

Motel to be replaced with spa, restaurant, gym



Highland Inn will soon no longer be a lodging establishment in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

The 27-unit Highland Inn next to Applebee's in South Lake Tahoe is about to be transformed.

When the owners are done it will no longer be a motel, but instead will be a restaurant-bar, spa and gym.

Moe Rahmani, who represents owners the Rahmani Family Trust, was not available for comment.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has already signed off on converting the one residential unit and 27 tourist accommodation units to commercial floor area.

The project goes to the South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission on April 10 for design review and a special use permit.

The plans call for a 3,851-square-foot restaurant and bar;

1,783-square-foot gym; and 3,352-square-foot spa.

The exterior will be remodeled to include changes to the roofline, stonework and wood siding. Fences will be replaced and exterior lighting improved.

The 960-square-feet of retail at the front of the building will be retained.

If this is approved, the next step is to get a building permit. That could take three weeks.

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Notes:

- Planning Commission meets April 10 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.
- Other agenda items include final map review to subdivide existing 15-unit mobile home park at 1025 Shepherds Trail; and to grandfather in the sign for Heidi's restaurant.

Police looking for missing Truckee man



Duane Colin

A 60-year-old Truckee man has been missing since March 28.

Duane Colin is 5-feet, 11-inches tall, 170 pounds, gray hair and brown eyes.

His vehicle is at his residence. It is not known what he was last wearing.

Anyone with information, is asked to call 530.550.2320.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Teachers' pension fund gap getting bigger

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

CalSTRS said Thursday that its long-term funding shortfall has risen to \$73.7 billion, a stark reminder of the financial issues facing the teachers' pension fund.

The newest tally reflects CalSTRS' financial condition as of last June 30. The pension fund said the shortfall grew by \$2.7 billion in the 12 months since the previous valuation of June 30, 2012.

CalSTRS' latest calculation comes as the Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown continue to debate how to fix the teachers' retirement fund. Brown originally said the Legislature could

enact a funding plan for CalSTRS in 2015, but he also supported the decision by Senate and Assembly committees to hold hearings last month on the issue.

Read the whole story

2 El Dorado County women accused of tax fraud

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

A federal grand jury in Sacramento returned a 28-count indictment Friday against two El Dorado Hills women, accusing them of preparing bogus tax returns and receiving illegitimate refunds.

Barbara Antonucci, 49, and Sherry Taggart, 54, are charged with conspiracy to file false claims, filing false claims and aggravated identity theft, according a federal Department of Justice news release.

Court documents say that starting in March 2008 and continuing through March 2014, Antonucci and Taggart obtained the names, Social Security numbers and additional identifying information of other people. The women allegedly used the personal information to file federal tax returns in their own names and those of other taxpayers.

Read the whole story

NSA reforms don't protect journalists

By Cora Currier, Columbia Journalism Review

Last week the Obama administration set forth a proposal to reform one part of the National Security Agency's surveillance program: the indiscriminate collection of American phone records.

Under the president's proposal, the government would no longer collect call data in bulk but would be allowed to ask for it from phone companies with court approval, and only for numbers linked to terrorism.

But the White House proposal leaves plenty of room for reporters' information to be caught up in the NSA's—albeit smaller—dragnet: The government would still be allowed to collect data for numbers “two hops,” or degrees of separation, from the targeted number, down from three. And once the government has that data, there are few restrictions on what they can do with it. In other words, the proposed reforms don't appear to do anything to address journalists' concerns about this administration's crackdown on national security leaks.

“Journalists are at risk if they communicate by phone with potential NSA targets – or even if they simply talk with others who happen to speak with those targets,” said Patrick C. Toomey, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union's National Security Project, in an email.

For example, Katherine Hawkins, a researcher who has studied Guantanamo Bay prison, noted in August that it was no stretch

of the imagination to think that former Guantanamo detainees might be NSA targets. The relatively small community of lawyers, rights activists, and any of the journalists who cover Guantanamo Bay (myself included) would then be easily within “two hops,” even if they’ve never spoken to the target.

Read the whole story

LTVA fireworks legal fees top \$32,000

As of April 4, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority had spent \$32,769.80 to defend the fireworks lawsuit.

“... the LTVA executive committee decided to retain Feldman, McLaughlin, Thiel, LLP, specifically partners Lew Feldman and Kara Thiel. The firm’s experience in environmental matters specific to Lake Tahoe, its expertise and record of success were key factors,” Pat Ronan, chairman of LTVA board of directors, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Feldman’s extensive knowledge and background in Tahoe area environmental issues, and Thiel’s experience on staff at Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency were determining factors for the committee.”

The executive committee is made up of board members Ronan, Jerry Bindel and John Koster.

More legal fees will be incurred until the suit is completely finished.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Motorcycle driver dies from injuries

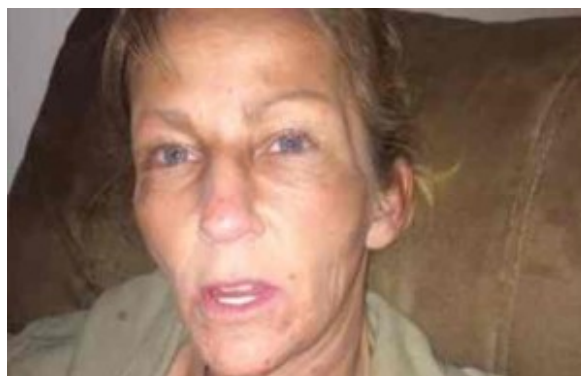
The second person involved in a motorcycle accident on March 22 has died.

Andrey L. Gallegos, 20, of Sparks died at Renown Medical Center in Reno. He was driving the motorcycle in Carson City when it collided with a vehicle.

Audrey G. Rugamas, 21, of South Lake Tahoe was also killed in the crash.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

S. Lake Tahoe woman missing, husband arrested



Camilyn Kay Price-Miller

Updated: April 4 8:05pm

A 47-year-old South Lake Tahoe woman has been missing for several days and her husband is in jail on an attempted murder warrant.

Camilyn Kay Price-Miller was reported missing April 3 by her husband, however her daughter in Kitsap County, Wash., had already reported her missing to her local sheriff's department on March 31.

South Lake Tahoe police officers arrested Jeffrey Miller, 44, on April 4 on the attempted murder warrant out of Nevada County. According to officials, in November he tried to beat his wife to death.

It wasn't long after that that the couple moved into an apartment in South Lake Tahoe near the state line.

"There is some information we are holding close to the vest. We are searching all areas of town for her Toyota 4Runner," police Lt. Brian Williams told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We don't know if she is alive. We are working diligently to find that out. We believe there could be foul play in this."

Miller has not been charged with any crime in South Lake Tahoe. He is being held in the local jail until he is arraigned Monday and could be sent back to Nevada County. His dog was taken into custody by animal control.

Price-Miller's SUV is dark in color with California license plate of 5ADM509. It has two stickers affixed to the rear bumper. One reads "Keep Tahoe Blue" and the other "Keep Tahoe Kind". Affixed to the rear window is a sticker that displays the letters "LT".

Anyone with information should call 530.542.6100.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Yelp at center of free-speech case

By Angus Loten, Wall Street Journal

A closely watched Internet free-speech case is headed to the Virginia Supreme Court this month, with many businesses that live and die by online reviews rooting for the owner of a small, suburban carpet cleaner.

In early 2012, Joe Hadeed, owner of Hadeed Carpet Cleaning Inc., arrived at his office atop a 70,000-square-foot warehouse in Springfield, Va., to discover a critique posted on Yelp. “Lots of hype, a mediocre cleaning and a hassle at the end. Don’t go with Joe!” wrote a “Mike M.” A few days later, another review, by “M.P.” popped up: “I will never use them again and advise others to proceed with caution!” it said.

Over the next several weeks, a string of similarly harsh reviews replaced more-favorable comments “as if someone had flipped a switch,” said the 47-year-old Hadeed, in an interview last month at his offices, where trucks drop off carpets to be washed, rinsed and dried.

Following the rash of negative Yelp reviews, business sank 30 percent in 2012, Hadeed says. Last year, Hadeed cleaned just 20,000 carpets, down from 29,000 in 2011. Revenue fell to \$9.5 million from \$12 million in 2011. Hadeed said the business has let 80 workers go and sold six trucks, reducing its fleet to 54.

The Federal Trade Commission has received more than 2,046 complaints filed about Yelp from 2008 through March 4,

according to data reviewed by the Wall Street Journal, following a Freedom of Information Act request. Yelp shares fell 5.7 percent in Wednesday trading, after the tally was posted on FTC.gov.

[Read the whole story](#)

El Dorado County targeting welfare fraud

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency reports that a team effort with the District Attorney's Office to combat welfare fraud resulted in the referral of more than 200 cases and recovery of more than \$340,000 last year.

"We take fraud seriously," Patty Moley, program manager of income maintenance and employment services, said in a written statement. "Our job is to make sure that people who need and qualify for benefits receive them. But it is also our responsibility to look for false information and potential fraud situations."

Suspected fraud cases are referred to the District Attorney's Office to be investigated. Investigators go to the client's home and/or employer to verify information and collect any needed documents. The information is reviewed and, if warranted, the fraud case is formally prosecuted, officials said.

[Read the whole story](#)