

LTCC cracking down on tobacco use

Lake Tahoe Community College board of trustees approved a policy that prohibits smoking within buildings or facilities owned or leased by the district, and has designated marked outside areas on campus for smoking.

All other smoking and tobacco use in and on the LTCC campus is prohibited except in personal vehicles.

Individuals who refuse to comply with the college's smoking policy will be disciplined. For the purposes of this policy, "smoking" means all uses of tobacco, including cigar smoking, cigarette smoking, pipe smoking, e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco. The sale of tobacco products is also prohibited on college property.

The policy applies to all LTCC employees, students, vendors, visitors, and other people who use the college's vehicles and facilities.

Calif. first state to ban plastic bags

By Fenit Nirapril, AP

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday signed the nation's first statewide ban on single-use plastic bags at grocery and convenience stores, driven to action by pollution in streets and waterways.

A national coalition of plastic bag manufacturers immediately said it would seek a voter referendum to repeal the law, which is scheduled to take effect in July 2015.

Under SB270, plastic bags will be phased out of checkout counters at large grocery stores and supermarkets such as Wal-Mart and Target starting next summer, and convenience stores and pharmacies in 2016. The law does not apply to bags used for fruits, vegetables or meats, or to shopping bags used at other retailers. It allows grocers to charge a fee of at least 10 cents for using paper bags.

State Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Los Angeles, credits the momentum for statewide legislation to the more than 100 cities and counties, including Los Angeles and San Francisco, that already have such bans.

The law marks a major milestone for environmental activists who have successfully pushed plastic bag bans in cities across the U.S., including Chicago, Austin and Seattle. Hawaii is also on track to have a de-facto statewide ban, with all counties approving prohibitions.

"This bill is a step in the right direction – it reduces the torrent of plastic polluting our beaches, parks and even the vast ocean itself," Brown said in a signing statement. "We're the first to ban these bags, and we won't be the last."

Plastic bag manufacturers have aggressively pushed back through their trade group, the American Progressive Bag Alliance, which aired commercials in California blasting the ban as a cash-giveaway to grocers that would lead to a loss of thousands of manufacturing jobs.

"If this law were allowed to go into effect, it would jeopardize thousands of California manufacturing jobs, hurt the environment and fleece consumers for billions so grocery store shareholders and their union partners can line their pockets," Lee Califf, executive director of the manufacturer

trade group, said in a statement.

Padilla, the bill's author, said Californians would reject a referendum effort and quickly adapt their behavior to help the environment.

"For those folks concerned about the 10 cent fee that may be charged for paper, the simple elegant solution is to bring a reusable bag to the store," Padilla said.

Shoppers leaving a Ralphs supermarket Tuesday in downtown San Diego were divided as they weighed the legislation's environmental benefits against its costs. San Diego does not ban plastic bags.

"With the amount of waste that we produce, we can try to help out by slightly inconveniencing ourselves," said Megan Schenfeld, 29, whose arms were full of groceries in plastic bags after leaving reusable bags at home.

Robert Troxell, a 69-year-old former newspaper editor, said the fees are more than an inconvenience for retirees living on fixed incomes like him. He shops daily because he has only a small refrigerator in his hotel for low-income seniors.

"It becomes a flat tax on senior citizens," said Troxell, who lives off social security and other government assistance. "I have not disagreed with Jerry Brown on anything – until this."

The American Forest and Paper Association, a trade group representing paper bag makers, says the bill unfairly penalizes consumers who use their commonly recycled products, while holding reusable plastic bags to a lower standard for recyclable content.

Responding to the concerns about job losses, the bill includes \$2 million in loans for plastic bag manufacturers to shift their operations to make reusable bags. That provision won the support of Los Angeles Democratic Sens. Kevin De Leon and

Ricardo Lara, who had blocked earlier versions of the legislation.

Lawmakers of both parties who opposed SB270 said it would penalize lower-income residents by charging them for bags they once received for free. The bill was amended to waive fees for customers who are on public assistance and limit how grocers can spend the proceeds from the fees.

Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Puerto Rico also have pending legislation that would ban single-use bags, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Northern Nevada growing without tourism

By Ryan Frank, Las Vegas Sun

Reno had a problem in 1998. Lots of problems, in fact.

“The Biggest Little City in the World” long had been surpassed by Las Vegas and Atlantic City as a gaming destination, and tribal casinos had taken over Reno’s monopoly on northern California gamblers.

Lance Gilman, a music promoter-turned-real estate mogul, had a solution. While others focused on the warts of boarded up casinos, Gilman saw Reno’s potential as a hub for warehouses, manufacturers and data centers. And he had the cash to make a big bet on the region’s future.

Gilman and his partner bought a parcel of land east of town that was so big it covered more ground than the city of Las Vegas does today. On it, they planned to build what they

described as the world's biggest industrial park.

Sixteen years later, Gilman has the world's attention.

Tesla Motors announced this month it would build an electric car battery plant in Gilman's industrial park, the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center. It's expected to be one of the biggest buildings in the world and, if all goes as planned, deliver up to 22,000 jobs, \$100 billion in economic impact and a new industry to help power Nevada's economy.

Gov. Brian Sandoval said the deal "changed the trajectory of Nevada forever." State lawmakers agreed, approving four Tesla bills, 240-0, including more than \$1 billion in tax breaks and incentives.

Southern Nevadans may wonder why Tesla landed in tiny Storey County when Clark County has 30 times more land mass and 500 times more people. The lesson for Las Vegas is that the Reno region won because it had the right mix of strategy, location, geography and people.

Northern Nevada's civic leaders accepted the reality that tourism wasn't coming back and embraced Reno's new identity as a remote suburb of San Francisco, rich with wealth, talent and tech. Fortune 500 companies such as Amazon, Wal-Mart and Barnes & Noble picked the region so their trucks could reach every major market in the West with one-day shipping.

Read the whole story

Cyclist struck by vehicle

identified

Updated Sept. 30 5:15pm:

The South Lake Tahoe bicyclist struck by a vehicle on Sept. 29 has been identified as 62-year-old Robert Klein.

He is at Renown Medical Center in Reno. Police Lt. Brian Williams told *Lake Tahoe News* he has “significant head injuries.”

Klein was lying in the traffic lanes of Emerald Bay Road near McDonald’s at the Y when police arrived about 5:40pm Monday. Klein was not wearing a helmet.

Carmel Jennings, 57, of South Lake Tahoe was arrested on felony driving under the influence charges.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Will Nev. falter if Reid loses Senate control?

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON – As much as anyone, Harry Reid is responsible for building modern-day Nevada. He has leveraged political savvy and well-placed Washington friends to pave bike lanes, build solar plants and land Tesla Motors’ battery factory.

But Reid could lose something important this fall: His power to control the U.S. Senate.

Republicans are rising in Senate races across the country. Who

controls the Senate next remains a toss-up. If Republicans take six seats back in the Nov. 4 election, Reid will lose his seven-year grip on the majority leader's chair.

Conventional wisdom says Nevada will suffer if its senior senator loses his hold on the Senate's top position. But the consensus of more than a dozen veteran Democratic and Republican insiders say conventional wisdom is wrong. Reid, a former boxer, has proven to be a such a skilled Senate tactician that his political capital weighs more than his title.

"I think Sen. Reid is probably the most powerful person in Washington, D.C., whether in the majority or minority," said Tom Skancke, president of the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance and a longtime Reid supporter.

Read the whole story

Truckee sales tax goes up Wednesday

Taxable goods are going to be more expensive in Truckee starting Oct. 1.

Voters in June approved Measure R, which increases the sales tax from 8.125 percent to 8.375 percent. The additional tax is designed to raise \$10 million in 10 years that will be used for trails in the area. The bulk would go for new trails, with some money being held onto for maintenance.

Truckee's master plan calls for 29 miles of paved trails and 39 miles of dirt trails. To date the town has 15 miles of

paved and 14 miles of dirt trails.

Consumers will pay 25 cents more for every \$100 they spend.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Full containment of King Fire expected Sat.

Even though the King Fire continues to burn, much of the focus is now on repairing roads, mop up and making sure the forest is safe so people will be able to recreate in it again.

The fire that started Sept. 13 is still at 97,099 acres, but is 92 percent contained. Full containment is expected by Oct. 4.

Crews are removing hazardous trees, chipping brush and getting roads safe for public travel. First priority for roads are: Wentworth Spring, White Meadows Road, Ice House Road, Eleven Pines Road and Mosquito Road.

The fire continues to burn within the containment lines. About 3,400 people are still on the scene, though personnel are being sent home on a daily basis.

An arsonist is accused of starting the blaze that has charred a large swath of the Eldorado National Forest and part of the Tahoe National Forest. The fire took out 12 houses and 68 other structures.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Novasel: 'This is not a job for first-timers'

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the two El Dorado County District 5 supervisor candidates a series of questions. All are the same except for one that is specific to each candidate. The responses are being run in the order LTN received them.*



Name: Sue Novasel

Profession/work experience: Business owner/school board member

Age: 58

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: Presently, I am serving a third term in office (12 years) as a school board member (and past president) of Lake Tahoe Unified School District's board of education; president of the board of Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care; secretary of the board of Lake Tahoe Wedding & Honeymoon Association; board member of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce; and member of Barton Hospital's Community Advisory Committee. I have served on the original Meyers Community Plan team from 1990 to 1993; chair for over 10 years

of the Meyers Community Roundtable Committee; immediate past president of Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe; member of the 56 Acre/Lakeview Commons Advisory Committee; and a member of TRPA's Pathway 2007 Committee.

Why are you running for supervisor?: I have served our community for over 30 years as a member of over 20 boards. I am deeply rooted in our community. My varied background has given me the breadth and depth of experience necessary to understand the dynamics and complexities of the Tahoe basin and this district. I know how to make a fair and balanced decision while being respectful to others. I seek to be your county supervisor because I want to increase the service I can give to our community, and pledge to be your full time supervisor.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidate?: This is not a job for first-timers. I have a demonstrated ability to work in a governing body with professional administrative staff. My 12 years of experience as a public servant has also given me a broad-ranging set of connections with community residents as well as the skills required to deal with the demands and requirements of the job of county supervisor. Experience has taught me that good decisions result from reaching out to get information from all those affected and that listening carefully is generally more important than talking. I will work full time to achieve the greatest good for those I represent, which is critical for our community.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing El Dorado County and how will you deal with it?: Economic vitality is the most important issue throughout our district. TRPA's new Regional Plan update includes incentives and processes that can spur businesses to redevelop run-down properties or add new businesses to our communities while improving our environment.

In addition, a huge issue in all of District V is the fire

risk resulting from poor forest health and dry conditions. We must be sure we are organized for rapid response by CalFire, the U.S. Forest Service, and local fire agencies so that effective coordinated action by all can occur the instant a fire starts.

Another important duty of the District V supervisor is to assure fair representation. Joint meetings between the county and City Council, school and utility districts, Tahoe Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, and Lake Valley Fire District should be sought where major issues, challenges and opportunities for joint action can be discussed and planned.

The 56-acre project, which includes Lakeview Commons and the campground on the other side of Highway 50, is owned by the county and maintained by the city. The county has not invested a dime and does not contribute to the maintenance and operations. Would you ask the county to help with paying some of the bills or would you advocate for deeding the land to the city? Why or why not?: The county has invested money within the 56-acre project area. El Dorado County built the South Lake Tahoe library and fully funds its operations, including snow removal. County staff maintains the building and grounds. As a member of the 56-acre Advisory Committee, our group studied the possibility of transferring property to the city. The property is currently under a 50-year lease between the city and the county. With the joint City-County Recreation Master Plan and the 56-acre Master Plan having most of its elements still to be done, there may be some capital improvement opportunities that the existing city/county arrangement may offer – which might go away if the city wholly owns the property. In the mid-90s, a transfer nearly occurred but the effort was terminated due to West Slope concerns about the city's commitment to retain the campground and the library. Those issues would all need to be addressed prior to pursuing a transfer. That being said, Lakeview Commons is a study on how our community can plan and create a masterpiece

of recreation and community events for all residents (city and county) and tourists alike.

The city and county are putting together a recreation master plan, but the Board of Supervisors has never voted on whether it would fund the implementation of the plan. Would you dedicate funds to promote the investment of recreation?: Absolutely. Lake Tahoe is a world-class destination resort town. As our area has struggled to re-invent ourselves in the area of recreation and tourism, it is vital that we understand how our locals and tourists alike need better recreational opportunities for improving our quality of life. Specific projects need to be identified so that priorities can be planned and implemented. The county will be considering funding when it [had] budget hearings in September. There is a joint City Council/Board of Supervisors meeting scheduled in South Lake Tahoe on Oct. 28, at which time it is expected that the Recreation Master Plan will be adopted.

Being on the board requires working with four others. Give readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: The key is to listen to what other are saying, seeking and noting areas of agreement and disagreement. I always consider possible compromises that might achieve agreement (or at least, seek first steps toward resolution and action). To be an effective, successful leader you must listen to all sides then initiate action by incorporating items that everyone can agree upon and which ends with a positive solution.

What is working in the county and what isn't; and how would you go about changing what isn't working?: County employees are doing their jobs, serving the public in an excellent manner. What is not working is the board and some department heads who are not working together and with the CAO. The board is not giving consistent policy direction or setting a level of civility in public meetings that the public expects and deserves. There will be three new personalities on the board

in this coming year. The board needs to work better together to become a strong advocate for public policy and leadership for our county. I will insist upon civility, respect and action plans to create a clearer direction for our county government.

Would you consider replacing the current CAO? Why or why not?:

It is the duty of the board to give clear direction to the CAO. With three new Board members, providing a stable atmosphere and consistent direction needs to be the first course of action. We need to work with the current CAO at that level in order to understand and assess the CAO's job performance.

The grand jury labeled the county dysfunctional. What is your opinion of that assessment?:

I agree with the grand jury's assessment that dysfunction within the board needs to be addressed. As to the recommendation to change several elected department head positions to appointed, the public reaction to that proposal has been extremely negative and I disagree with the grand jury on this point. There are benefits to the elected department heads having the independence to serve the voters, as opposed to being controlled by the board and/or administration. Most elected department heads are not seriously challenged (if challenged at all) when they run for re-election, giving them little need to posture for political reasons. I believe it is important to communicate well with department heads and I will work hard to build positive working relationships with both those who are appointed and elected.

Agriculture is a huge economic driver for the county. What are your ideas in regards to the drought to ensure farmers and ranchers have enough water?:

With regard to the agriculture, issues of urbanization, conservation, management and utilization of lands within the county are fundamental elements that need to be considered as pressures from increases in population within our county threaten the rural

character of our lands as well as the water supply in our county. It is especially important during these drought years and vital that agricultural water supplies be kept from being diverted to urban uses. The county needs to be proactive in the development of long-term water sources for irrigation and we need to be constantly searching for ways to expand sources. We need to prioritize water needs and actively pursue long-term solutions for the agriculture industry. I will take steps to assure that plans for future water use are properly drawn, reviewed and executed throughout the county. We need to get information about opportunities and costs, then evaluate feasibility and determine how extended supply facilities can be financed.

The Sand Fire this summer proved El Dorado County was lacking in emergency response coordination efforts. What improvements would you propose?: The Sand Fire, similar to the Angora Fire in Tahoe, was a “perfect storm”, as characterized by first responders. A huge issue in all of District V is the fire risk resulting from poor forest health and dry conditions. We must be sure we are organized for rapid response by CalFire, the U.S. Forest Service, and local fire agencies so that effective coordinated action by all can occur the instant a fire starts. I will work to ensure that reserve funding is strengthened to provide critical response time to emergency events while still providing general funding sources that are equipped to handle essential services and public safety to our communities.

How would you improve relations with the city of South Lake Tahoe?: To improve staff relationships, I would have the principal counterpart positions – county chief administrative officer and city manager, county counsel and city attorney – meet after facilitating and developing a discussion agenda, then have them meet on a regular basis thereafter. To improve the elected officials relationship, I would meet periodically with the mayor and, with the mayor’s knowledge and approval, meet with other members of the City Council. These meetings

would be in addition to being sure that my office did a very good job of setting up the annual county board/city of South Lake Tahoe meeting, such as the one being held in October. To improve communications, this would include setting joint meetings between City Council and county supervisors, taking tours of city and county projects with emphasis on major project areas, and meeting with representatives of other Tahoe basin agencies such as the TRPA, Tahoe Conservancy, Tahoe chambers, U.S. Forest Service and Lake Valley Fire District.

You are involved in many things, how can people trust you will devote the necessary time it takes to be supervisor?: I recognize that the job of supervisor is at least 70 hours per week, with over 500 meetings per year. This obligation would be of utmost importance to me and would necessitate the need to resign from other positions I hold within our community. I pledge to devote my complete attention and energies to being a full time supervisor for District V.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: Many people didn't know (until I mentioned it during the primaries) that I was an Olympic torch runner when the torch came through Tahoe in 1984 (on its way to the Summer Games in Los Angeles). I was the student representative for Lake Tahoe Community College's board of trustees at the time and they asked me to represent the college by running the torch for the school. It was such a great honor that I decided to donate the torch back to the college and it still resides in their gym today.

Brown takes last-minute action on bills

By David Siders and Alexei Koseff, Sacramento Bee

Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation Saturday giving the proponents of California ballot initiatives more time to collect signatures and allowing them to withdraw their initiatives or add amendments.

The signing was among dozens of bill actions the Democratic governor announced Saturday as he works to meet a Tuesday deadline to act on legislation lawmakers sent him this year. He also approved bills limiting school officials' ability to suspend students and authorizing a diversion program for military personnel or veterans who are accused of misdemeanors while suffering from service-related trauma, substance abuse or mental health problems.

Brown vetoed part of a budget bill that would have awarded an additional \$50 million each to the University of California and California State University systems for deferred maintenance the systems deem critical.

Read the whole story

USFS backs off wilderness photo restrictions

By Rob Davis, Oregonian

The U.S. Forest Service's chief backed off proposed

restrictions on photography in wilderness areas Thursday after facing sweeping protests from lawmakers, First Amendment advocates and media outlets across the country.

“The U.S. Forest Service remains committed to the First Amendment,” the agency’s chief, Tom Tidwell, said in a statement. “To be clear, provisions in the draft directive do not apply to news gathering or activities.”



The USFS is looking at revising rules for filming/photographing wilderness areas like Desolation. Photo/LTN file

Tidwell’s statement said he was attempting to “clarify the agency’s intentions” and would not require a permit for news-gathering or recreational photographs in wilderness areas.

Tidwell didn’t explain why others in his agency told the *Oregonian* the opposite just two days earlier.

On Tuesday, Liz Close, the agency’s acting wilderness director, said the Forest Service would permit reporting in wilderness depending on its subject matter, with exceptions for breaking news. “If you were engaged on reporting that was in support of wilderness characteristics, that would be permitted,” Close said.

She acknowledged that reporters shooting videos, even on iPhones, would need special permits.

The agency's news release Thursday said the maximum \$1,500 permit fees were "erroneous, and refers to a different proposed directive."

Read the whole story

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***LTN* notes:**

- To comment on the proposal, go online. The deadline is Dec. 3.
- The number of film requests the local USFS office gets was not immediately available.
- Here is a statement from the National Press Photographers Association.