

Half of Nev. homes in foreclosure also underwater



Nevada has been a leader in foreclosures for years.
Photo/Brendel

By Eli Segall, Las Vegas Sun

Being underwater on your mortgage doesn't necessarily mean you'll lose your house to lenders.

But more often than not, it does in Nevada, a new report shows.

An estimated 55 percent of properties statewide in some stage of the foreclosure process also were heavily underwater in the first quarter, according to RealtyTrac.

That's the highest rate in the country and far above the national average of 35 percent.

Read the whole story

LTWC breaks ground on new facility



Mayor Hal Cole, center, surveys the work that started April 10 at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care's new home. Photo/Tom Millham

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency on April 23 approved the permit for the new home of the Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care facility.

Preliminary work like cleaning up the lot started earlier this month on the new home for Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

Turner and Associates employees surveyed the property and placed stakes showing the outlines of the buildings and parking areas as well as the centerlines of the roadways. The general contractor of the project and South Lake Tahoe Mayor Hal Cole were on hand.

Then, about an hour later, Ed Cook Tree Service showed up to begin removing the trees that were on the ground after decades of being blown over from wind, snow, rain and fire.

The new location is for the nonprofit organization which has a mission to raise, rehabilitate and release orphaned and

injured wild birds and animals in and around the Lake Tahoe Basin.

After 37 years of running the organization out of our home, Cheryl, my wife, and I will soon be located on the corner of Al Tahoe Boulevard and Pioneer Trail on 27 acres. The new location will have more cages, larger cages and be state-of-the-art. It will give the organization more room to care for more wildlife for many years to come.

– Tom Millham, Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care treasurer

Convicted sex offender wanted in El Dorado County



Jaime Lynn
Olson

By News 10

Officials are looking for a parolee at large who is described as a violent sex offender.

The El Dorado County District Attorney's Office said Jaime Lynn Olson, 36, violated her parole and failed to register as a sex offender.

Investigator Dave Stevenson said Olson frequents South Lake Tahoe, where the crime originally happened, the West Slope of El Dorado County and is possibly living in the Sacramento area.

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Travel insurance a prerequisite for worry free vacation

By Lee Traupel, Huffington Post

Every traveler begins her journey with a complex web of connections, coupled with dreams of blue skies, unlimited horizons, fair weather and unlimited upgrades.

But, as in everything in life, risk and reward live together and in this complex fine print driven world we all live and travel in the “devil truly is in the details.”

You are out there in the wilds ready to re-enact your favorite Bear Gryll’s survival technique and you hear the dreaded words: “your luggage did not make it....”

Or, worse, “we have no idea what kind of fungus this is and we may need to put you in quarantine for a few days...”

But to practical discussion. Many will tell you traveling without travel insurance has too much risk and not enough reward.

Read the whole story

Tourism's challenge: Bay Area millennials

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

The San Francisco Bay Area has spoken on Reno-Tahoe tourism, and while the region's favorability holds steady from last summer, more attention is needed on marketing to millennials.

Among the findings from the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority's twice-a-year Bay Area Awareness Survey in February to be presented to the RSCVA board on Thursday:

- 79 percent of respondents have a favorable opinion about Reno-Tahoe, unchanged from the August 2014 survey and up 3 points from a year ago, while 63 percent see Reno favorably, down 1 point since summer but up 6 points from the February 2014 survey.

[Read the whole story](#)

Passage of Nev. tax hikes bittersweet for Dems

By Kyle Roerink, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY — For Democratic Sen. Tick Segerblom, Tuesday yielded a victory five sessions in the making.

Senate lawmakers passed into the Assembly a tax measure, SB

252, that's backed by GOP Gov. Brian Sandoval that would annually raise \$430 million to fund education and other programs.

The rub for Segerblom, though, was that his party didn't have its name on the legislation.

Segerblom, a Las Vegas lawmaker serving in his fifth legislative term, and his colleagues have championed tax increases in every session since 2007. But despite holding a majority in both chambers of the Legislature, the Democrats' efforts did little to provide new revenues for education. During Segerblom's time in office, both parties have fought to fill the budget shortfalls posed by the recession and raise more money for government.

Segerblom applauded Republicans on the floor for "biting the bullet on taxes" and blamed them for not calling to do so sooner.

Read the whole story

SLT vacation home rental permit fees increasing

South Lake Tahoe is about to charge a more realistic fee for vacation home rental permits.

That is the major change to the ordinance that was amended on Tuesday.

As with all ordinances, they must be read and voted on a second time before becoming the law of the land. And while usually items on the consent agenda sail through without

discussion, that wasn't the case for something so controversial.

Still, only four people spoke at the April 21 City Council meeting. This compares to the April 7 meeting when 30 people voiced their opinions.

The council, with Tom Davis recusing himself because of his ownership in Tahoe Keys Resort, did not make any changes to what had been voted on two weeks ago.

Fees will go up starting June 1. They are based on the number of bedrooms and the number of violations an owner has incurred the previous 12 months. It also involves the manpower required to deal with the fees – including the city attorney's office and other departments that were not previously included.

Money raised will also support the hiring of additional enforcement personnel and a full-time auditor.

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In other action:

- No one made a motion to grant Councilman Tom Davis' request to be reimbursed for driving to Placerville to see Supervisor Sue Novasel sworn in, so he has to foot the bill and not taxpayers.
- Awarding of the contract for the multi-million dollar Sierra Tract erosion contract was delayed because one of the bidders is challenging the process. The dispute will go to a hearing board and then be brought back to the council.
- The mid-year budget was approved.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Religion complicates Calif. vaccine debate

By Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

Nick Johansen arrived at a Capitol hearing on vaccinations last week carrying a Bible.

Johansen, who said he hasn't yet decided whether to vaccinate his 10-month-old daughter Savannah, argued government shouldn't impose a reverence for science over his faith in God.

Senate Bill 277, a bitterly contested California bill eliminating the state's personal belief exemption for vaccines, doesn't apply just to parents who believe they are dangerous. It also would eliminate parents' ability to skip vaccinations for religious reasons.

In what Johansen described as an affirmation of his faith, his daughter has overcome severe medical issues. He considers her survival miraculous and warned SB 277 would harm devout Californians like him.

Read the whole story

Calif., N.Y. rethinking

higher ed, feds lag behind

By Nick Anderson, Washington Post

In its first few years, the Obama administration played a major role in higher education as the nation's economy was foundering. The expansion of Pell grants for students in financial need, the provision of billions of dollars in stimulus funding for university research and other purposes, an overhaul of federal student loans to put the government at the center of lending – these and other measures enacted in 2009 and 2010 showed that Washington was thinking big.

Now, it seems, it is the states that are expansive. Or at least some of them. That's a takeaway from recent interviews with higher ed leaders from the Empire State and the Golden State.

Nancy L. Zimpher, chancellor of the State University of New York, is promoting a new goal for a system that grants 93,000 degrees a year. She wants SUNY to award 150,000 degrees a year by 2020.

With 460,000 students from the community college level to doctoral programs, SUNY is a key player in public higher education. President Obama in August 2013 launched a significant initiative at one its campuses, choosing the University at Buffalo as the backdrop for a speech announcing that the federal government would rate colleges on measures of value and access. More than a year and a half later, the federal ratings plan is inching forward slowly. Some college leaders wonder whether it will ever happen.

Read the whole story

Gambling losing its appeal in Las Vegas

By Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times

Gambling, once the mainstay of Las Vegas, is slowly taking a back seat to other entertainment in Sin City.

The latest survey of Las Vegas visitors found that fewer people go to the city to gamble and that first-time visitors are more likely to travel there for a wedding or a convention or to visit friends and family.

The number of visitors increased to 41 million in 2014, up from 39.7 million in 2013, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau. But as hotel occupancy rates and hotel tax revenue went up, gaming revenue for Clark County fell from \$9.7 billion in 2013 to \$9.5 billion in 2014, according to the agency.

[Read the whole story](#)