

Tahoe not included in federal water legislation

The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act is not included in the House's version of the Water Resources Development Act.

Representatives voted 399-25 for the bill, which was smaller than what the Senate had passed. The Senate version included \$415 million for Tahoe. The money for Tahoe would have been allocated over 10 years for forest fuels management, environmental and watershed restoration, stormwater management and other projects.

The overall legislation is designed to address the needs of harbors, locks, dams, flood protection, and other water resources infrastructure.

House and Senate leaders must now compromise on a final bill to send to President Obama by the end of the year. There is a slim chance the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act could be resurrected to be included in what goes to the president.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Profits up at El Dorado Savings Bank

Profits at El Dorado Savings Bank for the third quarter are up from a year ago.

The Placerville-based bank reported Oct. 28 profits of \$2,820,264, which is \$81,557 more than the third quarter of

2015.

Year-to-date profits are up \$9,285,754, compared to \$8,553,749 in 2015.

“The continued stable performance of the investment and real estate loan portfolios have contributed to the strong earnings for the first three quarters of 2016,” CEO George L. Cook Jr. said in a statement.

El Dorado ended the quarter with \$2.10 billion in total assets and savings deposits of \$1.88 billion.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Snowboarder must pay \$263K for crash on slopes

A Colorado jury this month ruled that a snowboarder must pay more than a quarter million dollars for being negligent on the slopes.

Casey Ferguson of Colorado was on a run at Keystone Resort at a high rate of speed when he crashed into a skier from behind. Tom Dubert of Chicago had to miss three months of work because of the injuries from the 2015 collision.

Ferguson was ordered to pay \$263,454.44. That money should be forthcoming from his parents' homeowners' policy.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

SLT children's memorial creating unwanted grief

"There is no footprint too small to leave an imprint on this world." – Author unknown

By Kathryn Reed

For those who have lost a child, that individual's footprint has left an impression far deeper than most will ever know.

There are many ways to memorialize a loss. In South Lake Tahoe there is the Children's Memorial at the corner of Highway 50 and Wildwood Avenue. More than 200 plaques have been placed on the tree since October 1994, when the tree was first dedicated.

Driven by the tragic death of her son, Rory, along with his two friends Sandy Haynes and Casey Wells in an automobile accident, Sue Hrbacek-Miller hoped to place, in a public location, the tree that the car struck on the night of Feb. 2, 1991.

Age and weather made the original tree no longer viable so a few years ago a "log" made out of a concrete-polymer material was installed with the idea it would be permanent.



The log has names of children from South Lake Tahoe who have died. Photo/LTN

The process to get a plaque on the tree has been simple and difficult at the same time.

This past summer Kenny Curtzwiler told the City Council he knows of 12 people who have run into issues at the city in regards to getting a name on the memorial. City Councilwoman JoAnn Conner has tried to get the topic on an agenda for months. It is supposed to be on the Nov. 15 agenda.

Lake Tahoe News reached out to Curtzwiler and Conner. Neither could provide *Lake Tahoe News* with names of anyone who supposedly is having an issue with the city.

"I will work on the list, but most of the people who contact me I just refer them over to Nancy [Kerry] by passing on her information and then lose the contacts," Curtzwiler told *Lake Tahoe News*.

City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News* that Curtzwiler provided five names of people who had contacted him in 2013, 2014 or 2015. She said one was for a South Lake Tahoe child and that the mother told her she has yet to fill out the paperwork.

Conner did not speak to *LTN* until confronted at the last council meeting.

"They want to meet with a parent, to share their grief. They don't want to be grilled," Conner said. Many at the city are parents and some have even lost a child.

Conner had no names to provide to *Lake Tahoe News*.

When asked by the council and staff to provide names, she wouldn't. Councilman Tom Davis asked her to provide names to him later so he could help. To this day she has not done so.

The city staff is in a quandary because it cannot help people without knowing who needs help.

Cindy Juarez spoke with *Lake Tahoe News* about her experience in getting her son's name on the tree. Dave Suarez died seven years ago at the age of 42. He had worked in the produce department at Safeway for 15 years and had lived here for more than 20 years.

"With the passion my son had for Lake Tahoe I would really like for him to be a part of [the memorial tree]. At this point I'm not sure it will happen," Juarez said from her home in the Bay Area. "Everyone has been very nice to me, but I felt I spent a week and got nowhere. It wasn't that people didn't seem as if they wanted to help me, but they didn't have solutions."

Lauren Thomaselli is in charge of the memorial tree for the city. She has people fill out a short form, directs them to a shop to get the plaque made and the city for free then installs the plaque.

In a memo to Kerry, Thomaselli wrote, "We have found that the new owner of Awards of Tahoe is not very easy to get a hold of and does not follow through in a timely manner – but this is more a problem for the family requesting the plaque."

No one from Awards of Tahoe returned *LTN*'s call.

That is where the breakdown is for Juarez. While she was up here last week she couldn't get the plaque made. The city doesn't provide another alternative to the one they know is not working. All the plaques on the tree are the same size, same font, same point size, but what those are are not conveyed to people wanting a plaque.

Juarez said she was told to take a picture of one and get a plaque made in the Bay Area. She doesn't have a smart phone to be able to so.

Just reaching the right person in the city was time consuming, she said. Nothing at the memorial site says who to call. For now, Juarez is at a loss as to how to proceed.

FCC boosts online privacy rules

By Associated Press

New privacy rules may make it easier to escape at least some online tracking.

The Federal Communications Commission on Thursday approved rules that require Internet service providers like Comcast, AT&T and Verizon to ask customers' permission to use or share much of their data.

That could potentially make it harder for them to build advertising businesses that could serve as competition to Google and Facebook. Those digital-ad behemoths are not covered by the new FCC rules.

Industry groups representing the cable, phone and advertising industries criticized the outcome of Thursday's vote. Several consumer-advocacy groups hailed it, while saying it should go further.

Under the measure, for example, a broadband provider has to ask a customer's permission before it can tell an advertiser exactly where that customer is by tracking her phone and what interests she has gleaned from the websites she's visited on it and the apps she's used.

For some information that's not considered as private, like names and addresses, there's a more lenient approach. Customers should assume that broadband providers can use that information, but they can "opt out" of letting them do so.

There will not be much visible difference in the online experience for most consumers. There will be more notices from your home internet or wireless carrier saying what type of information they collect and that they'd like to use and share it.

"I think the new FCC rules are a step in the right direction," said Mark Bartholomew, a law professor at the University of Buffalo who studies advertising law and privacy. "But ultimately I think people will go ahead and let themselves be tracked. ...We routinely click and agree to get what we want online without thinking too much about being tracked."

The Federal Communications Commission's measure was scaled back from an earlier proposal, but was still criticized by the advertising, telecommunications and cable industries.

Cable and phone companies want to increase revenue from ad businesses of their own – AT&T has said increasing advertising tailored to customers' preferences is one of its goals with its \$85.4 billion purchase of HBO, CNN and TBS owner Time Warner. Verizon has bought AOL and agreed to buy Yahoo in order to build up a digital-ad business.

But the new rules could make doing that more difficult. Companies and industry groups say it's confusing and unfair that the regulations are stricter than the Federal Trade Commission standards that Google and Facebook operate under.

FCC officials approved the rules on a 3-2 vote Thursday, its latest contentious measure to pass on party lines.

"It is the consumer's information. How it is to be used should be the consumers' choice, not the choice of some corporate algorithm," said Tom Wheeler, the Democratic chairman of the FCC who has pushed for the privacy measure and other efforts that have angered phone and cable companies. AT&T and other players have fought the "net neutrality" rules, which went into effect last year, that say ISPs can't favor their some internet traffic. Another measure that could make the cable-box market more competitive is still waiting for an FCC vote.

One of the Republican commissioners who voted against the privacy rules, Michael O'Reilly, said that they were senseless because broadband providers could still buy the information they would have collected, and that the prices consumers ultimately pay could rise.

El Dorado, Placer charter schools named in probe

By Shirin Rajaei, CBS-13

More than two 200 California charter schools are accused of violating state and federal laws.

A recent report by the American Civil Liberties Union of

Southern California says those charter schools are discriminating when admitting students. They say just like public schools, there needs to be equal access for all students enrolling.

About 20 schools from Sacramento to El Dorado and Placer counties have been named.

Read the whole story

Calif. pension reforms haven't reined in costs

By Judy Lin, Los Angeles Times

A year after his 2010 election, Gov. Jerry Brown made a rare appearance at a legislative committee hearing to confront lawmakers about the steep cost of public employee pensions – and to demand that they pass his 12-point pension overhaul.

Brown challenged fellow Democrats to drink political “castor oil” so public retirement costs would not overburden future generations.

State lawmakers eventually passed many of Brown’s proposals, including a higher retirement age for new employees. But they rejected those with the biggest dollar savings – notably his plan for a hybrid retirement system combining smaller pensions with 401k-style savings plans.

The state’s annual bill for retirement obligations is expected to reach \$11 billion by the time Brown leaves office in January 2019 – nearly double what it was eight years earlier.

Read the whole story

500 pounds of pot confiscated in EDC

About a quarter ton of marijuana was confiscated on the West Slope on Sunday.

A California Highway Patrol officer smelled what he thought was fresh marijuana coming from trucks in the Apple Hill area.

A K-9 unit was brought in and then the trailers were opened. Inside, according to officers, they found 500 pounds of cut and processed marijuana.

Two people were arrested.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

50-year-old restrooms replaced at North Shore park

The first of two new restroom buildings were delivered to the upper parking lot of the North Tahoe Regional Park in Tahoe City this week.

The lower restrooms will be delivered within the next few weeks. Delivery of those restrooms will necessitate closing the park entry temporarily.

The replacement restrooms, designed with a Tahoe look, are engineered to be vandal resistant, reduce maintenance, are hydronicly heated for use during the winter and meet ADA guidelines for accessibility.

North Tahoe PUD received more than \$550,000 in grant funds for the planning, design and construction of this restroom project that replaces two restrooms.

The old restrooms were more than 50 years old.

Pot legalization may not alter enforcement in Nev.

By Rachel Crosby, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Should Nevada voters legalize recreational marijuana come Nov. 8, the penalties for the drug's average recreational user will see a massive overhaul.

But in practice, policing of the drug won't change much, Metropolitan Police Department narcotics Sgt. Craig Lousignont said. For the average user, at least.

While the preamble to Question 2, the Initiative to Regulate and Tax Marijuana, states an incentive to passing the act is to "better focus state and local law enforcement resources on crimes involving violence and personal property," Louisgnont said Metro is already doing that.

"We don't go after (marijuana) users right now," he said. "There's more important things to be doing."

Read the whole story