

Calif. gun-control bill headed for fall ballot

By Christopher Cadelago, Sacramento Bee

Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, the architect of an omnibus gun-control initiative to require background checks for ammunition, said Thursday that the campaign has collected enough signatures to qualify for the fall ballot.

Newsom planned to submit roughly 600,000 signatures for his "Safety for All," initiative on Friday, far more than the required 365,000.

"I feel resolved to move forward. The voters I think are ahead of a lot of elected officials of all political stripes," Newsom said of taking the issue to the ballot. "We have a chance to do something that's permanent, that can't be watered down, and send a very potent and powerful message to the National Rifle Association that we think will resonate across the country."

Read the whole story

60-day sentence becomes 1 year for EDC man

An El Dorado County man may be spending a year in prison for failing to serve a 60-day sentence.

A jury on April 26 found Cesar Caballero, 46, of Diamond Springs guilty.

According to court documents, on Aug. 30, 2011, Caballero was convicted of obstruction of mail for submitting change of address forms to the U.S. Postal Service for the purpose of diverting mail addressed to the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians to himself. Caballero appealed, and the Ninth Circuit affirmed his conviction on two of the three counts. He was resentenced June 29, 2015, to 60 days behind bars.

He was ordered to surrender to begin serving his sentence by Sept. 8, 2015, but never showed up.

Caballero was then arrested Feb. 28.

Caballero is scheduled to be sentenced May 17. He faces a maximum sentence of one year in prison, a \$100,000 fine, and a one-year term of supervised release.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

North Tahoe tax revenues continue to climb

By Lake Tahoe News

Even though the number of permanent residents is declining in North Lake Tahoe, second home ownership and tourism is increasing.

Placer County Deputy Chief Executive Officer Jennifer Merchant gave supervisors an update this week on services, programs, and projects delivered to citizens in the eastern part of the

county. Part of the presentation highlighted the growing economic divide.

North Lake Tahoe area property taxes saw a 9 percent increase since last fiscal year. This is being attributed to the growth in second homes.

The hotel tax is also on the rise, in large part because tourism is growing. The North Lake Tahoe region had 822,000 visitors in 2002, while 10 years later that number had grown to 1,037,000.

The transient occupancy revenue was more than \$12 million in 2014-15. Sixty percent of that goes back into the community to provide marketing services, increased transit services and visitor related capital projects such as bike trails and beach maintenance.

Merchant told the electeds that in the last 10 years more than \$32 million in TOT funding has leveraged \$235 million in private, local, state and federal funding sources to enable Placer County to complete nearly 100 Tahoe area projects such as the Kings Beach Commercial Core Improvement Project, Tahoe City Transit Center, Commons Beach Restoration and bike trail expansion and improvement.

While tourists are spending money, not all locals are doing well. This is evidenced by the number of people applying to the CalFresh (aka food stamps) program. The number of applications more than doubled over a five-year period in eastern Placer County with 2,020 applications in 2010 growing to 4,430 applications in 2015. That number is expected to grow this year.

“The increase in permanent residents needing social services is very concerning,” Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery. “We need to understand how to address this in eastern Placer County and understand how it relates to a lack of affordable housing and economic opportunities.”

Battery charges delay ex-CalPERS chief's sentencing

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

CalPERS' former chief executive, sitting in jail for allegedly committing battery against a former girlfriend, is expected to have his sentencing postponed a week for his role in the pension fund's bribery scandal.

Fred Buenrostro was scheduled to be sentenced May 18 in U.S. District Court in San Francisco after pleading guilty to accepting bribes from a Lake Tahoe investment banker. But with Buenrostro expected to be in Sacramento County's main jail until May 22, prosecutors and defense attorneys have agreed to postpone the federal sentencing to May 24. The proposed delay awaits a judge's approval.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tourism experts: Experience

trumps product

By Kathryn Reed

A pretty lake and casinos. That combo is no longer enough. That is why Lake Tahoe needs to up its game if it's going to keep attracting tourists.

That was an overriding message delivered this week by those in the industry.

Lynn Carpenter, vice president of marketing for Visit California – the state tourism agency, said her people are focused on showing the California experience. It's sharing the California lifestyle, a place where visitors can have an emotional connection to wherever they are visiting.

California has lost a segment of the tourism market in the last few years. It used to be that 52 percent of travelers came to the state; it's now 45 percent.

One thing helping the overall state effort is that the marketing budget has grown from \$6 million in 2006 to \$150 million today. Promotional material includes television ads, online pieces, written propaganda, and offices in foreign countries. There is information on the state website that can also be used by local tourism agencies as well as individual businesses.



Marketing material from Visit California. Photo/LTN

Carpenter along with Carl Ribaud of South Lake Tahoe based SMG Consulting spoke April 26 at the annual tourism conference put on by Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce.

“It’s not just the thing you have in your destination. It’s about how interesting you are and the connections that people make,” Ribaud said.

The whole point is that the product is different than the experience. Old school is to have focused on the product. Memories have always been what people take away from a vacation. Tapping into that in a deeper way is what the experts say needs to happen.

“We talk about lifestyle. They want to live like a Californian,” Carpenter explained.

The marketing zeroes in on the outdoors, culinary, entertainment, culture and luxury.

This was the first winter for Catch the Winter Wave – outdoor fun in California in winter. Crews will be in Mammoth next week filming snowboarding sensation Chloe Kim at her home

resort. That footage will be used for next year's campaign.

"We love talking about the snow product when we're overseas," Carpenter said. This is because so many foreigners equate the state with just beaches and Disneyland.

Family travel is also big, capturing 42 percent of the market. That is one reason the state has come up with a second video targeting kids. It will be called Welcome to Kidifornia. Carpenter wouldn't divulge any specifics.

Tourism is big business in the Golden State, accounting for \$121 billion in revenues in 2015 and more than 1 million jobs.

Visit California divides the state into 12 regions, with Tahoe being in the High Sierra. In 2014, \$2.6 billion in direct spending is attributed to tourism in this region, there were 28,000 jobs, and local tax dollars totaled \$98 million.

Statewide, Canada, China, United Kingdom, Australia and Japan account for the most international visitors. For the South Shore, it's Germany, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and China. The High Sierra is the only region where Germans are the No. 1 visitor. This is attributed to their love of the outdoors.

Ribaudo is a believer that arts and culture need to be a larger component of what the South Shore offers because those are things people connect to. He wonders why all the art created at the three-day SnowGlobe music festival isn't out in the community.

He also doesn't believe the area tells its history in a compelling manner, if at all.

"We need to make every part of the South Shore interesting," he said. "It's the little things that matter." This includes right down to the bike racks. For what is supposed to be bike friendly town it's hard to know cyclists are welcome if they

have no place to park.

He showed pictures of other locales that are doing things better – like Oceanside with its abundance of bike racks, public art in obscure towns, and funky restaurants that are destinations unto themselves.

“What will keep people coming here is if we are real and authentic,” Ribaudó said.

Trump nation gambling on Nevada

By Joe Mozingo, Los Angeles Times

On the vacant, sun-blasted streets southwest of the Strip, Joe Cervantes sees an America on the decline.

For Cervantes, life in these sand-blown suburbs has come to look like much that has gone wrong with the rest of the country.

The way Cervantes sees it, the government is a high-stakes card game at which he and most Americans never get a seat. He voted for President Obama but has twice been disappointed. This election, the name he is betting on is emblazoned in gold on the Vegas skyline: Trump.

“The middle class is done in this country. I think we need an outsider like [Donald] Trump to come in and upset the establishment and make them help the middle class,” Cervantes says.

The GOP front-runner swept the February caucuses with a nearly 2-1 edge over the establishment candidate, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, claiming all but two of Nevada's counties.

Read the whole story

Calif. bill would allow landlords to ban pot

By Alexei Koseff, Sacramento Bee

With legalization looming on the horizon, California lawmakers are already grappling over how to treat marijuana in a state with some of the strictest tobacco regulations in the country.

A bill from Assemblyman Jim Wood, D-Healdsburg, would extend to medical marijuana a 2011 law that permitted landlords to prohibit the smoking of cigarettes and other tobacco products on their rental properties. If voters pass a November ballot measure legalizing recreational use, it would apply to all marijuana.

California law already prohibits smoking medical marijuana anywhere tobacco is banned, which includes most public places. But the bill sponsor, the California Apartment Association, said it is important to give landlords explicit authority to forbid pot smoke on their properties, since it can create tension among tenants.

Read the whole story

4th suspect in SLT murder behind bars

A fourth suspect in the January murder of an Amador County man was arrested this week.

Tevarez Lopez, 33, of Georgetown was already in custody in El Dorado County on an unrelated when South Lake Tahoe officials caught up with him April 27.



Dion Jermaine Randolph Vaccaro is wanted on a murder warrant.

He, along with Domenic Randolph, 22, Tristan Batten, 18, and Harvest Davidson, 20, is charged with murder in the killing of 40-year-old Dennis Wright.

Wright, according to officers, was selling 100 pounds of marijuana from his vehicle that was parked in the Beverly Lodge lot on Jan. 30. He was shot multiple times and later died at Barton Memorial Hospital.

An arrest warrant for Dion Jermaine Randolph Vaccaro, 26, a

former resident of Vallejo, is still active. He is 6-feet tall and weighs 200 pounds.

Anyone with information is asked to call the South Lake Tahoe Police Department at 530.542.6100 or Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Douglas County man in jail on kidnapping charges

A Douglas County man is behind bars accused of kidnapping his wife.

Jessica Albericci, 29, of Gardnerville was found unharmed Wednesday afternoon on Blue Lakes Road in Alpine County.

Sheriff's deputies were called out to a residence in the Gardnerville Ranchos on April 27 at 10:45am regarding a domestic dispute between Albericci and her 32-year-old Joshua Albericci.

She fled to a friend's. He followed her and was able to get her into his vehicle at gunpoint, according to deputies.

At 12:35pm, Alpine County deputies found the vehicle. Following a short standoff, Joshua Albericci was taken into custody and booked on kidnapping, false imprisonment, possession of an assault weapon, felon in possession of a firearm, destruction or concealment of evidence, obstructing or resisting arrest charges. Bail was set at \$300,000.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Stateline casino revenue surges in March

By Associated Press

State officials say Nevada gambling revenue was down 3 percent in March compared with the same month a year ago because of lower winnings in the Las Vegas area.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board said Thursday that the state's casinos won \$951 million in March.

Revenue fell in the areas with the most gambling activity. Strip gambling revenue was down 4 percent to \$487 million last month, and downtown Las Vegas was down 4 percent to \$51 million.

The picture was rosier in the north. Reno casino revenue was up 1 percent to \$47 million, and Stateline revenue was up 23 percent to \$17 million in March.

The state collected almost \$73 million in tax money based off the winnings, which is down 8 percent from the same time last year.