

Deputies kill bear near South Lake Tahoe

El Dorado County sheriff's deputies on the morning of Dec. 2 shot and killed what they called an aggressive bear.

Deputies said a 700- to 800-pound bear in the area of Minniconjou and Susquehana drives on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe had been disrupting the neighborhood for several weeks by breaking into multiple residences.

Loud noises and less lethal beanbag rounds were unsuccessfully used to shoo the bear away.

Deputies said when the bear moved aggressively toward them that is when they shot it.

In the past year, deputies responded to 177 bear related calls, of which 23 were located in the same neighborhood as Wednesday's incident. All but this one was resolved with the use of non-lethal measures.

Calls have been left with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to find out if this is the same bear that was found in Meyers and taken to Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Impostor

performing

substandard dentistry

South Lake Tahoe police officers are looking for a person who has been performing basic dental work without a proper dental office or license, and doing so in kitchen.

Officers said it appears this is a cash business that preys on the vulnerabilities of the poor.

Two local dentists told police that people have needed dental repair work after receiving this substandard dentistry.

Anyone with information is asked to call the police department at 530.542.6100.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Dead bear found in Meyers neighborhood

A dead bear was found in Meyers on Dec. 2. The cause of death is unknown.

The 2- or 3-year-old cub was not moving behind the house where it was located.

“We did not notice anything that resembled foul play. No blood, no gunshot wounds that we could see, just dead,” Tom Millham with Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care told *Lake Tahoe News*. LTWC is holding the bear until state officials retrieve it.

A game warden with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Service is expected to arrive on the South Shore on

Thursday. An official with the agency could not be reached late Dec. 2.

It will be up to the warden to decide what to do with the bear's body and determine how the animal died.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

NV Energy seeks to buy more solar power

By Kyle Roerink, Las Vegas Sun

The state's largest power utility wants to add more solar to its portfolio.

NV Energy, which serves more than 1 million customers throughout Nevada, filed an application on Monday with the Public Utilities Commission to buy power from projects currently being developed by First Solar and SunPower in Clark County.

The power company hopes the PUC will approve a deal for it to buy a total of 129 megawatts, which would likely power the equivalent of more than 20,000 homes, from the solar companies.

Read the whole story

How El Niño affects the weather

By Brian Clark Howard, National Geographic

This year's hurricane season is winding down. And as meteorologists predicted, there was above average activity in the eastern and central Pacific and less than usual in the Atlantic. The reason, also as predicted: a strong El Niño.

El Niño may have also contributed to October 2015 being the warmest on record, at 1.76 degree above the 20th century average for the month.

Now we'll begin to see the weather phenomenon's influence on winter storms and rainfall. But that doesn't mean drought-stricken California can celebrate just yet.

El Niño is the periodic warming of water in the Pacific Ocean every few years. When it occurs, it means more energy is available for storms to form there. El Niño also affects wind shear, which is when air currents at a lower altitude blow in a different direction from winds higher in the atmosphere. Strong wind shear makes it harder for hurricanes to form.

[Read the whole story](#)

Vehicle thefts tend to increase in winter

December, January and February are statistically the worst months for vehicle thefts in Washoe County, according to a

four-year analysis done by the Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

Based on this analysis, the sheriff's office predicts an increase in vehicle thefts in the coming months unless steps are taken by the public to help reverse this trend.

The sheriff's office believes that the increase in motor vehicle thefts during periods of colder temperatures is primarily due to the number of vehicles that are left unattended while warming up. Auto thieves are aware of this practice and look for opportunities to take advantage of it.

Vehicle owners can help take away this opportunity by never leaving their vehicles unattended while the vehicle is running.

According to the Nevada Division of Insurance, many drivers are not aware that their auto insurance policy may not cover vehicle theft or damage to the vehicle caused by wind, fire, flood, a falling object, or vandalism. Comprehensive coverage can help protect consumers from incidents other than those caused by a collision.

Snowpack deeper than a year ago, but still not great

By Veronica Rocha, Los Angeles Times

First, the good news: Thanks to a series of frosty winter storms, California's snowpack is now double what it was last year at this time, according to officials.

Now the bad news: The amount of water actually contained in the fluffy white stuff is still well below average.

Snow levels measured statewide on Tuesday showed that water content was 56 percent of the historical average for Dec. 1. One year earlier, the water content measured just 24 percent of average.

Read the whole story

TTD steering loop road project to completion



The city-county street looping to the left behind the casinos may one day be Highway 50. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Planning for the South Shore's loop road is nearing the finish

line, with no intention of going to the voters even if that were a possibility.

Carl Hasty, executive director for the Tahoe Transportation District – the lead agency for the project, believes between the information that has been provided and the future opportunities for the public to weigh in that people have had ample opportunity to voice their opinions.

This bi-state agency, if it were to get the go-ahead from the California and Nevada departments of transportation, could reroute Highway 50 behind Harrah's Lake Tahoe and MontBleu casinos and turn the current highway into a city street without South Lake Tahoe's blessing. TTD is a federal entity that has a higher level of authority than a city or county.

The City Council could put an advisory question to voters asking if they want the loop road or not. The outcome, though, would not be a mandate. The council could still support or not support the project, and TTD doesn't have to listen to the voters or the council.

It could hurt TTD if the council were to come out against the project because it would likely make it more difficult to get federal funding.

And if eminent domain were needed to acquire property, TTD would need the city to make that happen. It would take four out of the five council members to reverse current policy that bans the use of eminent domain.

The goal of TTD is to turn just more than a mile of the current Highway 50 at the state line into a road managed by South Lake Tahoe and Douglas County, and make the current local street behind the casinos into a highway. The purpose is to make the commercial area more walkable and inviting.

Hasty did not know if the realignment would save drivers time. The focus is on flow. He also could not tell *Lake Tahoe*

News what the speed limits on the respective roads might be. Today there are four traffic lights on Highway 50 in the stretch that will be affected. The new route would have two, at Heavenly Way and Harrah's.

Tuesday night was the most recent opportunity for people to give input. More than 100 people spent time Dec. 1 at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel looking at the five alternatives, including one to do nothing. People were asked based on the exhibits what they thought of the possibility of affordable housing, mixed use buildings, gateway features, site options and if they had any general comments to make.

Mike Riley has been listening to the loop road talk for 20 years. He called Tuesday's presentation the best he has seen to date. He supports the concept, but is worried about the people who would be displaced, and wonders who will be responsible for the upkeep of the trail from MontBleu to Van Sickle Bi-State Park.

Mark Cuthright has driven Lake Parkway-Montreal Road (the roads that could become a federal highway) after it snows. The grade makes it sketchy, he said. He questions the logic of having people on that stretch of road instead of the flat and straight highway of today.

For Dave Kurtzman, he likes the mix of affordable housing, and the possibility of getting federal money to make it a reality.

For all of this to come to fruition as TTD envisions, no properties on the Nevada side would be adversely affected. On the California side it's a completely different story. Multiple residences and businesses would be bulldozed, likely starting before the current easterly intersection of Highway 50 and Pioneer Trail in South Lake Tahoe and then going back toward Montreal Road.

Mike McKeen, who owns the property where Naked Fish and Powder House are located, was initially a staunch opponent of

project, going so far as to create signs saying as much that were outside the businesses. Today he is a proponent, envisioning a revamping of his property.

His biggest concern now is where people will park if the new commercial and residential structures are built.

For Hasty, what he likes is the evolution of the plan into what he calls a true community revitalization project.

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Notes:

- South Lake Tahoe City Council will get an update on the project Dec. 7. The meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport starts at 9am.
- There will be an open house Jan. 26 from 5-7pm at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel.
- The draft environmental studies are expected to be released in the first quarter of 2016. People will have 60 days to comment.

Asset forfeitures surpass burglaries

By Christopher Ingraham, Washington Post

Here's an interesting factoid about contemporary policing: In 2014, for the first time ever, law enforcement officers took more property from American citizens than burglars did. Martin Armstrong pointed this out at his blog, *Armstrong Economics*,

last month.

Officers can take cash and property from people without convicting or even charging them with a crime – yes, really! – through the highly controversial practice known as civil asset forfeiture.

Last year, according to the Institute for Justice, the Treasury and Justice departments deposited more than \$5 billion into their respective asset forfeiture funds. That same year, the FBI reports that burglary losses topped out at \$3.5 billion.

Read the whole story

6th-grade books frame climate change as uncertain

By Amy Quinton, Capital Public Radio

Sixth-grade is usually the first time California students are formally taught about climate change as part of their science curriculum. A recent study shows some textbooks present the subject as a debate stemming from opinions rather than science.

Stanford and Southern Methodist University researchers analyzed the language in four sixth grade science textbooks from major publishers. All were published in 2008 and adopted for use in California.

The authors found that the books contain language that frames climate change as possibly happening and that humans may or may not be causing it.

Read the whole story