

Bus service caters to Truckee area seniors

TAHOE CITY – A one-year transportation pilot program in the Truckee region is benefitting seniors.

“It’s not just for folks without a vehicle or the disabled,” explained Tara Styer, mobility manager with Tahoe Transportation District.

While the curb-to-curb service is designed for those 60 and older, anyone is allowed to use the system. But preference will be given to the older crowd because that is whom the grant is designed to serve.

Scheduled trips go to Reno, Grass Valley-Nevada City, Auburn-Roseville-Sacramento, and Kings Beach-Tahoe City-Homewood. Many of these are doctor and shopping related. But trips can also be social in nature.

An additional trip has been added Jan. 15 to take people to Reno. Cost is \$8 round trip.

“We provided a couple holiday trip so seniors could get out,” Styer said Jan. 6 when she made a presentation before the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association’s Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club. “We’ve added trips to South Lake Tahoe so seniors could see specialists there.”

She said if the demand is there, the goal is to continue the program beyond June.

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Notes:

- For more info, go online.

- To book a ride, call 530.550.7451.
- Reservations may be made 72 hours in advance.
- Personal care assistants ride for free.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Increase in police deaths isn't what it seems

By Abbie VanSickle, Center for Investigative Reporting

In his remarks at the funeral of slain New York police Officer Wenjian Liu, FBI Director James Comey told those gathered that 2014 had been an unusually deadly year for law enforcement officers.

“We had 115 officers killed in the line of duty last year, a shocking increase from 2013,” he said.

Comey’s remarks suggest that officers are dying at the hands of criminals at a higher rate than in the past. But do the statistics support this “shocking increase?” Not really.

While newly available data show that law enforcement deaths did rise from 2013 to 2014, a closer analysis shows that 2013 may have been the aberration, with an unusually low number of police deaths, while 2014 marked a return to the recent norm.

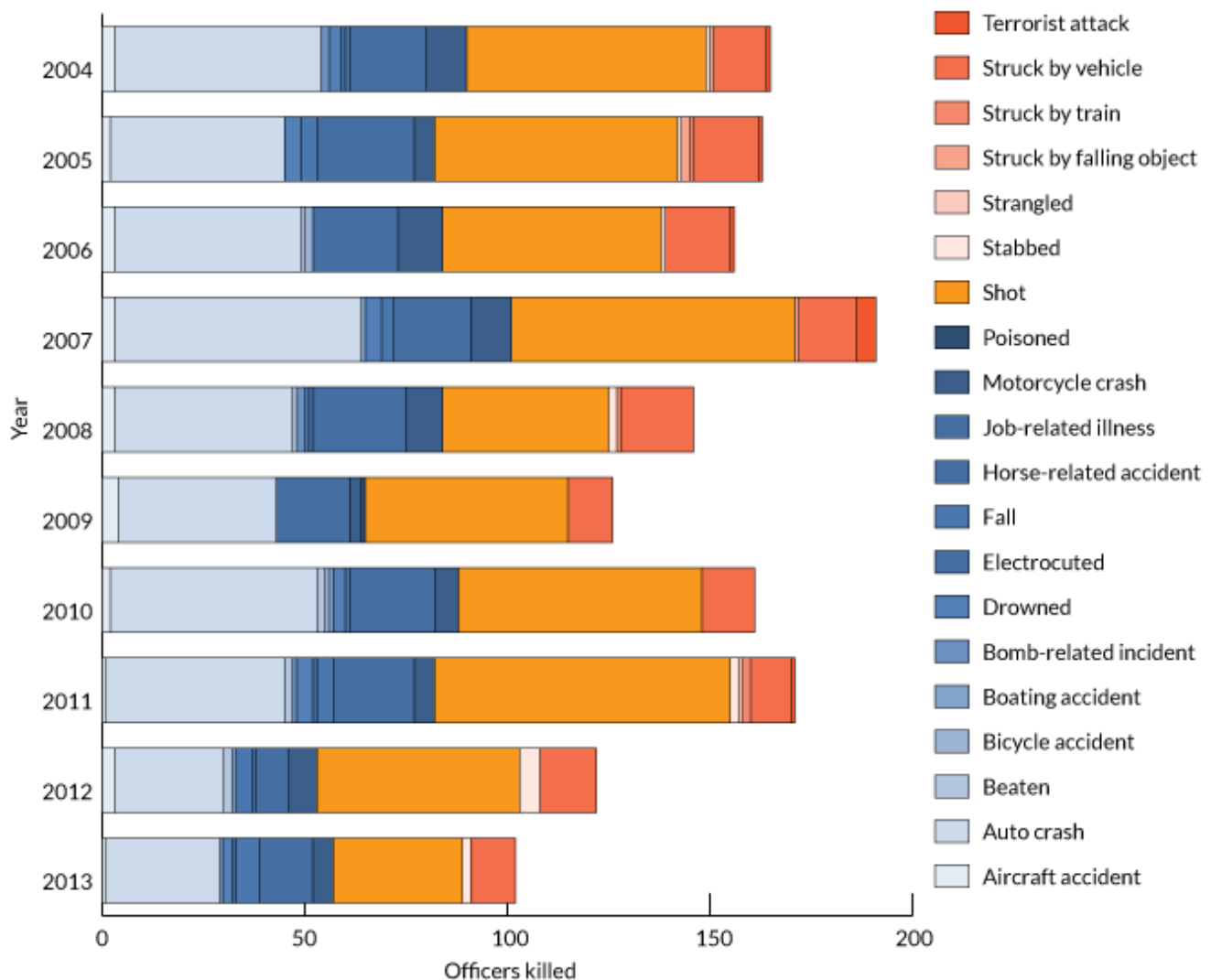
“It was not far out of line from the other years,” said Steve Groeninger, spokesman for the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. “I think it was troubling in that I think that we as a community had hoped that we were turning a

corner on law enforcement safety, and, boy, they just jumped back up again.”

The memorial fund, a Washington-based nonprofit that tracks nationwide law enforcement deaths, compiles a database widely used by researchers. Its preliminary data for 2014 show that 126 law enforcement officers in the U.S. died in the line of duty, up 24 percent from 2013, when 102 officers were killed. In 2012, 122 officers died. But in 2011, 171 officers lost their lives, and in 2010, the figure was 161.

The biggest news in the 2014 statistics may be that firearms deaths surpassed traffic-related fatalities as the leading cause of death among law enforcement officers.

Causes of law enforcement deaths, 2004-2013



Source: National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund

Firearms-related fatalities among law enforcement officers have decreased each decade since the 1970s, according to the memorial fund's data. In the 1970s, an average of 127 officers were killed with guns annually. That dropped to an average of 87 officers a year in the 1980s. Last year, firearms deaths rose from 32 officers in 2013 to 50 in 2014 – a 56 percent increase, but still below this decade's average of 53 officers a year.

This data is largely in line with related sources. The FBI tracks deaths of law enforcement officers each year and publishes an annual report, "Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted," also known as LEOKA. This data differs slightly from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's data because it does not include some types of law enforcement officers, such as prison guards, and relies on voluntary reporting by agencies.

While the 2014 FBI report is not yet available, prior data show that 2013 was an exceptionally safe year for police. According to the FBI, 26 officers were killed with firearms in 2013, a sharp decline from 2012, which saw 44 officers killed with firearms, and 2011, when 63 officers killed.

Interested in how many people were killed in 2014 by law enforcement? That's much a harder question to answer. No national government database tracks deaths at the hands of law enforcement. Instead, local police departments can self-report information to the FBI on what it calls justifiable homicides, but that data is widely considered to be unreliable, according to recent media reports including Nate Silver's ESPN website FiveThirtyEight and the *Washington Post*.

Ex-Placer County deputy sentenced for unlawful sex with minor

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

A former Placer County sheriff's deputy has been sentenced to 150 days in jail and three years probation for having sex with

a minor in a case involving a 17-year-old sheriff's department volunteer.

Kenneth Skogen was sentenced Wednesday in Placer County Superior Court Judge Jeff Penney, who also ordered Skogen to attend counseling. Skogen pleaded guilty Nov. 12 to one felony count of unlawful sex with a minor.

Read the whole story

Colo. cannabis firm to help Calif. tribes

By Steve Raabe, Denver Post

Denver-based United Cannabis Corp. is proposing to team with Native American tribes in California to grow and manufacture medical marijuana products.

United Cannabis has signed a consulting and licensing deal with a company that will build up to three cultivation and processing facilities on tribal lands.

FoxBarry Cos. LLC, a firm that helps tribes with economic development projects such as farms and casinos, has pledged \$30 million to develop the facilities. FoxBarry, in turn, will have exclusive distribution rights for United Cannabis products in California.

Read the whole story

Caesars clears threshold for creditor agreement

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

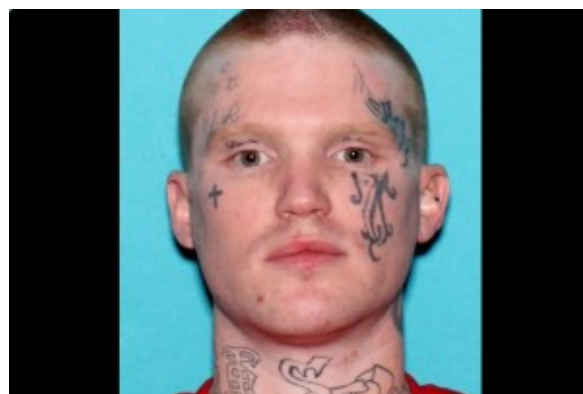
Caesars Entertainment has cleared a critical threshold of creditor support for a bankruptcy restructuring plan in its operating subsidiary, the casino company announced today.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Caesars said that more than 60 percent of first-lien bondholders have signed on to a plan that will slash nearly \$10 billion of the subsidiary's \$18.4 billion debt.

Caesars needed at least 60 percent of those bondholders to support the plan by Monday; Jan. 8 the company announced it had more than 50 percent support.

Read the whole story

Douglas County man accused of killing infant



Trent Getty

Trent Getty, 23, of the Carson Valley has been arrested in the death of his 2-month-old child.

The cause of death is pending an autopsy. The child was taken off life support Jan. 10 at 12:48pm.

Getty had been wanted on a \$1 million warrant. He was located at the Greyhound depot in Sacramento on Saturday.

Getty had reportedly left the child at Carson Valley Medical Center on Jan. 7 and then was wanted when the injuries to the child did not match what he had told medical personnel.

He is awaiting extradition back to Douglas County.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Cancer groups urge restrictions on e-cigarettes

By Karen Kaplan, Los Angeles Times

Electronic cigarettes should be subject to the same taxes, marketing restrictions and limitations on public use as traditional tobacco products, according to new guidance from cancer experts.

In a joint policy statement issued Thursday, the American Association for Cancer Research and the American Society for Clinical Oncology acknowledged that e-cigarettes may improve public health by taking market share away from combustible tobacco products and helping smokers quit. But until the

benefits are proved, the statement said, regulators shouldn't distinguish between the two kinds of products.

The U.S. surgeon general's office estimates that smoking-related conditions such as lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease result in 484,000 premature deaths each year. If present trends continue, 5.6 million children alive today will wind up dying as a result of smoking.

Read the whole story

Caltrans completes Hwy. 50-Sly Park work

After nearly 10 months of work, Caltrans has finished construction of a bridge on Highway 50 over Sly Park Road.

Work on the \$15.1 million bridge replacement project, which began in April, included demolishing the old bridge in two phases and replacing it with a single span and precast and prestressed concrete girders. Traffic on Highway 50 was reduced to one lane in each direction during most of the construction.

New sidewalks, curb and gutter, and ramps have been added to Sly Park Road as part of the project, and sight distance has been improved for motorists on Sly Park Road because of increased horizontal clearance. The stone wall design was selected to blend in with the community of Pollock Pines.

The previous bridge was built in 1964 and was approaching the end of its service life because of corrosion.

Scientist: Carbon fee will alter fossil fuel use

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Government won't solve climate change. And people won't do anything to change the course of events without a monetary incentive. It is a global crisis. And the solution needs to be implemented worldwide.

Those are the thoughts and concerns of James Hansen, former director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies and adjunct professor at Columbia University's Earth Institute.

He gave the keynote address Jan. 8 during the 17th annual Operation Sierra Storm at Harveys. Once a year meteorologists from around the country gather at Lake Tahoe to talk science, trends and news.

"The bottom line is science tells us we have to phase out fossil fuel emissions and leave what's remaining in the ground," Hansen said. "There is a tremendous amount of fossil fuel in the ground. We can't afford to put it into the air without guaranteeing our children inherit a situation that is out of their control."

He is dead-set against fracking.

Hansen has been working to stem the effects of climate change since the 1980s. In 2006, *Time* magazine called him one of the 100 most influential people on Earth.



James Hansen talks about climate change Jan. 8 in Stateline. Photo/Denise Haerr

Not one to mince words, Hansen told Gov. Jerry Brown in person that California's cap and trade policy is nothing more than a tax that will do little to resolve the larger issue.

With word coming out this week that 2014 was the hottest year on record in the world, Hansen said 2015 is headed to be another record breaker. The U.S., by contrast, was one of the coolest places on Earth. But the United States only represents $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent of the planet's surface.

"If you add CO₂ to the atmosphere, it's like putting a blanket on the planet," Hansen explained.

Instead of the heat radiating to space, most of the energy goes into the ocean. This then creates an energy imbalance on Earth. The energy into the ocean each year is the equivalent of the energy from 400,000 Hiroshima bombs a day. That energy contributes to the warming ocean, the loss of Arctic ice and the rising seashore water that threatens cities.

Climate change is affecting plant and animal species – some of which are threatened with extinction – like the Eastern monarch butterfly. Some of the stressors on flora and fauna are also the result of herbicides. Agricultural practices – including how the soil is tilled – could be changed to help

reduce carbons released into the air.

Getting China onboard to get away from coal will help, Hansen said, as he talked about that major polluter building nuclear plants.

“The only way to solve the problem is to put an across the board fee on carbon. The only way it will work is if the money goes to the public. That would stimulate people to avoid carbon emissions,” Hansen said.

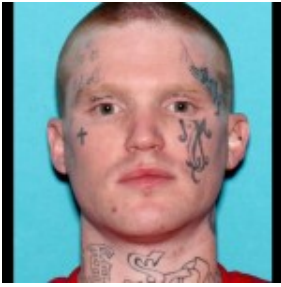
He predicts 70 percent of people would get a dividend back, while 30 percent would have more out of pocket costs with a carbon fee. Hansen said this is a “golden opportunity” with the oil prices so low to implement such a fee.

“If we start adding a carbon fee, it will depress the use of fossil fuels,” Hansen said. “It would rapidly decrease the addiction to fossil fuels.”

Douglas County father suspected of child abuse

A Douglas County man accused of abusing his 2-month-old child is wanted by sheriff's deputies.

Deputies were summoned to Carson Valley Medical Center the afternoon of Jan. 7 because the father, 23-year-old Trent Getty, brought his unresponsive infant there.



Trent Getty

“Investigators developed information that the infant had suffered substantial injuries which appear to be the result of traumatic abuse and are inconsistent with the initial statement given by the father regarding how the injury occurred,” deputies said in a press release.

The condition of the child has not been disclosed.

A \$1 million warrant has been issued for Getty’s arrest.

He is 6-feet-1-inch, 170 pounds, short-cropped red hair, green eyes, and has numerous facial tattoos.

Anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of Getty is asked to call 775.782.5126.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*