

Calif. lawmakers propose limits on gifts

By Laurel Rosenhall, Sacramento Bee

Following a spate of ethical problems at the Capitol, a group of California lawmakers Thursday proposed a set of bills they say will change the way they do business.

In recent months, two senators have taken leaves of absence to fight criminal charges, and two Sacramento lobbying firms paid record-setting fines for violating lobbying laws.

Senate Democrats, saying the events had prompted their action, unveiled proposals to ban campaign fundraising parties at the homes of registered lobbyists, cap gifts for legislators at \$200 apiece and specifically prevent them from getting free tickets to concerts, sporting events and amusement parks.

Read the whole story

El Niño could bring wet weather to Calif.

By Tony Barboza, Los Angeles Times

U.S. government forecasters say odds are increasing that El Niño, an ocean-warming pattern that alters weather across the globe, will develop later this year.

Conditions in the eastern tropical Pacific have shifted enough that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on

Thursday activated its alert system to issue an official El Niño watch.

The alert means that meteorologists now believe El Niño, a natural cycle that occurs every two to seven years, has a more than a 50 percent chance of forming by the summer or fall.

Read the whole story

Poll: Nevada obesity rate among lowest in U.S.

By Kira Terry, Las Vegas Review-Journal

A Gallup Well-Being poll released last week shows Nevada among the top three states with the lowest obesity rates with an average of 21.1 percent obesity.

Nevada comes in as the third lowest in the nation, falling just behind Colorado at 20.4 percent and Montana at 19.6 percent.

Gallup used information gathered from telephone interviews that took place through much of 2013 as part of the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index survey.

The poll highlights that Nevadans and other top states with the lowest obesity rates have less of a possibility of being diagnosed with chronic diseases during their lifetime, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression, diabetes, cancer and heart attack.

Read the whole story

Possible political payback by indicted supervisor

By George Warren, Channel 10

As El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting prepares to stand trial next month on multiple felony charges stemming from his alleged misuse of state grant money, he's apparently found time to target the two elected officials who put him in the predicament.

Two candidates filed papers this week to run against El Dorado County Auditor-Controller Joe Harn, who first called attention to the irregularities, and District Attorney Vern Pierson, who obtained the indictment. Friday was the deadline to file.

Neither county official has ever been challenged in an election before and they say the two campaigns have Nutting's fingerprints on them.

"This is political payback because the district attorney and I have done our jobs. That's all it is," Harn said. "Ray Nutting is looking for county officials who won't call him out when he improperly obtains the public's money."

Read the whole story

Calif. sees dearth of new teachers

By Diana Lambert and Phillip Reese, *Sacramento Bee*

Young teachers have become far more scarce in California classrooms after school districts slashed their budgets to survive the recession.

From 2008 to 2013, California saw a 40 percent drop in teachers with less than six years' experience, according to a *Sacramento Bee* review of state data.

As the state cut funding, districts laid off teachers with the least seniority and stopped hiring new applicants. Those employment practices, in turn, discouraged college students from pursuing the profession in California, as enrollment in teaching programs fell by 41 percent between 2008 and 2012.

Students are learning from more experienced teachers, but the hiring changes have disrupted the natural flow of classroom talent that districts typically rely upon. First-time teachers bring "freshness and energy" and ensure schools have a steady pipeline ready to replace veteran instructors who retire, said Jon Snyder, executive director of the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education.

[Read the whole story](#)

Business owner draws gun on

suspect

An argument on private property escalated to the point a gun was drawn Saturday morning.

South Lake Tahoe police officers said John Runnels saw a guy walk across his auto lot at the Y and then they got into an argument. Then the suspect allegedly shoved Runnels to the ground. Runnels, who has a concealed weapons permit, pulled his gun.

The suspect fled and Runnels called 911.

A description of the suspect has not been released. He is wanted on a battery charge.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

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McClintock to face GOP challenger

By Christopher Cadelago, Sacramento Bee

Republican Art Moore filed paperwork Friday to challenge veteran GOP Rep. Tom McClintock, casting himself as a pragmatic supporter of limited government with roots in the foothill-based 4th Congressional District.

Moore said it's clear that the federal government is not working for the district, which he believes should be represented by someone with a completely different perspective on public service.

A graduate of Placer High School and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Moore brings to the campaign a combined 14 years of active duty and National Guard service. He spent 30 months deployed overseas and currently is a major in the Army National Guard, he said.

El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago pulled papers for the race but did not file.

Read the whole story

June election full of choices for Tahoe voters

By Kathryn Reed

Voters will have a slew of decisions to make in June during the primary election.

The deadline to file for office for El Dorado County was March 7 at 5pm. That was the same for Placer County. However, for Placer the date is extended to March 12 if an incumbent has not filed. March 14 is the deadline to file for Douglas County races.

The following people are running for El Dorado County offices:

- **Superior Court Office 1**

Vicki Ashworth, David Combellack, Joe Weinberger

- **Superior Court Office 3**

Suzanne Kingsbury

- **Superior Court Office 4**

Steven Bailey

- **Superior Court Office 5**

Joseph Hoffman, Dylan Sullivan

- **Superior Court Office 6**

James Wagoner

- **County superintendent of schools**

Jeremy Meyers

- **County supervisor District 4**

Scott McNeil, Tim Palmer, Lori Parlin, Howard Penn, Michael Jon Pettibone, Winston Pingrey, Michael Ranalli, Dave Souza

- **County supervisor District 5**

Kevin Brown, Kenny Curtzwiler, Gerri Grego, Sue Novasel, Teresa Piper, Angela Swanson

- **Assessor**

Karl Weiland

- **Auditor-controller**

Joe Harn, Michael Owen

- **District attorney**

Judson Henry, Vern Pierson

- **Recorder-clerk**

Chris Amaral, Bill Schultz

- **Sheriff**

John D'Agostini

- **Surveyor**

Rich Briner

- **Treasurer**

Ron Briggs, C.L. Raffety.

Here are the candidates in Placer County:

- **Superior Court Office 1**

Charles Wachob

- **Superior Court Office 2**

Michael Jones

- **County Superintendent of Schools**

Gayle Garbolino-Mojica

- **County supervisor District 1**

Jack Duran

- **County supervisor District 2**

Regy Bronner, Robert Weygandt

- **Assessor**

Kristen Spears

- **Controller**

Andrew Sisk

- **Clerk-recorder**

Jim McCauley

- **District attorney**

R. Scott Owens

- **Sheriff**

Edward Neil Bonner

- **Treasurer**

Jenine Windeshausen.

California statewide offices on the June ballot include:

- Governor
- Lieutenant governor
- Secretary of state
- Controller
- Treasurer
- Attorney general
- Insurance commissioner.

In order to win the contest outright on June 3 a person must receive 50 percent plus one vote. If no one reaches that amount, then the top two vote getters will square off in November.

In addition to the individual races, there are a number of local and statewide initiatives that will be before voters in June and November. Plus, El Dorado and Placer residents will be asked to vote on a congressional race and Assembly.

On the November ballot will be South Lake Tahoe City Council candidates. The seats occupied by Angela Swanson, Brooke Laine and Tom Davis will be up.

November will be the first time Lake Tahoe Unified and Lake Tahoe Community College candidates are elected by district. This means people will vote for only one person.

South Tahoe PUD seats will also be up.

The filing for November opens in mid-July.

SLT pays ex-employee in multi-layered lawsuit

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe has agreed to pay Leigh-Ellen Yarbrough \$49,500 in what it calls a breach of contract case.

Her attorney says it was much more than that.

City Attorney Tom Watson said he had little to do with the case because it was handled by outside counsel and he was new to the city as the lawsuit was wrapping up.

While the council agreed to settle in November, the formal vote on the settlement was not taken until last month in closed session.

Several charges against the city were alleged in the lawsuit.

According to Jacqueline Mittelstadt, Yarbrough's attorney, it all started when Yarbrough called 911 from the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena to report a sex offender being near children. Yarbrough was a temporary part-time employee at the rink when it was still operated by the city and had a contract with the city to be an independent coach.

That wasn't the first time Yarbrough had warned authorities about the sex offender's presence.

The sex offender's wife was a member of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission and said it was fine for him to be there because their daughter was skating.

Shortly thereafter Yarbrough was banned from the arena. And in the settlement agreement she is banned for the next three years.

During this time she lost her job, so part of the suit had to do with being wrongfully terminated.

"You can't fire someone for whistle blowing," Mittelstadt said.

The sex offender ultimately went to prison and the rec commissioner resigned.

"The community of South Lake Tahoe should be giving her a medal. For all we know she helped avert another Jaycee Lee Dugard situation," Mittelstadt told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Mittelstadt said the most egregious part of the whole issue is "this is what every citizen should be doing to protect our children ... calling 911 to protect our children. Nepotism and politics slammed this person."

The city's insurance company is footing the bill, according to Watson.