

La Niña next winter could worsen drought

By Aaron Orlowski, Orange County Register

Last month, state water officials eased conservation mandates in response to slightly above-average winter rain and snow in much of California, leading many to speculate that the state's long-running drought has tapered off.

If only.

The El Niño winter that forecasters said could drench the state with rain and snow veered north instead, striking mostly the Pacific Northwest. The amount of rain and snow that hit Northern California was a tick above average and looked impressive mostly because it contrasted sharply with the extreme drought of the previous four years. Southern California was wetter than in previous years, but not by much.

Now, conditions are shifting, and El Niño's counterpart, La Niña – a seasonal period marked by lower Pacific temperatures that shrivel rainfall in California – is expected to arrive around early fall and could prolong the dry times in California.

Read the whole story

Spotlight glares on lack of

women in top gaming jobs

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Jan Jones Blackhurst stood in a large ballroom at the Mirage on Wednesday and showed an image that she said illustrated a critical issue for the casino industry.

It was more than a dozen headshots of executives from a certain gambling company. All but one were men.

Jones Blackhurst, Caesars Entertainment Corp.'s executive vice president of government relations and corporate social responsibility, told the audience that she was not "picking on" that particular company, apparently Scientific Games Corp.

"It would be the exact same picture of any executive team that I happen to showcase," she said.

Rather, Jones Blackhurst was trying to show that, in both the casino industry and in business at large, there are not nearly enough women in leadership roles. And she said that needs to change.

Read the whole story

Nevada regains almost all jobs lost in recession

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY — Nevada has regained nearly all of the 175,000 jobs lost during the Great Recession and should fully recover

later this year, a state economist told the Economic Forum on Thursday.

Bill Anderson, chief economist for the state Employment, Training and Rehabilitation Department, said Nevada added 140,000 jobs from 2010 to 2015. Also, 30,000 more jobs have been added in the first four months of this year, he said.

"We're getting close to regaining all of those lost jobs," Anderson said. "By the time we get out to the end of next year, we will have exceeded our prerecessionary high by close to 100,000 jobs."

Anderson said all employment sectors except mining are showing job gains.

Read the whole story

Distracted driving on the rise

By Jasen Lee, Deseret News

Distracted driving is on the rise as texting and social media usage are increasing among teenage drivers, according to AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Nationally, during the past five years more than 5,000 people have been killed in crashes involving teen drivers during the summer months. And nearly 60 percent of teen crashes involve distractions behind the wheel, the foundation said in a release.

According to the foundation, the report is part of the most

comprehensive eight-year research project ever conducted into crash videos of teen drivers. In collaboration with researchers at the University of Iowa, the AAA Foundation analyzed the moments leading up to a crash in more than 2,200 videos captured from in-car dash cameras. The latest report compared new crash videos with those captured from 2007-12 and found consistent trends in the top three distractions for teens when behind the wheel in the moments leading up to a crash.

Read the whole story

Nevada GOP confronted with taxing choice in primary

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Rarely have Nevada Republican voters had such clear choices about the future of their party as they do in Tuesday's primary election.

On one side is Gov. Brian Sandoval and the GOP state lawmakers who stood with him on the 2015 budget, which included \$1.5 billion in new and continuing taxes aimed primarily at funding public education.

Their support in the Assembly and Senate was crucial to getting the two-thirds vote needed to pass the omnibus tax measure, which included a new commerce tax now being implemented on businesses that earn \$4 million or more in revenue.

On the other side are anti-tax Republicans who are outraged

that the party, which controlled the governor's office and both houses of the Legislature for the first time since 1929, failed to enact a stronger GOP agenda.

Read the whole story

UNR student ID'd as paddleboarder presumed dead

By Associated Press

Authorities have identified a paddleboarder who went missing in Lake Tahoe as a UNR football player.

The Placer County Sheriff's Office says the search was ongoing Saturday for Marc Ma, but at this time believe it will be recovery.



Marc Ma

According to a news release, Ma was on a paddleboard trip with several football players the afternoon of June 10. The group was on the West Shore when they encountered strong winds. There had been a lake wind advisory Friday.

Ma's board was found adrift. He was not wearing a life jacket.

“The Placer County Sheriff’s Office is calling this search one of recovery, not rescue. As such, it is with an incredibly heavy heart that we acknowledge the loss of Marc Ma, a beloved member of our Wolf Pack family,” Nevada head football Coach Brian Polian said in a statement.

Ma, who is from Honolulu, is listed on the Nevada Wolf Pack website as a sophomore who plays defensive end.

North Tahoe Fire Protection District officials say crews were called shortly before 3:30pm Friday to Obexer’s Marina, about 700 yards off shore. North Tahoe Fire spokesman Ron Carson says other paddleboarders had turned back toward shore because of high winds and noticed one person was missing.

LTCC, SNC looking at education partnership

Sierra Nevada College is considering offering a bachelor’s degree in global business management at Lake Tahoe Community College.

The two institutions are having an open house June 16 at 5pm in LTCC’s Aspen Room to gauge the level of interest in the program.

The Incline Village-based private four-year college would offer a per-credit rate of \$382 to LTCC students.

The lower-level courses needed to earn the global business management degree are already offered at LTCC. The required upper division courses would be offered on LTCC’s campus,

allowing South Shore residents to earn a bachelor's degree from SNC without having to commute.

LTCC is building a university center where undergraduate and specialized programs will be housed. The stand-alone building will rise where the theater arts parking lot is located starting next May, with a planned opening of fall 2018.

Until the Lisa and Robert Maloff University Center opens, SNC Tahoe would operate in existing offices and classrooms on LTCC's campus.

The two colleges are also discussing offering joint psychology and education bachelor's degree programs, possibly starting in spring 2017.

Placer County supes approve working budget

Placer County's budget for 2016-17 is \$34.3 million less than last year's final budget.

Most of the savings (\$31.7 million) come from a number of maintenance and construction projects winding down, most notably the Auburn Animal Services facility and the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project.

The fiscal year begins July 1.

The \$782 million proposed budget includes:

- Funding for the Sunset Area Plan and the Tahoe Area Plan.
- \$1.9 million for homeless needs and services, and additional public safety and public health resources.
- \$925,000 to finish the Placer County Conservation Plan.
- \$175,000 to replace outdated library materials.
- Implementation of the Criminal Justice Master Plan, completing the phased-in expansion of the South Placer Adult Correctional Facility campus by 180 beds, and building a new booking station. It also funds further exploration of a proposed crime lab and coroner's facility.

A final budget will be presented to the board for approval in September.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

DCSD keeps trying to sell former KMS parcel

Interest in the former Kingsbury Middle School site continues to be lukewarm at best.

"We've had a few phone calls, so we hope there might be some interest out there," Douglas County School District Superintendent Teri White told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The sale of the Stateline property will be back before the school board on June 14.

The asking price remains \$3.125 million. This is an average of two appraisals.

What the board will be asked to do on Tuesday is change the language in any potential contract to what it originally was. It had been altered last year to accommodate a potential buyer. That transaction never came to fruition.

The goal is to start advertising the property more.

The school closed several years ago because of declining enrollment. The three lake schools were consolidated into two.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Passenger-carrying drone company will test in Nev.

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The nation's first passenger-carrying drone manufacturing company is coming to test its system in Nevada.

EHang Inc., a company headquartered in Guangzhou, China, is developing a drone capable of carrying passengers. A passenger would enter a destination into the drone system's accompanying smartphone app.

The Nevada Institute for Autonomous Systems, a state nonprofit group sponsored by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, will work to help EHang test and develop its system, officials said this week.

Read the whole story