway 50 if the loop road is built. Today they have two easy routes to get to points past the casinos. In the future it will be one by vehicle.

There is no crosswalk planned to easily get them across the highway. Instead, they said, it will be a long walk or ride to do so to be legal. They suspect they'll opt to risk crossing the busy highway in what could be an illegal manner.



TTD officials say the intersection of today's Highway 50 and Heavenly Village Way needs help. Photos/Kahtryn Reed

Theirs is just one story of what could happen to residents if the highway were to be reconfigured.

Tahoe Transportation District is the lead agency behind wanting to take the current Highway 50 and reroute it behind Harrah's Lake Tahoe and MontBleu, then turning the current highway in both states into a city/county street.

The hope is that it would make the casino corridor more pedestrian friendly. Plus, it would be more visually appealing. An added bonus is the affordable housing component that was added during the planning process.

The proposal is still in the environmental process, with comments on the draft environmental impact statement being addressed. The final EIS is expected to be released by the end of the year. That document would still need to be approved by the TDD and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency boards.

"I'm eager to get past the decision and get to design," Carl Hasty, TTD leader, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

On Oct. 5, several dozen people attended an open house hosted by the TTD at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel. The purpose was to begin discussing design components of the plan. While a definitive route has not been selected because it's under environmental review, the assumption is the preferred alternative will be selected. It is that route that people on Thursday night were asked to comment on.

The various stations delved into specific components of the realignment. People were asked to comment about how they walk/bike in the area now and what they'd like to see in the future; where they park and where they'd like to see future parking as well as signage for it; where they access transit and where they'd like to see future routes/stops; and where they live in the area and where they'd like future housing.

For those who could not attend Thursday's gathering, comments will be taken **online** starting Monday about the design components.

While the sites for future housing are not definitive, but instead place holders on a map, the district has pledged that the road work will not begin until affordable housing is built for the displaced residents. This will come when funding is secured.

Hasty said his agency is going after grants now to assist with acquisition of properties, which is expected to be the most expensive part of the project. Replacement housing would be the next step.

One attendee who was a bit verbally combative was certain those who would lose their homes or businesses would not be fairly compensated as was the case in some instances across the street at the Chateau site. A TTD rep was quick to point that was a private developer and the highway project is a public endeavor. This means fair market value will have to be paid to people. Renters will also be compensated. There are federal laws that protect people and govern agencies in these types of interactions.

Report: CalPERS forces local gov't to cut other spending

By Adam Ashton, Sacramento Bee

California governments likely will make do with fewer teachers, parks employees and other public workers while they struggle to absorb fast-rising pension costs in the next few years, a former state lawmaker argues in a study released this week through Stanford University.

Former Democratic Assemblyman Joe Nation projects that many

cities, counties and school districts will double their spending on pensions by 2030, “crowding out” their ability to fund public services.

The trend is an acceleration of the swelling pension costs that most California governments have recorded since the dot-com crash in the early 2000s, when pension plans that had been over-funded suddenly had to catch up with investment losses.

Read the whole story

Cops looking for suspects who fired shots in SLT

South Lake Tahoe police are looking for two men who allegedly fired a semi-automatic handgun in the parking lot of 7-Eleven on Pioneer Trail late Tuesday night.

Casings from the bullets were found, but police are not saying how many. No one was reported injured. Property damage has not been disclosed.

The gunfire was reported Oct. 3 at 11:56pm.

Witnesses told officers the suspects are two Hispanic men in their 20s with short dark hair; they were driving a gold colored Ford Excursion or Explorer.

No arrests have been made, but officers have identified two people considered “investigative leads.”

Anyone with information about the shooting is asked to call the South Lake Tahoe Police Department at 530.542.6100, or to remain anonymous, Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Vegas shooter casts spotlight on high-limit gaming

By Jason Hidalgo and Sam Gross, Reno Gazette-Journal

The gunman at the center of the deadliest shooting in U.S. history did not leave much of an impression with his Reno neighbors.

Amid the bright lights and bustling din of the casinos he visited in the Biggest Little City, however, Stephen Paddock was instantly recognizable.

Before becoming known around the world as the man behind a shooting rampage that left 59 people dead and more than 500 injured at the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas, Paddock was a familiar fixture among the staff at some of Reno's big hotel-casinos.

Matt Orchowski, 25, of Reno remembers running into Paddock a few times at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa's VIP lounge. Orchowski, now the general manager at Fitness For 10's downtown Reno branch, worked as a VIP representative at the Atlantis from 2014 to 2016. He was responsible for catering to the needs of high rollers, including checking them in and serving them drinks.

Read the whole story

EDC man wins $1 million from lottery ticket

By Michael McGough, Sacramento Bee

After an El Dorado County man’s wife had criticized him for purchasing lottery tickets, he started hiding in his own house to scratch them.

Hermenegildo Beltran-Meza was in the bathroom when he discovered that one of his $10 California Black Premium Scratchers was a $1 million winner, the California Lottery reported in a Tuesday press release.

Read the whole story