Placer County partners with Truckee for animal shelter services

By Gabrielle Karol, ABC10

Closing an animal shelter usually means bad news for the animals. But, in the case of Placer County's Tahoe Vista shelter, the closure may actually mean a better experience.

Starting today, animals that would have gone to the Tahoe Vista shelter will be taken 13 miles to Truckee's animal shelter – a newer, more high-tech facility. Truckee's shelter has an average 17-day stay for animals, compared to the 3- to 4-month stay in Tahoe Vista.

"It will improve the health of the animals, it's more convenient and accessible to the community," Placer County animal services director Wesley Nicks explained. "And, it saves taxpayers a ton of money."

Read the whole story

Experts: Clinton's college plan could be a boon for Nev.

By Ian Whitaker, Las Vegas Sun

Hillary Clinton's plan for lowering the cost of higher education and reducing the roughly $1.2 trillion student loan debt held by American students could strengthen Nevada's post-

secondary institutions while saving money for the state's college students, local education experts say.

But if you think those benefits would be enough for the state to embrace the plan, those same experts say, you don't know Nevada.

Clinton's "New College Compact" would funnel $350 billion toward states that agree to increase funding for higher education and make sure students are graduating on time. One-third of the funding would be set aside to allow students to refinance existing loans at lower interest rates, while the rest would go toward grants designed to keep costs down for state colleges and universities, as well as make community college free.

Read the whole story

Trapped bear and cub to be released

A bear cub on Sept. 1 sits outside a trap that contains

its mother. Photo/Carolyn Stark

Updated 3:37pm:

A female bear was captured in a trap in Crystal Bay this morning that Nevada Division of Wildlife had set.

This was not the bear officials were trying to catch. The sow's cub was outside the trap trying to get to its mom.

Chris Healy, spokesman for NDOW, told *Lake Tahoe News* the targeted bear – not the trapped bear – had broken into a building in the area.

The sow, weighing about 150 pounds, and 6-month-old, 30-pound cub were reunited. Both bears were tranquilized, tagged, tattooed and microchipped in order to identify them in the future should they come back in to contact with humans. Neither bear had previously been handled by NDOW.

They will be released Sept. 2 – after sleeping off the effects of the tranquilizer drugs – in the mountains above Crystal Bay.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SLT nixes idea of rec center as homeless facility

By Kathryn Reed

The South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center is off the table as a resource for the homeless to stay warm during the winter.

That was the direction the City Council took Tuesday after much discussion and a presentation by the **Tahoe Homeless Coalition**.

A group of individuals has come together to establish a warm room that would be open Nov. 1-April 30 between 8:30pm and 6:30am. It would be for adults without pets.

The coalition came to the council Sept. 1 with the goal of securing access to the rec center on select nights through the winter season for people to seek refuge from the cold. It would not be open every night, but only when the temperature was projected to reach a certain level.

Councilwoman Wendy David was the only member who wanted the rec center to be used in this manner. (Councilmember Tom Davis was absent until the afternoon **budget presentation**.) The other three believe there would be a conflict between users, didn't want people kicked out into the cold at dawn, and had other concerns.

All four, though, agreed there is a need for a warm room. They also support using a city facility if appropriate. Councilman Austin Sass even advocated for using taxpayer money to house the people in a $20/night hotel when needed.

The council ultimately decided to appoint Councilmembers JoAnn Conner and David to a committee to work with the homeless coalition to find an answer.

Representatives from Temple Bat Yam and Unity at the Lake spoke of offering their facilities as a backup to the rec center, but had their own constraints for not being able to use their facilities on a regular basis.

In other action:

· The council voted to create a policy where money could be given to nonprofits on a case-by-case basis for economic development and political advocacy. Cash cannot be given to social organizations. The vote was 3-1, with Conner voting no.

· The council adopted a policy to decide who will be inducted into the Champions Plaza at Lakeview Commons. The Parks and Recreation Commission will be the panel making the decision based on the criteria and an application that must be submitted. Individual or team names will be etched on paving stones. Still to be determined is the funding source for the bricks.

· The idea of a key for the city was brought forward, but died for lack of desire to move forward.

· Sept. 19 is the city's 50th anniversary parade from Al Tahoe Boulevard to the Y. The two southbound lanes of Highway 50 will be used. Sept. 4 at 5pm is now the deadline to apply. There are more than 50 entities participating – including walking groups, floats and vehicles. The theme is Past, Present and Future.

· Nov. 11 is the city's gala at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel. The city is putting in $15,000 to lower the cost to about $65 per ticket. It's expected 250 people will attend. A book about the city's first 50 years is being created by Bona Fide Books in Meyers; cost is $25.

Researchers: Drought, heat waves more likely to mix

By Karen Kaplan, Los Angeles Times

A drought can make a hot day hotter, while a heat wave can make dry conditions even drier. Now scientists are making the case that heat waves and droughts have become more likely to overlap throughout most of the United States.

In fact, the longer and hotter the heat wave, the bigger the jump in the odds that it coincided with drought conditions, according to a study published Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

“Despite an apparent hiatus in rising temperature and no significant trend in droughts, we show a substantial increase in concurrent droughts and heatwaves across most parts of the United States,” wrote Omid Mazdiyasni and Amir AghaKouchak, who study climate and hydrology trends at UC Irvine.

Read the whole story

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3 people killed on Hwy. 50 near Fresh Pond

Two women and a man were killed Sunday night and another person was seriously injured when the vehicle they were in struck a tree on Highway 50 near Fresh Pond.

The names of the four have not be released, however the California Highway Patrol identified three being from Southern California and one from out of state.

The Dodge Nitro was going west on the highway about 11:50pm Aug. 30 when the driver failed to make a curve, left the road, went down an embankment and struck a tree. The roof of the vehicle was sheared off. The three who died were not wearing seat belts and were ejected, according to officers. The fourth person was belted in and was able to reach the highway for help.

Alcohol and drugs do appear to be a factor, according to authorities.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Meyers plan to move onto environmental review

By Kathryn Reed

The vote by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors on Monday regarding the Meyers Area Plan reflected that of the community – it wasn't unanimous – just like there isn't consensus among residents as to what should be done.

Many of the 17 people who spoke Aug. 31 believed it was necessary to talk more before moving on to the environmental phase. Just as many said it was time to take the next step.

Ultimately, the board voted 3-1 to start the environmental review. Supervisor Shiva Frentzen was the dissenting voice. Supervisor Sue Novasel was not part of the discussion or vote,

having recused herself because she owns property in the area.

In the 3½ years that the Meyers Area Plan has been discussed three area plans on the South Shore have been completed. The Meyers plan is at least two years from being complete because it could take that long for the environmental documents to be finalized. The time frame will in part be determined by the level of review that is conducted. Then there will be five opportunities for the public to comment. Ultimately the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board will have the final say.

One of Frentzen's hang-ups was not knowing how much the process would cost the county going forward. An environmental impact report could cost more than $100,000. She wanted a guarantee there would be a return on investment for that outlay of cash. It's not something anyone can guarantee.

El Dorado County planner Brendan Ferry on Aug. 31 advises supervisors about the Meyers plan as about 30 people listen. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Brendan Ferry, county planner, pointed out that the county is not in the development business. While he said a goal of the plan is to attract economic development, there is no guarantee this will occur.

Fear of a large-scale development has gripped this small South Shore enclave ever since Norma Santiago when she was supervisor spearheaded the **Catalyst project**. That project was

dead in the water almost as soon as it came to life. But just the thought of something of that magnitude still strikes fear with many.

However, many who spoke on Monday said it was apt to be locals who initiate any new development in Meyers.

Still, one thing that divides those who live there is whether a motel or bed and breakfast ought to be built. Currently, other than camping, there is no place for tourists to sleep in Meyers. The criteria in the proposed plan would allow for some sort of lodging – something the existing 1993 plan can no longer accommodate based on zoning regulations and commodities distributions.

The current plan, which is the fourth draft, contains:

· 42-foot height limit; this is the same as what's in the 1993 plan.

· 34,150-square-feet of commercial floor area, with 17,500 dedicated to small businesses. The 1993 plan had 25,400 square feet. The difference is that Bob Dog Pizza did not use as much CFA as anticipated.

· 30 units per acre for a lodging property, 20 units per acre for multi-family residential; 1993 plan had 40 and 15 units per acre, respectively.

· One level of incentives for potential developers; 1993 plan had no incentives.

· Meyers Advisory Council will either be elected or appointed, be a formal body and must adhere to open meeting laws; 1993 had a loose knit group with zero power.

· 4 California Tahoe Conservancy lots will be classified recreation, while 5 will retain current zoning to allow for potential development.

The next step is for county officials – with the help of their legal staff and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency – to determine the level of environmental review.

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In other action:

· The board heard a presentation about the **Community Wildfire Protection Plan**, a basinwide effort to make the area less prone to catastrophic wildfire. When Supervisor Frentzen asked why the basin doesn't have small fire safe councils, Lake Valley Fire Chief Gareth Harris chose not to tell her about the **misappropriation of funds** and how many contractors still have not been paid.

· South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry and marketing guru Carl Ribaudo talked about the legacy principles, which are designed to get all parties – public and private – on board with a shared vision for the area even if the means to get to the end is different. The overriding desire is to leave a legacy of sorts.

Candidates reveal different styles in Nev. campaign stops

By Ben Botkin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

A circus has been coming to Las Vegas nearly every week this summer, but not the kind with clowns and dancing elephants that delights youngsters.

Instead, the ringmasters are candidates running for president and their shows are filled with political acrobatics.

The seemingly never-ending parade of candidates is to be expected here. Nevada is an early voting state with February caucuses that play a key role in determining which candidates get the Democratic and Republican nominations. Its importance is on par with New Hampshire, South Carolina and Iowa, other states with early primaries or caucuses.

Read the whole story

Homeowners catch would-be burglar in the act

A Placerville teenager was arrested last week on burglary charges.

Tryston Alvarez-Ross

Homeowners on Lo-Hi Court in Placerville said they found Tryston Alvarez-Ross, 19, in their house on Aug. 26 about 8pm. They kept him until officers arrived.

The victims said they were gone a couple of hours. Alvarez-Ross reportedly came walking out of the house as they pulled up.

The house had been ransacked, the TV turned on, and alcohol consumed, accordign to officers.

Tryston Alvarez-Ross was arrested on charges of burglary. He had been arrested on burglary and drug charges on Aug. 24 and was released less than three hours before allegedly committing the latest crime.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Caesars gets reprieve in N.Y. lawsuit ruling

By Kimberly Pierceall, AP

Caesars Entertainment Corp. can breathe a bit easier after a New York federal judge denied the company's bondholders a quick judgment in their pursuit for nearly $7 billion they say they're owed.

On Thursday, New York Judge Shira Scheindlin denied bondholders their motion for partial summary judgment in the case giving Caesars a reprieve for now. The ruling doesn't stop the case from proceeding against the casino giant.

The bondholders suing Caesars have claimed the company illegally took away a guarantee on their sizeable debt in Caesars' operating subsidiary by making a series of asset transfers and stock offers that released the parent company from its obligations. The operating subsidiary filed for bankruptcy protection in January.

In her ruling, Judge Scheindlin says there's no ambiguity in the guarantee's language promising full payment to creditors

if the operating company were to default. She says, though, that creditors did not offer enough proof at this stage that the federal Trust Indenture Act was violated.