

Incumbents win TPRID election

The four incumbents running for the Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District board are staying.

Voters on Nov. 3 made that decision. What changes is the seats they actually have.

The terms of Judy Clot and Pete Nelligan were expiring. Those are for four-year terms. The other two seats expire Dec. 1, 2017. Joe Cardinale and Victor Babbitt were in those seats.

Running for the full term seats were Babbitt, Clot, Brandie Jordan-Griffith and Diane Verwoest. Babbitt (298 votes, 40.2 percent) and Judy Clot (291, 29.55 percent) were the top vote getters for the full term seat. Verwoest (175, 23.62 percent) and Jordan-Griffith (49, 6.61 percent) were unsuccessful in their bid.

Cardinale, Nelligan, Jan Roman-Gonzales and Frank Jones were vying for the seat that expires in a year. Nelligan (266, 33.29 percent) and Cardinale (240, 30.04 percent) soundly beat their opponents Jones (152, 19.02 percent) and Roman-Gonzales (141, 17.65 percent.)

An El Dorado County supervisor is the fifth member. This is usually the person representing District 5. In this case it is Sue Novasel.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Severe obesity a billion dollar taxpayer issue

By Soumya Karlamangla, Los Angeles Times

We know obesity increases your risk of having high blood pressure, getting diabetes and being diagnosed with certain cancers. Now it turns out it can also increase costs for your state government.

A study published Monday in the journal Health Affairs found that medical care associated with severe obesity cost state-run health programs \$8 billion in 2013. California's program for the poor, known as Medi-Cal, took the biggest hit, spending \$1.3 billion that year on severe obesity-related care.

Though the obesity epidemic in America has garnered a lot of attention, there hasn't been enough focus on severe obesity, which has much bigger health risks and associated costs, said Michael Long, study author and assistant professor of prevention and community health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University.

Read the whole story

7 suspected gang members

arrested in SLT

Seven people were arrested Halloween night in South Lake Tahoe on felony and misdemeanor charges ranging from conspiracy to commit a crime, illegal possession of weapons, and contributing to the delinquency of minors

Extra officers were on duty to help curtail any potential gang activity. The drive-by shootings on **Oct. 14** and **Oct. 28** have been classified as gang related.

Officers at about midnight Oct. 31 saw two carloads of suspected gang members drive to the dead end of Spruce Avenue, where a drive-by shooting took place two weeks ago. Some of the occupants in the vehicles wore blue bandanas over their faces, a clear showing of gang colors.

Officers said searches of the seven as well as the two vehicles turned up marijuana and alcohol contraband as well as several weapons, including a stun gun, a switchblade, a metal bat, brass knuckles and a loaded and concealed .22-caliber pistol with extra loaded magazines.

Arrested were:

- Oscar Arreola, 18, South Lake Tahoe
- Jorge Medrano, 18, South Lake Tahoe
- Guian-Renz Corpuz Agbigay, 20, South Lake Tahoe
- Garcia Camacho, 18, South Lake Tahoe
- Edward Christopher, 24, South Lake Tahoe
- 14-year-old, South Lake Tahoe
- 15-year-old, South Lake Tahoe.

While this arrests were in progress officers were called to

investigate a stabbing on Silverwood Avenue.

Josh Boyer, 21, of South Lake Tahoe had been stabbed multiple times during a fight. He fled with at least two vehicles in pursuit. According to officers, Boyer intentionally rammed his vehicle into one of the pursuing vehicles.

He abandoned his vehicle on Lakeview Avenue, then ran until he collapsed. He was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital where he is expected to recover from his wounds, officers said.

The suspects in the stabbing have not been identified.

Anyone with information about the crimes is asked to call 530.542.6100 or Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Energy firm plans Nevada's power future

By Kyle Roerink, Las Vegas Sun

Next month, regulators will decide on a proposal for how NV Energy will supply customers with power in the future.

Known as the integrated resource plan, the power company's proposal is a pitch made every three years to regulators about the company's long-term strategy. The state's energy gurus have been debating since June.

Last week, officials representing gaming, renewable energy, conservation groups, state bureaucrats and NV Energy huddled at the Public Utilities Commission office to testify on the

nearly 5,000-page plan.

The commission will decide on a final plan by Dec. 28.

Read the whole story

Grant to allow SLTPD to beef up patrols

South Lake Tahoe Police Department has been awarded a \$35,500 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety for a yearlong program of special enforcements and public awareness efforts to prevent traffic related deaths and injuries.

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department will use the money as part of the city's ongoing commitment to keep roads safe.

After falling dramatically between 2006 and 2010, the number of people killed and injured in traffic collisions has been slowly rising. Particularly alarming, according to law enforcement, are recent increases in pedestrian and bicycle fatalities, the growing dangers of distracting technologies, and the emergence of drug-impaired driving as a major problem. This grant funding will provide opportunities to combat these and other problems such as drunken driving, speeding and crashes at intersections.

Activities that the grant will fund include:

- Educational presentations
- DUI checkpoints
- DUI saturation patrols

- Motorcycle safety enforcement
 - Distracted driving enforcement
 - Seat belt and child safety seat enforcement
 - Bicycle and pedestrian safety enforcement
 - Speed, red light, and stop sign enforcement
 - Specialized DUI and drugged driving training.
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Study: Big animals' extinction forever alters environment

By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle

Extinctions of large animals – a fate that could soon befall elephants and rhinoceroses – have a cascade effect on local ecosystems, including Northern California, where many smaller animals and plants died off after mammoths were wiped out, a team of scientists has discovered.

The size of elephants, wildebeests and other big plant-eaters makes them not only impressive and fascinating but also vital to the many species that live with and depend on them, according to a joint report by UC Berkeley, Stanford University, CSU Sacramento and the University of Chile.

“Ecological studies have shown that if you pull out a top predator or a key herbivore today, you get dramatic change in the ecosystem,” said Anthony Barnosky, a UC Berkeley professor of integrative biology and the study leader. “Our study makes

it clear that in the past, such changes have lasted for thousands of years. These extinctions really do permanently change the dynamics. You can't go back."

Read the whole story

Companies stacking deck of justice with arbitration

By Jessica Silver-Greenberg and Robert Gebeloff, New York Times

On Page 5 of a credit-card contract used by American Express, beneath an explainer on interest rates and late fees, past the details about annual membership, is a clause that most customers probably miss. If cardholders have a problem with their account, American Express explains, the company "may elect to resolve any claim by individual arbitration."

Those nine words are at the center of a far-reaching power play orchestrated by U.S. corporations, an investigation by the *New York Times* has found.

By inserting individual arbitration clauses into a soaring number of consumer and employment contracts, companies can circumvent the courts, and bar customers from joining together in class-action lawsuits, realistically the only tool citizens have to fight illegal or deceitful business practices.

Over the last few years, it has become increasingly difficult to apply for a credit card, get cellphone, cable or Internet service, or shop online without agreeing to private arbitration. The same applies to getting a job, renting a car,

or placing a relative in a nursing home.

Among the class-action challenges thrown out because of such a clause was one brought by Time Warner customers over charges they said mysteriously appeared on their cable bills, and another against a travel booking website accused of conspiring to fix hotel prices. A top executive at Goldman Sachs who sued on behalf of bankers claiming sex discrimination was also blocked, as were African-American employees at Taco Bell restaurants alleging a pattern of discrimination.

Read the whole story

Nev. leads U.S. in dropping rate of uninsured kids

By Trevon Milliard, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada has achieved the largest decline of any state for its rate of children without health insurance, according to a new report by Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families.

The number of uninsured Nevada children fell by 35 percent in one year, dropping from 14.9 percent uninsured children in 2013 to 9.6 percent last year, reports the university, using information from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

In one year, the state went from 98,500 uninsured children to 63,700.

Read the whole story

Controlled fires could save forests and fight climate change

By Conor Gearin, NOVA Next

Forestry managers face what seems like an unavoidable tradeoff. Controlled burns in Western forests reduce the risk of wildfire but release carbon dioxide, contributing to climate change. But a team of ecologists recently showed that controlled burns can actually benefit the climate in the long term.

Since the 1960s, attempts to suppress natural low-intensity fires led to forests overgrown with small trees and loaded with dead leaves. These act as fuels that easily accelerate a small fire into a forest-clearing inferno, though burning some fuel when winds are low and humidity is high—making a wildfire unlikely—can help prevent future disasters.

In 2012, calculations suggested that restoring low-intensity fire would release more carbon than not burning. However, new computer simulations of wildfire behavior over several decades showed that prescribed burns and vegetation thinning can both reduce the risk of wildfire and trap more carbon in tree growth than an untreated forest.

Read the whole story

Sandoval, GOP given low marks by conservative group

By Reno Gazette-Journal

CARSON CITY — A report card from the conservative Nevada Policy Research Institute gave failing grades to Gov. Brian Sandoval and moderate GOP lawmakers who helped pass a \$1.1 billion tax package, contending Republicans squandered their time in power and failed to shake things up.

The think tank issued the grades on a scale of 0 to 100 percent based on how closely the politicians lined up with NPRI's legislative priorities.

The institute opposes tax increases, tax incentive programs and many spending measures, while pushing to weaken union power and scale back public employee pensions.

Read the whole story