

Placer County OKs Squaw's mega development

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A proposal to dramatically upgrade resort offerings in Squaw Valley won approval by the Placer County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday on a 4-1 vote.

The proposal by Squaw Valley Ski Holdings, which owns Squaw Valley Resort, is a plan with multiple, village-style developments with new hotel rooms, restaurants, retail, condominiums, time shares and an indoor water park or mountain adventure center.

The project, which would take as many as 25 years to build, has divided much of the Lake Tahoe community between people who see it as an important step forward for the iconic winter resort that hosted the 1960 Winter Olympics and others who see it as a blight on some of the most scenic and lucrative real estate in the Lake Tahoe area.

"I meditated on this process for days and I relied on my head and my heart and my gut to make this decision today," Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery said of her "no" vote.

Read the whole story

Cole retires from South Lake Tahoe politics



A plaque near the South Lake Tahoe welcome sign pays tribute to Hal Cole. Photo/LTN

In an emotional goodbye, Hal Cole said farewell to politics on Tuesday – at least as an elected official.

After more than 20 years on the South Lake Tahoe City Council he opted not to seek re-election. He is the longest serving council member in the city's 51-year history.

At the December meeting the new council members will be sworn in. So, technically, he is on the council until then.



Hal Cole

Many accolades were bestowed upon him at the Nov. 15 council meeting. The city honored him with a plaque detailing how the welcome sign by the airport came about. It was installed before the meeting was over.

Cole started the process of creating the sign when he was on the Planning Commission and completed it with the help of many others once he got on council.

He readily admits it's his most treasured accomplishment.

A mini version of the plaque was given to Cole as well as a proclamation that was read by Mayor Wendy David.

Cole also spoke of how proud he is of the redevelopment of the Heavenly Village area and approving the gondola project. He said the risk paid off.

He equated his time on council to being in college; learning so much it was like getting degrees in multiple subjects.

But he also knows along the way he alienated friends with some of his votes. That, he said, is the fallout of doing what's right for the city.

After he thanked those he currently works with and those from

the past, Cole was sent off with a standing ovation.

– Kathryn Reed

Californians fleeing high cost of housing

By Kevin Smith, San Jose Mercury News

California's warm weather, sunny beaches and world-class schools have lured people to the Golden State for decades, but rising home prices are turning that equation around.

Data analysis firm CoreLogic says that for every home buyer coming into California, another three are selling their homes, packing up and moving out, CNN Money reported recently.

The trend of out-migration was also noted in a separate trio of reports released earlier this year by Beacon Economics. Beacon noted that 625,000 more U.S. residents left California between 2007 and 2014 than moved into the state. The vast majority ended up in Texas, Oregon, Nevada, Arizona and Washington.

[Read the whole story](#)

Congress will get peek at

Nev. land transfer bill

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

The House Committee on Natural Resources will get a sneak-peek at a bill that would transfer millions of acres of federal land to the state of Nevada.



Mark Amodei

The committee scheduled a hearing for today on H.R. 1484, the Honor the Nevada Enabling Act of 1864.

The bill by Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Carson City, is controversial because conservation groups say it would undermine important federal oversight on land throughout the state.

Proponents say it would provide state and local officials more control over public land. Currently the federal government owns about 85 percent of land in Nevada, among the highest percentage of any state.

Read the whole story

Treasury finds troubles with TARP in Nevada

By Daniel Rothberg, Las Vegas Sun

Seeking to address the housing crisis in the states most affected by unemployment, the federal government created a fund in 2010 to help homeowners pay mortgages. Nevada stood to benefit from an allocation of about \$200 million as part of the Hardest Hit Fund. But six years later, half the funding has yet to be disbursed, with many homeowners turned away from the program.

Although the fund – controlled by the nonprofit Nevada Affordable Housing Assistance Corp. (NAHAC) – approved payouts for thousands of homeowners in its first three years, assistance plunged after 2014, a trend that prompted federal and state inquiries into the fund's management and day-to-day operations. Under new management, it is in the process of reforms.

In a harsh September report detailing wasteful spending, an auditor for the Treasury Department criticized the fund for acting with “a sense of entitlement and no appreciation for the fact that it was taking funds for itself from the homeowners the program intended to help.”

Read the whole story

2016 on target to be world's

warmest year

By Matt McGrath, BBC

2016 looks poised to be the warmest year on record globally, according to preliminary data.

With data from just the first nine months, scientists are 90 percent certain that 2016 will pass the mark set by 2015.

Temperatures from January to September were 1.2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, according to the World Meteorological Organization.

The body says temperatures should remain high enough for the rest of the year to break the previous record.

El Nino has had an impact, but the most significant factor driving temperatures up continues to be CO2 emissions.

Read the whole story

High cost for not offering paid sick leave

By Austin Frakt, San Francisco Chronicle

Each week about 1.5 million Americans without paid sick leave go to work despite feeling ill. At least half of employees of restaurants and hospitals – two settings where disease is easily spread – go to work when they have a cold or the flu, according to a recent poll.

To address that issue, Chipotle began offering paid sick leave

to all its U.S. employees this year. The chain is hoping to reduce the spread of infectious disease – like the norovirus outbreaks traced to its restaurants last year and earlier this year. Although many industrialized countries already require employers to offer paid sick leave to all employees, the United States does not.

Paid sick leave is not free, of course. Economic theory suggests that its cost would be passed from employers to employees in the form of lower wages or reductions in other benefits. Yet employees and their co-workers may be better off with an incentive to take time off when sick.

Read the whole story

Study: Racial gaps in arrests pervasive in Calif.

By Bob Egelko, San Francisco Chronicle

Arrest rates have dropped for all racial groups in California over the past decade, but African Americans are still much more likely than whites to be arrested on felony charges, the state Attorney General's Office reported.

In 2015, blacks were 10 times as likely as whites to be arrested on robbery charges and three to five times as likely to be arrested on charges of burglary, theft or assault, the report said. For felonies involving narcotics, black men were six times as likely as white men to be arrested, and black women were 2.9 times as likely as white women.

The report, part of a year-old project by the state Attorney

General's Office to study arrest records statewide, comes at a time of national controversy and protests over racial issues in law enforcement and police killings of black men.

Read the whole story

El Dorado, Placer school employees eligible for mortgage aid

By Mark Glover, Sacramento Bee

The Sacramento-based California Housing Finance Agency has expanded its Extra Credit Teacher Home Purchase Program, making more California K-12 public school employees eligible to receive as much as \$15,000 in down payment assistance.

The down payment assistance comes as a loan, which recipients are not required to pay back until the home is refinanced or sold, or the mortgage is paid off.

Under the ECTP, public school employees in 35 of California's "high-cost" counties – including Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado and Yolo counties – could qualify for up to \$15,000 or 3.5 percent of the sales price or appraised value, whichever is greater.

Read the whole story

Political divide between Nev.'s urban, rural counties grows

By Ben Botkin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada's political divide between rural and urban regions is wide.

Nevada voting trends in the 2016 election demonstrated the growing clout of Clark County, which has about 70 percent of the state's population, and the need for future candidates to connect with voters in the state's urban centers.

Though Donald Trump won the presidential election, Hillary Clinton carried the state, with the widest margin of victory in Southern Nevada. Clinton carried Nevada with slightly more than a 2-point lead: 47.89 percent to Trump's 45.53 percent.

Clark County and, to a smaller degree, Washoe County, put Nevada's six Electoral College votes in Clinton's column.

Read the whole story