

Copper wire stolen from LTWC's new facility

Thieves made off with a spool of copper wire from the Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care construction site on Al Tahoe Boulevard.

Last week work was going forward to connect the sewer line to South Tahoe Public Utility District's connection at Pioneer Village nearly 900 feet away.

"The new way to locate water, electrical, sewer lines, etc. is to bury a copper wire just above the line – which makes it easier to locate in the future, should that need occur," Tom Millham, co-founder of LTWC, said in a statement. "After the initial 200 feet had been placed with the copper line, the remainder of the coil was left above ground for work the next day, as the contractor does about 200 feet per day. That night, someone cut the line and took the remainder of the spool."

The value of the wire at a scrap yard is much less than what it will cost the nonprofit to replace it.

To complete the framing, security fence and asphalt work, donations are still being sought. For more info about LTWC, go **online**.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevada debates statewide

fracking ban

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

The use of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, to extract fossil fuels could be banned in Nevada if a state assemblyman gets his way.

But that's only if the Legislature approves Assembly Bill 159 before the end of the legislative session on June 5 and Gov. Brian Sandoval signs it into law.

"It endangers our air, our water, our earth," Assemblyman Justin Watkins, D-Las Vegas, told the Senate Committee on Natural Resources on Tuesday.

Read the whole story

Brown joins other governors backing Paris accord

By Kathleen Ronayne, AP

Three Democratic governors said Thursday they won't let the U.S. back away from a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, despite President Trump decision to withdraw from an international pact.

"This is an insane move by this president," Gov. Jerry Brown said, blasting the decision as "deviant behavior from the highest office in the land."

Brown joined Gov. Jay Inslee of Washington state and Gov.

Andrew Cuomo of New York to form the U.S. Climate Alliance to uphold the Paris climate agreement, a pact involving nearly 200 nations aimed at slowing the warming of the planet.

Read the whole story

Olson appeals bankruptcy court's decision



Patty Olson

The legal battle involving the parcel in South Lake Tahoe that houses the medical marijuana collective has reached another stage.

On May 31, attorneys for Patty Olson filed paperwork with the U.S. Bankruptcy Appellate Panel of the Ninth Circuit.

A **bankruptcy judge in Reno** dismissed the case because of the medicinal pot shop being a tenant. This is because federal law deems this type of business as being illegal. Olson, who owns the property, is challenging that decision.

While the issue is tied up in court, Olson remains owner of the parcel in the Bijou Center and the foreclosure proceedings are stalled.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Douglas County workers to receive raises

Douglas County commissioners this week approved contracts with the labor unions. Commissioner Dave Nelson was the lone vote against the raises.

The 140-member strong Douglas County Employees Association agreed to a seven-year contract. It reduces the annual merit raise from 0-6 percent to 0-3 percent, and provides a cost of living adjustment based on the CPI; the latter being tied to county revenues.

A five-year deal was reached with the Douglas County Sheriff's Protective Association as well as the Douglas County Sheriff's Protective Association Sergeants' Bargaining Unit. They have the same raises as DCEA. There are 85 and 14 members, respectively.

The contracts guarantee a 2 percent raise in even years, and a maximum of 2 percent in odd years.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Search warrant issued in Humane Society case

The investigation into the alleged embezzlement at Lake Tahoe Humane Society escalated this week with officers confiscating

potential evidence from the former director's residence.

Niki Congero has been accused by the nonprofit's board of taking **more than \$100,000**. She has not worked at the Humane Society since being fired March 31.

South Lake Tahoe police detectives on June 1 took a couch and financial documents as evidence. Furniture is an item that showed up on the nonprofit's credit card bill. Congero had access to the card at that time.

Congero has been posting garage sale dates on the Facebook page South Lake Tahoe & Around the Lake Garage Sale. Congero remains free while the investigation is ongoing. She has not been charged with any crime.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Recreational pot sales may be delayed in Nev.

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada may not get recreational marijuana sales in July as promised.

A group of alcohol distributors are demanding that they have exclusive rights to transport marijuana for the first 18 months of the industry. A district court judge in Carson City validated their concerns Tuesday evening, issuing an order that prevents the state from issuing any recreational marijuana distribution licenses before the matter is resolved.

Distribution licenses cost \$15,000 under temporary regulations

that go into effect with the state's early start program, expected to debut on July 1.

Read the whole story

Why fighting wildfires often fails

By Steve Inskeep, 60 Minutes

Fighting wildfires in America cost federal agencies almost \$2 billion last year including more than half the budget of the U.S. Forest Service. Wildland fires are growing worse in a time of drought and climate change, and the biggest and most destructive fires can't be stopped.

They are a force of nature: imagine trying to stop a hurricane. Yet the government has to try, because more than a 100 million Americans now live in – or near – forests and grasslands that can erupt in flames.

Much of the Kern River Valley near Bakersfield burned in a wildfire that swept across 75 square miles. It killed two people and destroyed 285 homes. The wildlands that fed this fire are the same wildlands that attracted residents like Fred Roach.

It kept burning despite the efforts of firefighters who spent \$22 million trying to stop it.

Read the whole story

Teen from Minnesota ID'd in Emerald Bay fatality

The teenager who died Wednesday in a fall near Emerald Bay has been identified as Chloe Conn of Detroit Lakes, Minn.

The 14-year-old fell about 50 feet on May 31 near Vikingsholm.

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies are not releasing any details about the incident.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Strong opposition to NDOT Hwy. 50 lane reduction

By Kathryn Reed

ZEPHYR COVE – Safety, according to transportation officials, is the primary reason they are looking at reducing the number of lanes on Highway 50 between Stateline and the intersection at Highway 28.

For many of the nearly 250 who attended a meeting Wednesday night about the proposals, the idea of one lane in each direction seemed counterintuitive to increasing safety. Twenty-five people spoke at the May 31 meeting.



Bill Killebrew, center, on May 31 echoes the sentiment of most at the meeting – don't reduce the lanes on Highway 50. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Comments included:

- Needing a light at Warrior Way. (None of the diagrams showed this as a potential reality.)
- Wanting the data by NDOT to be more detailed; as in where did the accidents occur, what were the conditions and more.
- Work with the U.S. Forest Service to build bike trails out of the vehicle travel lane.
- Pilot options before they are permanent.
- Praise and criticism for roundabouts.
- Make the highway function like Skyland with turn lanes and frontage street.
- Being worried about future bottlenecks with projects like Edgewood Lodge, Zalanta, Tahoe Beach Club and Sierra Colina coming on board.
- Concern about emergency vehicles getting through on smaller roads and through roundabouts.
- Belief the crash numbers are low because many don't

report accidents, especially solo spinouts.

- The need for chain enforcement.
- Remembering when the second tunnel at Cave Rock was built because there was a need for more roadway even in 1957.
- Believing a reduction in lanes will increase congestion.
- There are areas where the highway should be widened.
- Addressing parking in the beach areas will alleviate problems on the highway in summer.
- Left turn lanes are needed without sacrificing other lanes.
- Build a pedestrian overpass.
- This is a cycling destination, but the current highway is unfriendly to those on two wheels because of non-existent bike lanes and drains in area where cyclists ride, thus forcing them into the vehicle lane.
- Frustration with no options presented keeping the four lanes, and none without a bike lane component.
- Public transit is needed.
- Add concrete medians.

What wasn't brought up is the Stateline-to-Stateline bike trail that will go from the South Shore to Crystal Bay. Right now it ends at Round Hill Pines. It is and will continue to be a multi-use path set away from the road.

Nine poster boards scattered about the multipurpose room at Zephyr Cove Elementary School showed different stretches of this roadway and what they could look like in the future. All received more no votes, but, still, plenty of people supported

the concepts.

NDOT's ideas range from a roundabout at highways 50 and 28, and one at Zephyr Cove Resort; to one lane through the tunnel that would include a bike lane; to revamping access at Cave Rock.



Possible lane reconfiguration on the highway at Warrior Way. Photo/LTN

Plans call for acceleration and deceleration lanes to get motorists onto and off of the highway in a safer manner, especially for residents with streets and driveways along the highway. Designated parking would be constructed. Left turn lanes would be added. Right hand storage lanes are proposed; this would allow traffic to flow around the bottlenecks, which are primarily at beaches.

NDOT doesn't have one plan. It's possible components of the various proposals will be used, along with the public's ideas.

According to Nevada Department of Transportation officials, on this section of Highway 50 in the last seven years there have been:

- 682 crashes
- 404 involved property damage
- 382 involved injuries
- 12 were fatalities.

“This is why we are here tonight – the crash data,” Kent Steele, senior designer with NDOT, told the packed room. “If we implement some of the components, we can potentially decrease crashes by 40 percent in some areas.”



Traffic on Highway 50 on May 30 in mid-afternoon.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

Notes:

- Send comments before June 16 to ksteele@dot.nv.gov.
- This scoping period could last nine months.
- NDOT will have another public meeting, probably in the first quarter of 2018, to share ideas based on public feedback.
- The design phase will take one to three years, with

construction another one to three years.

- Repaving of Highway 50 will occur in the next three to five years, and NDOT wants some of the new ideas implemented at the same time.