

Study: Advertise online to attract undecided voters

By Jackie Kucinich, Washington Post

Despite being bombarded by TV ads in the final days of the 2014 midterm campaigns, undecided voters (yes, they do exist) are going online before they decide how to cast their ballots.

In a study by Republican firm Public Opinion Strategies, Democratic firm Global Strategy Group and Google, “persuadable” voters in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana and North Carolina were polled to find out where they were getting information about candidates.

The study found that 50 percent of voters hear about candidates on television, then they hit the Web.

Sixty-six of the persuadable voters use the Internet to vet candidates, 55 percent use it to find candidate positions on issues and 54 percent said the Internet gives them the information they need before they cast their ballots. At the end of all that research, 47 percent of persuadable voters said the information they see or read on the Internet affects how they vote.

Read the whole story

Calif. voter turnout may be

less than 50%

By Josh Richman and Julia Prodis Sulek, Inside Bay Area

California has tried to make casting a ballot as easy as ordering a pizza online.

We've scooped up potential voters when they come to the DMV to renew their driver's licenses. We've let Californians register to vote on smartphone apps. We've set up voting booths at city halls around the state weeks before Election Day. We've sent registered voters mail-in ballots every election.

But while 17.8 million Californians are now registered, more than for any other gubernatorial general election in the state's history, voting experts project that Tuesday's could be the first general election in which turnout falls below 50 percent. That's a far cry from the record 80 percent that cast ballots in 1958, when Democrat Pat Brown beat the GOP's William Knowland in a Republican-leaning state.

Yeah, this election has mostly been a snoozer – mostly because Pat Brown's son, Jerry, is expected to win a fourth term in a landslide. But the problem is bigger than one election. With the exception of slightly better turnouts in the last few general elections, the Golden State's voter participation has been slowly declining for half a century.

One big reason is the state's sweeping demographic changes. Simply put: White Californians tend to vote a lot more than other Californians. Although whites now make up only 39 percent of the state's population, they're 57 percent of voters who show up.

In the next quarter century, 8.3 million more Californians will become eligible to vote, 8 million of whom will be people of color. So it will be a tougher task getting people to the polls, unless attitudes toward voting change.

EDC supes to discuss firing employee Tues.

By Kathryn Reed

A closed session item has been added to the Nov. 4 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors meeting that says “public employee discipline/dismissal/release”.

Terri Daly, chief administrative officer, cleared out her office last week and was not at work today. Supervisors have a limited number of people whom they may hire and fire – CAO, county counsel and department heads.

Neither County Counsel Robyn Drivon nor board Chairwoman Norma Santiago was available for comment.

The Nov. 4 meeting starts at 9am in Placerville.

Daly has come under scrutiny lately because of her handling of financial matters, creating an environment where morale has plummeted, and having the county be labeled “dysfunctional” in the annual grand jury report.

The county has also set two special meeting dates – Nov. 13 and Nov. 21. While formal agendas have not been released for either meeting, the Thursday meeting in part is expected to deal with the Community Development Agency issues that involve Assistant CAO Kim Kerr.

Heller quietly steps out of Reid's shadow

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON – Standing on the royal blue carpet of the U.S. Senate chamber in cowboy boots, Republican Sen. Dean Heller looks every bit the Washington power broker as he swaps jokes and slaps backs with the most influential people in the city.

Across the chamber, in a scene that plays out daily, Nevada's senior Sen. Harry Reid hunches over a desk with fellow Democrats. The Senate majority leader, in a plain gray suit, mutters out the side of his mouth about the vote of the day.



Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., wants to be a bigger player on the national stage.
Photo/LTN

Heller and Reid never make eye contact on the Senate floor. But they could soon be staring each other dead on. Heller, an ambitious yet relatively anonymous Washington lawmaker, is quietly putting together a campaign to make his own name in this town, dethrone Reid and become the state's leader on Capitol Hill.

This fall, Heller worked behind the scenes to raise money for key Republicans seeking to win or hold Senate seats. His goal is to cash in on an unpopular Democratic president and, to a lesser extent, an unpopular Reid, to help his party take over the Senate.

Heller will find out Tuesday if he succeeded. "I told my staff there's a path I want to go down," said Heller, 54. "One of those steps is being in the majority."

Heller's political maneuvering comes after he spent two years on policy work to aid the unemployed, help veterans and reduce federal spending. That work has put Heller on Democrats' shortlist to co-sponsor bipartisan bills.

The real Nevada battle, though, will be born in 2016.

The Silver State will be a swing state in a wide open presidential election, and Reid, 74, is expected to run for his sixth term. With those races on the horizon, Heller is lobbying now to become Senate Republicans' top campaign operative. It would be an extraordinary feat for a rookie senator. If he wins the job, his No. 1 target will be none other than Harry Reid.

"He spent \$12 million against me in my last campaign," Heller said in a September interview, referring to Reid's behind-the-scenes meddling in Heller's 2012 Senate race. "And I'll probably return the favor."

The questions for Heller in the next two years: Can the unknown freshman senator climb the ranks of an increasingly conservative Republican party? And can he do it while maintaining a relationship with the still-influential Reid and with Nevadans who are becoming increasingly centrist?

Read the whole story

\$24 mil. overhaul of MontBleu casino-hotel



Suites at MontBleu are more contemporary.
Photos/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Even though MontBleu has been around for more than nine years, remnants of when the hotel-casino was Caesars Tahoe still exist. But those are all about to disappear with a \$24 million remodel of the Stateline property.

“The rooms have not been touched since the Caesars days. It was the mid- to late-’90s since anyone did anything to the rooms. Some of the rooms have Caesars’ logos in them,” General Manager Steve Ditchkus told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Each of the 401 rooms, plus the 36 suites, is practically being gutted. A Tahoe-esque feel is being incorporated with

all of the wood that is being used, along with neutral colors.

For a society that needs to be plugged in even on vacation, the rooms will be wired with multiple outlets.

Flat screen TVs are being added. The headboards, nightstands and other furniture are new.

Bathrooms are also getting a much-needed overhaul, with such improvements as walk-in showers. New vanities and fixtures are coming.

Mountain modern is the overall theme.



Gone are all references to Caesars Tahoe.

Ditchkus said the price of rooms will go up, but how much has not been decided. That's one of the things he plans to discuss with his bosses when he's in Las Vegas this week.

The remodel is designed to cater to what Ditchkus calls their demographic – “the avid gambler from the Bay Area.” This is why the 45,000-square-foot casino floor and showroom are also getting a face-lift.

While carpet was laid when the property changed hands, it is time to be replaced. Ditchkus calls the new carpet, which is in, “elegant”.

Several televisions will be added to the box office.

The showroom – which has Caesars pillars – will get new carpet and tables. The bars are going to be revamped so they are easier to access.

“It will have a new look and a new feel,” Ditchkus said. The showroom should be done by Christmas.

The sports book is going to move to the Zone Bar side, with the bar being redone. Outside upgrades are also in the works, including painting the building, redoing the parking lot and porte cochere.

MontBleu, while it has had outdoor concerts in recent summers, is staying away from that concept and instead is letting Harveys and the future Hard Rock capture that market. Outdoor festivals like this year’s craft beer and crawfish events are what MontBleu plans to do more of.

No changes are planned for the restaurants.

MontBleu is an Edgewood Companies property. The lease with Las Vegas-based Tropicana Entertainment, which operates the hotel-casino, expires in 2028. Ditchkus said it is too soon to know what will happen when that date arrives, but added negotiations are always ongoing with the landlords.

Reno duo arrested in Truckee on multiple charges

Two Reno residents were arrested Oct. 31 in Truckee on numerous felony charges related breaking into residences.

On Halloween officers were notified of two subjects inside a vacant residence for sale. The real estate agent encountered

the two subjects exiting the residence. The agent had noticed the two subjects broke into the residence through a back window, moved furniture around and started a fire in the fireplace.

Within minutes an officer spotted the vehicle and made a traffic stop. The vehicle was driven by Breanna Sherven and Hector Avila was the passenger.

Officers said a search of the vehicle revealed methamphetamine packaged for sales, drug paraphernalia, stolen property linked to a burglary in Oroville, numerous suspected stolen cell phones, a realistic replica of a pistol (later identified as an airsoft pistol), 9mm ammunition, and evidence pointing to two burglaries in the Armstrong tract subdivision in Truckee.

Anyone with additional information is asked to call Truckee police at 530.550.2320.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. Ebola rules require quarantine for some travelers

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

Just two days after the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended a 21-day isolation period for travelers at the highest risk of Ebola, the California Department of Public Health has issued its own quarantine order, one of a handful of states to do so.

The order, released Wednesday by department Director Dr. Ron Chapman, says any person arriving in California from an Ebola-

affected country who had contact with an Ebola-infected person will be quarantined for 21 days. This policy, like the ones issued by New York and New Jersey, appears to be stricter than that issued by the CDC on Monday, which only applies to people deemed “high-risk” because they were caring for an infected person without proper protective clothing or were exposed to the virus through needle-stick or injury.

Ebola-affected areas, as defined by the CDC, currently include Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Travelers returning from those countries who did not come into contact with someone with a confirmed case of Ebola will not be subject to quarantine, according to the state order. There have been no confirmed cases of Ebola in California.

Read the whole story

Officials: Water is going to cost more in Calif.

By Sharon Bernstein, Reuters

Californians face higher water prices and permanent conservation measures amid drought, global warming and population growth in a state that has long struggled to satisfy urban and agricultural needs, the administration of Governor Jerry Brown said Thursday.

It will take up to \$500 billion to improve the state’s water infrastructure to improve supplies, reduce flood risk and shore up the fragile ecosystems that provide water for people, farms and wildlife, the state’s top natural resources officials said in a long-awaited update to California’s water

plan.

“Water is going to cost more for Californians in the future,” said Mark Cowin, director of the state department of water resources, in a conference call with reporters on Thursday. “That’s a reality we’re all going to have to get used to.”

But the state has long struggled to meet the water needs of thirsty cities and its mammoth agricultural sector, prompting a century of political fights between the wetter north and the drier south.

Read the whole story

Rape charges reduced in plea agreement

By Kathryn Reed

A former South Lake Tahoe City Council candidate who was accused of rape was sentenced to lesser crimes last week after reaching a plea agreement.

Doug Cichowicz, who came in last in the 2010 council race, agreed to a deal that will have him spending just more than 70 days in the local jail and then be on probation for five years. He pleaded guilty to felony burglary because he entered the home of his victim uninvited, felony stalking, and misdemeanor assault and battery.

Had he been convicted of rape, Cichowicz would have had to file as a registered sex offender. He doesn’t have to based on what he pleaded to.

“I don’t feel like he is a sex offender. I feel like he has a violent trigger,” the victim told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I want people to be warned about him.”

The two worked together years ago and then he returned to her life in the past few years.

The crimes took place in summer 2013.

“I know this is a win, but I was so geared up for a trial,” the South Lake Tahoe woman said. “It was supposed to be (this) week. Then they asked for pleas at the last minute.”

Attorney Rob Woelfel, who represented Cichowicz, declined to comment.

Canoeists rescued from Pyramid Lake

Two men had to be rescued from the choppy waters of Pyramid Lake on Nov. 1 after their canoe overturned.

The fishermen were off the western shore, several miles south of Sutcliffeon.

The call came in shortly after 11am.

Raven, Washoe County sheriff’s helicopter, arrived with two volunteer swimmers. The first boater was located in rough water about a mile off shore still clinging to the canoe. Both rescue swimmers entered the water and the boater was hoisted into the helicopter.

A short while later the second boater was located. The rescue

swimmers dropped into the water so that the victim could be hoisted into the helicopter.

Both men were transported to a local hospital.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*