

Term limits change complexion of Nev. Legislature

By Yvonne Gonzalez, Las Vegas Sun

Term limits have helped make the Nevada Legislature more diverse in the almost 20 years since they were implemented, though the higher turnover has come with some costs.

Experts say term limits have brought in new faces but reduced institutional knowledge as veteran lawmakers are pushed out. They say lobbyists have more power and the Legislative Counsel Bureau is even more vital both in educating new lawmakers and keeping the legislative process moving.

Voters decided in the 1990s to limit lawmakers to 12 years (six terms) in the Assembly and 12 years (three terms) in the Senate.

Read the whole story

Historic Glenbrook property on the market

By David Caraccio, Sacramento Bee

The historic 129-acre Shakespeare Ranch on the shores of Lake Tahoe is for sale at a listed price of \$69 million.

It's only the third time in history the ranch has been on the market, according to Oliver Luxury Real Estate, which has listed the Glenbrook property along with Christie's

International Realty.

The listing is the latest in a number of high-priced Lake Tahoe luxury homes hitting the market. A Lake Tahoe mansion in Crystal Bay is listed for a record \$75 million, the Drum estate sold for \$29 million, and an Incline Village property once owned by casino mogul sold for \$31 million.

Read the whole story

California the world's fifth largest economy?

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

Frustrated about unaffordable housing or clogged freeways? Think of it as the price you pay for living in one of the world's largest economies.

California's economy ranked sixth in the world in 2016, according to rankings released by Palo Alto economist Stephen Levy last week. That's the same as the year before, when California overtook France and Brazil.

But the state's economy isn't stagnating; California's economy is growing so quickly that Levy thinks the state will overtake the United Kingdom this year for No. 5.

Read the whole story

Staffing shortage plagues Tahoe-Truckee kitchens



Finding restaurant staff in Tahoe-Truckee is getting difficult. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Ally Gravina, Moonshine Ink

At the bottom of its beer and wine list, Pianeta, a 19-year-old Italian restaurant in downtown Truckee, presents diners with the option to buy a six-pack as a gratuity for the kitchen staff. When customers place the order, a ticket not only prints at the bar for accounting purposes, but also prints in the kitchen; to which the kitchen staff then

responds by banging pots and pans so loudly that the purchasing patron (and the entire restaurant) hears the acknowledgement.

Tom Beckering, managing partner and owner, says the celebration creates a snowball effect as more and more customers purchase rounds for the hard-working staff.

Creative incentives like this come from the heart of Truckee/Tahoe restaurant owners, but these sorts of programs are being put into place as solutions to the severe lack of kitchen staff in the area.

Local restaurant owners, managers, and chefs say the dwindling pool of back of the house staff is a crisis. "It's gone from never having been a problem to always being a problem," said Bill Arnoff, who has been a chef at Pianeta for 17 years.

Read the whole story

Smoke inundates Tahoe-Carson-Reno areas



Smoke covers Carson City on July 19 from fires outside the area. Photo/Susan Wood

Air quality in the Tahoe-Carson-Reno areas has deteriorated because of the Detwiler Fire in Mariposa County.

AIRnow said the air quality for Reno is unhealthy for sensitive groups. People should stay indoors and avoid heavy exercise or work outdoors.

Air quality on the South Shore is not great either; the same goes for the Truckee area.

This fire raging in California has consumed nearly 46,000 acres and is 7 percent contained. Gov. Jerry Brown has declared a state of emergency. Eight structures have been destroyed and 1,500 others are threatened.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

CHP shutting down Truckee dispatch center

By Susan Wood

Come next May, the California Highway Patrol will have silenced its voice out of Truckee – moving the communications dispatch center to Chico.

The move is part of a five-year infrastructure plan by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to consolidate dispatch centers labeled PSAPs – Public Safety Answering Points.

CHP manages 25 dispatch centers throughout the state as an essential tool backing up its 109 offices with more than 11,000 employees.

The 40-year-old Truckee dispatch center – which handles South Shore 911 cellular calls – averages about 200 calls a day unless a major snowstorm prompts a surge in call activity. Landline calls are channeled through sheriff's and police departments.

In comparison, a large dispatch center such as Chico or Sacramento takes in about 3,000 calls a day, CHP Truckee Capt. Ryan Stonebraker told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Stonebraker assured the public the shutdown would be fairly seamless and explained how larger dispatch centers could manage the calls more efficiently based on their large staffing levels. If Chico becomes inundated with calls, some will be forwarded to Sacramento. In Northern California, other cities with dispatch centers include Eureka, Redding and Susanville.

“I think we'll have some growing pains. But with resiliency, redundancy and continuity in taking the calls, it will work

out. We've had these calls in Sacramento before. There are certain advantages to moving resources around," he said, adding that technical changes will need to be adjusted in the radio frequencies.

The captain, who runs CHP Truckee operations, pledged to have at least a few dispatchers from Chico and Sacramento familiarize themselves with the unique nature and terrain of the Lake Tahoe region.



CHP Capt. Ryan Stonebraker of the Truckee office is losing his dispatch center in 10 months. Photo/Provided

CHP dispatch took a critical hit a decade ago during the Angora Fire aftermath when South Shore witnesses – one with a distinct view from the Lake Tahoe Golf Course – called in to report the blaze early on and were told it was a prescribed burn that they shouldn't worry about.

At the time, it took South Lake Tahoe police dispatch Supervisor Leona Allen telling CHP Truckee dispatch it was not a controlled burn. The miscommunication led to a subsequent investigation about whether the devastating fire that consumed 254 homes could have been doused sooner. Results of the investigation have never gone public because the state labeled them a “personnel” matter.

Whatever the case, Stonebraker said dispatch is a very tough job and feels sympathy for the staff in Truckee being upended – especially since severe damage to its center and offices this winter sent staff to modular, portable facilities.

“I love my dispatchers. This is hard for me. I care about the center. I care about them,” he said.

Truckee employs one dispatch supervisor and a dozen dispatchers who work varying shifts. They will be offered jobs at other dispatch locations, posts that are often readily available, according to Stonebraker.

Turnover in Truckee is high, with no staffers lasting longer than two years. To no surprise in a tourist town, housing is apparently as tough to deal with as the job, according to city and state officials.

CHP could not provide the amount in cost savings to close the facility, assuming there even is a savings.

Outgoing Truckee Town Manager Tony Lashbrook pointed out how the state is planning on investing about \$20 million in a new CHP building at a different site in town; it just won’t have dispatch. Come 2019, the new offices will be built in the old U.S. Forest Service structure on Pioneer Trail.

The public resisted the new towers the CHP intended to erect on Highway 89 because they are in the scenic corridor of Interstate 80; however, towers already exist at that location.

"I wouldn't presume to second guess the CHP. Consolidation is the state of industry today. With technology, I'm not convinced it's super important where the dispatch center is located (in terms of call efficiency). But one factor in the proposed closure is the cost of housing, and the town didn't want the towers," Lashbrook summed up his assessment. One factor facilitated another.

The whole proposal was met with mixed reaction from external and internal forces.

"We're sad to see that happen. We like the dispatch here," CHP Lt. Cmdr. Terry Lowther of the Meyers office said.

CHP Chico also intends to rebuild with about a quarter of its 33,000 square-foot facility dedicated to dispatch.

Burglary at Heller's Vegas office, note left

By Ed O'Keefe and Amy B. Wang, Washington Post

Police said a "threatening note" was found over the weekend after a break-in at the Las Vegas office of Sen. Dean Heller, a Republican who could be a critical swing vote on the GOP health-care bill.

Las Vegas police said officers responded to a call about a burglary alarm Saturday morning at Heller's office in southwest Las Vegas. There, they discovered what they described in a statement as a "threatening note" addressed to Heller, R-Nev., near the door to his office.

Heller has been under pressure from the left and the right

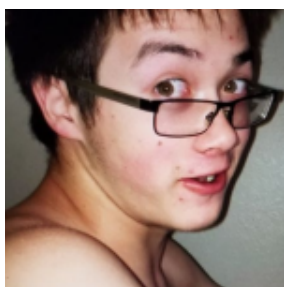
over his vote on the health-care bill. Republican lawmakers have been steadfast for years in their promise to “repeal and replace” the Affordable Care Act, President Obama’s signature health-care measure – a pledge Donald Trump frequently invoked on the campaign trail.

Read the whole story

N. Nevada casino heir found safe at Tahoe

By Sarah Litz and Siobhan McAndrew, Reno Gazette-Journal

After scouring the shores of Lake Tahoe overnight, Sean Ascuaga, 17, was located safe and unharmed at Marlette Dam, according to officials.



Sean Ascuaga

He is the son of John Ascuaga Jr., and the grandson of John Ascuaga, the patriarch of the well-known family that owned the Nugget casino in Sparks for 58 years.

A person at Marlette Dam recognized Ascuaga from media coverage. RAVEN, the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office helicopter, flew in to pick Ascuaga up.

Read the whole story

Smoke from Yosemite area fire affecting Tahoe



Air quality at Lake Tahoe is diminished because of fires outside the basin.
Photo/Lisa Huard

The Detwiler Fire burning in Mariposa County is filling the Lake Tahoe Basin with smoke.

It is near impossible to see across the lake.

The Truckee area is also being impacted by this fire, as well from what's burning in the greater Reno area.

The Detwiler Fire has consumed nearly 20,000 acres, forced the evacuation of the town of Mariposa and has closed Highway 140 going into Yosemite National Park.

People with respiratory problems should stay indoors.
Exercising outside in these conditions is not advised.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

DCSD board vacancy filled

Douglas County School District board has a new member.

Neil Freitas moved so he had to resign. The seven board members must live in the district they represent.

The remaining board members this month chose Carey Kangas to fill out the term.

Kangas is a manager for the REDCO rubber engineering and development company in Carson City. He has lived in Northern Nevada for 20 years and had children go through the local system in the Carson Valley.

John Louritt who was on the board from 2001-08 and retired teacher Martha Betcher also applied for the appointment.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*