

LTUSD board member resigns mid-term

There could be four new Lake Tahoe Unified School District board members this fall.

Ginger Nicolay-Davis resigned effective Aug. 9, while three seats are on the November ballot.

Nicolay-Davis ran unopposed in 2014. Her term was to expire in December 2018. She was not available for comment.

At the Aug. 23 board meeting the remaining members will decide how to go forward with replacing her.

Leaving the board in December is Adam Jones. In March 2015 he was appointed to the seat vacated by Sue Novasel after she became a county supervisor. Annie Davidson and Larry Reilly are running for that seat.

Larry Green is not seeking re-election. The lone candidate for that seat is Troy Matthews.

The other contested seat is incumbent Mike Doyle being challenged by Bonnie Turnbull.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Revamping community colleges to improve graduation rates

By Alina Tugend, New York Times

Offer students a less confusing array of courses.

Require fewer remedial classes to improve students' basic math and English skills. Or find a way to pair these not-for-credit courses with others that would provide progress toward a degree.

Provide more personal advice.

And lower the cost.

While some of these steps might seem more obvious than others, they are among the changes community colleges across the country are making in hopes of ensuring that more students graduate.

Read the whole story

Mammoth man guilty of looting Nev. artifacts

By Marcella Corona, Reno Gazette-Journal

A Mammoth Lakes doctor faces up to two years in prison and a hefty fine after pleading guilty to illegally looting about 20,000 Native American artifacts from Nevadan prehistoric sites for more than two decades.

Jonathan Cornelius Bourne, 59, an anesthesiologist at Mammoth Hospital, pleaded guilty Tuesday to 21 felony counts of transporting archaeological resources and excavating, removing, damaging or defacing those resources, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office in California.

Nev. cops' agency against recreational pot law

The Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association this week came out against the November ballot measure that would legalize recreational marijuana.

"Our association members have a particular concern about the growing edibles market of marijuana-infused products such as gummy bears, candy bars, and sodas; products with specific appeal to children that would become legal under this initiative," Robert Roshak, executive director of the association, said in a statement.

Question 2 on the Nov. 8 ballot asks Nevadans to legal pot beyond medicinal uses.

"A second major concern to our members is the near-certain increase in impaired drivers and fatal car crashes," Roshak said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

South Shore-Carson City bus

route threatened

People relying on public transportation to get between the South Shore and Carson City may be out of luck starting Oct. 1.

The Tahoe Transportation District, which operates the BlueGo bus system, is losing funding for the 5-year-old route as of Sept. 30. It is not eligible for federal funding because Tahoe is no longer designated a rural area when it comes to transportation dollars.

The Stateline-based TTD lobbied hard to get the basin to be considered an urban area with the goal of being able to obtain more transportation dollars. Losing route 21x, which has 25,000 rides a year, is one of the side effects of that change.

The transportation agency is looking for other ways to pay for the route so there is not an interruption in what is mostly a commuter service.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

For millennials, Clinton vs. Trump choice ‘feels like a joke’

By Philip Rucker, Washington Post

FORT COLLINS, Colo. – Jo Tongue doesn’t have much time for politics, but the Hillary and Trump show is hard to tune out.

And even harder to take. To this 31-year-old mother of two, with a third on the way, the presidency should be an honorable office, but instead she feels “bummed that we’re at a place where it all feels like a joke.”

At the Panetta Institute for Public Policy in California, the summer interns are up on the issues. But Dominic Cicerone has a similar sense of foreboding. For him, the big issue is his own safety – he was afraid to go to the July 4 fireworks at Fisherman’s Wharf because the Islamic State had released a video claiming San Francisco as a target – and neither candidate is easing his concerns.

Polling suggests the millennial generation will act much the same this November as it did four and eight years ago – by voting heavily for the Democratic nominee, though with a considerable share supporting a third-party candidate.

But in interviews this past week with more than 70 young voters in nine states from diverse backgrounds, lifestyles and careers, it is clear their mood is decidedly different from previous elections. Despite their varied lives, most of those interviewed shared a disgust with both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump so intense that it is pushing many beyond disillusionment and toward apathy.

Read the whole story

Major roadwork on Hwy. 50

west of Echo Summit

Construction and maintenance work will cause traffic delays along a 45-mile stretch of Highway 50 between Camino and Echo Summit for the next three months.

Crews will be setting up lane restrictions on the four-lane section of Highway 50 in the Camino area and one-way traffic control on the two-lane stretch of highway over the summit. Motorists can expect up to 20 minute delays. These lane restrictions will continue through the end of November, weather permitting.

Caltrans will be removing hundreds of dead trees along the highway, paving a section of roadway over the summit and doing foundation drilling on Echo Summit.

Here is the schedule:

- There will be one-way traffic control starting at 9pm Aug. 21, and continuing through 9am Aug. 26 at the Echo Summit Bridge. Crews will be drilling into the foundation to gather information for plans to replace the bridge. Work will take a break for another construction project and resume in late September. Completion is expected on Oct. 15.

- Around the clock one-way traffic control between Strawberry and Johnson Pass Road around Echo Summit is scheduled to start at midnight Aug. 29 and continue through mid-October. Crews will be doing pavement grinding and paving work.

- From Sept. 6 through the end of November, motorists can expect lane restrictions and one-way traffic control to occur at various times and locations between Braeburn Lane in Camino and Echo Summit. Crews will be removing hundreds of dead or dying trees impacted by the drought and the bark beetle infestation to ensure public health and safety.

No solutions come out of housing forum

By Terra Breeden

Whether you own a home in Lake Tahoe or rent one, count yourself lucky to have a roof over your head. The housing crisis in Lake Tahoe is reaching a crescendo.

On Aug. 17 a throng of concerned residents met at the Tahoe Beach Retreat for a community meeting regarding the South Lake Tahoe housing crisis.

The meeting, hosted by Tahoe Regional Young Professionals, addressed the issues that have led to the affordable housing shortage in the community and discussed solutions to the problem.

Jenna Palacio, Executive Director of TRYP said, "This isn't your mom's affordable housing event. It's a serious problem and we are saying goodbye to a lot of people who can't afford a house here."

A panel of experts from Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Urban Housing Communities project, Tahoe Prosperity Center and Tahoe Truckee Foundation presented the reasons Lake Tahoe is experiencing a housing crisis.



Dozens of people on Aug. 17 attend a housing workshop in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Terra Breeden

According to a study conducted by the Tahoe Prosperity Center, the housing shortage is because of the very nature of the area. Quite simply, Lake Tahoe is a resort community that relies on tourism dollars to support the economy.

Employment in the Lake Tahoe community is primarily focused on tourism and visitor services. The majority of residents work in these industries where pay is low and jobs are often seasonal. Sixty-three percent of Tahoe residents fall into a low-income bracket.

Because Lake Tahoe is a world-renowned destination, many people from outside the community buy houses in Tahoe as vacation homes. With limited land to build and expand towns, property is becoming scarce. These factors combined have made Lake Tahoe houses expensive, and home rentals are becoming harder and harder to find.

"We are in a housing crisis simply because there aren't enough houses for residents and there is limited room to build more,"

speaker Sara Schrichte from the Tahoe Truckee Foundation said.

According to the study by the Tahoe Prosperity Center, nearly two-thirds of Tahoe's houses are second homes, not primary residences, and the median home price in the Tahoe basin was 1,007 percent of the median income. This ratio was significantly higher than ratios observed in other areas such as Reno (530 percent) and the Bay Area (838 percent).

After laying out why the community is experiencing a housing shortage, the panel and audience began a discussion about what can actually be done to solve this problem. There is so much red tape from the state government and local planning agencies such as TRPA, that solutions to the housing crisis seemed daunting.

"We are always going to have a very limited supply and a very high demand for people who want to buy homes in Lake Tahoe," South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry said.

Yet, many of the ideas focused on solving the housing problem and boosting the local economy so that Tahoe residents can actually afford a home in the area where they live and work.

Heidi Hill Drum from the Tahoe Prosperity Center proposed said that building the economy in Lake Tahoe is a key factor in solving the housing crisis. If residents can generate higher incomes, they will be able to afford homes in Lake Tahoe.

"The way our organization is approaching housing is with a work force project that allows businesses to expand and offer higher wages," Drum said.

Another solution to combatting the housing crisis is to develop more affordable housing projects. All of the low-income housing that has been built in the Tahoe basin has been immensely successful. The Aspens, an affordable housing project in South Lake Tahoe geared toward low-income residents, has more than 40 units and all are occupied. In

fact, there is a six-year waiting list to rent a home in the Aspens.

But to build more affordable housing in Tahoe requires government funding for building permits, land parcels, and housing development. Local taxpayers won't fund these projects, so the state government – still taxpayers – has to step in and make it happen.

"We need affordable housing in our towns, but we are competing for government funds with cities like Fresno where people really need affordable housing," Kerry said.

Once the panel laid out the issues and possible solutions to the housing crisis, the audience asked questions and ones submitted online were asked.

One of the questions focused on the tiny house trend that is taking the country by storm. "Are tiny houses available in Tahoe? Could tiny houses help revive the housing crisis?" were questions posted by a resident in the online discussion.

According to the panel, tiny houses require the same amount of government fees as a \$450,000 private residence.

"The fees don't pencil out. But I have a developer interested in building smaller units to make it economically feasible," Susan Simon from Simon Consulting said. "However, it's a great question and worth looking into."

Lyn Barnett, a local resident and founder of the nonprofit organization Saint Joseph Community Land Trust, said, "I advocate that TRPA set aside a large percentage of homes to be owner-occupied only and not be a second home for someone in Los Angeles." Barnett used to work for the bi-state regulatory agency before starting his own consulting firm.

Barnett's sentiment echoed that of many community members because his statement was met with a resounding applause.

After Barnett suggested putting a cap on vacation homes in the Tahoe basin, many other audience members voiced similar opinions. Everyone seemed to agree that, yes, Tahoe is a place where people from all over the world want to live, but if we keep letting non-residents buy all of the homes in the Tahoe basin, pretty soon there will be nowhere for local residents to reside.

“It’s going to take all of us to solve the housing problem – the community, the city, everyone. But we have to do what we can to provide affordable housing for everyone,” Mark Irving from the Urban Housing Communities project said.

Nev. out of the execution business for now

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Nevada is out of the execution business, at least for now.

One of the two drugs needed to administer an execution by lethal injection has expired and the drug manufacturer has refused to provide any further supplies, state officials were told Tuesday.

Dozens of killers are on death row, but should any of their final appeals fail, it would be impossible for the state to carry out their death sentences.

Read the whole story

Former Tahoe teacher dies in Ariz. crash



Sue
Bartholomew

Longtime Tahoe resident and retired teacher Sue Bartholomew died Aug. 15 in a vehicle accident in Arizona.

This was one of five accidents involving 14 vehicles after a dust storm cut visibility to zero on Interstate 10 near the California border, according to the Associated Press.

Bartholomew, 76, had been living full time in Litchfield Park, Ariz., for the past two years.

A Mass will be celebrated Aug. 25 at 8am at St. Theresa Church in South Lake Tahoe. There will be a celebration of life at a later date.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*