

Placer County nonprofit loses meal delivery contract

By Anita Creamer, Sacramento Bee

Seniors First, the nonprofit agency that administers Placer County's federally funded seniors programs, lost its contract late last week to deliver meals to more than 100 homebound seniors.

The Area 4 Agency on Aging board instead awarded the Meals on Wheels contract for the Placer suburbs and foothills communities to Meals on Wheels by ACC, which since 2010 has been the senior nutrition provider for Sacramento County.

The \$85,000 contract for the remainder of the fiscal year ends June 30 but can be renewed for up to three years.

Read the whole story

Political groups in Nev. slow to disclose donors

By Andrew Doughman, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada's politicians are assembling stockpiles of money, the ammunition for this year's election campaign season.

They will report millions of dollars in campaign contributions this week on annual disclosure forms, but that's just the money elected officials are required to report.

As in the 2012 election, groups unaffiliated with any

candidate will likely spend millions of dollars to bankroll advertisements aimed at Nevada voters, and it's unclear what, if anything, these groups need to tell you about who's paying for the ads.

Judges in several Nevada court cases are considering whether groups sending political messages must disclose their donors in Nevada.

Read the whole story

No snow: Monitor Pass open mid-winter

Publisher's note: *This is one of a series of blurbs about how the lack of winter is impacting businesses in the Lake Tahoe Basin. If you have an idea, please email it to info@LakeTahoeNews.net.*

There are traditional mountain passes that close for the bulk of the winter. Monitor Pass is usually among those.

However, this stretch of Highway 89 has opened after closing at the start of the season. There just isn't any snow now so Caltrans is letting motorists use it.

This is the earliest it has opened in seven years. But if winter returns, the road closure is likely to return as well.

Sonora Pass (Highway 108), Ebbetts Pass (Highway 4) and Tioga Pass (Highway 120), remain closed. However, Highway 120 east from Highway 395 to the town of Benton is open. Normally it is closed all winter and spring.

These passes are likely to open in mid-May.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

California earns F for timely ER treatments

By Eryn Brown, Los Angeles Times

An updated national report on U.S. emergency medical care has again awarded California an F for lacking access to speedy treatment, noting that the state has the fewest hospital emergency rooms per capita – 6.7 per 1 million people – in the nation.

The America's Emergency Care Environment report card, which gauges how well states support emergency care, was released Thursday by the advocacy group American College of Emergency Physicians. Tracking 136 measures from sources including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the organization called overcrowding in California emergency wards a "critical problem" and urged the state to increase its healthcare workforce and beef up a variety of facilities to reduce long waits for emergency services.

On average, Californians who were admitted into the hospital after visiting an emergency room waited more than five and a half hours from the time they arrived in the ER to the time they left it, the report said.

Read the whole story

McClintock may be challenged

By Christopher Cadelago, Sacramento Bee

Looks like Rep. Tom McClintock will get a challenge from the left. Democrat Kris Johnson plans to run in the Republican-dominated 4th Congressional District.

The Granite Bay resident filed the necessary paperwork to run just days after news anchor Walt Gray ended speculation that he would mount an independent campaign against McClintock, a rock-ribbed Republican.

Johnson, who has yet to formally announce her candidacy, said in a message posted to her website that she was frustrated and angry about the poor performance of elected officials to stem the economic crisis in the Foothills.

Read the whole story

Smart phones share data unbeknownst to users

By Elizabeth Dwoskin, Wall Street Journal

Fan Zhang, the owner of Happy Child, a trendy Asian restaurant in downtown Toronto, knows that 170 of his customers went clubbing in November. He knows that 250 went to the gym that month, and that 216 came in from Yorkville, an upscale neighborhood.

Businesses are tracking their customers and building profiles of their daily habits using a network of startups that have placed sensors in restaurants, yoga studios and other sites. Chris Gilpin, founder of one such site, Turnstyle, joins the News Hub.

The sensors, each about the size of a deck of cards, follow signals emitted from WiFi-enabled smartphones. That allows them to create portraits of roughly 2 million people's habits as they have gone about their daily lives, traveling from yoga studios to restaurants, to coffee shops, sports stadiums, hotels, and nightclubs.

Read the whole story

Woman shot at Carson Tahoe hospital, man in custody

By KTVN-TV

A woman has been shot at Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center in Carson City.

Sheriff Ken Furlong tells Channel 2 News the shooting happened at 11:30 Sunday morning.

The shooting happened on the 3rd floor of the hospital. That floor is currently sealed off as officials investigate.

Read the whole story

Solar desalination may be answer to water woes

By Peter Kelly-Detwiler, Forbes

Aaron Mandell, founder and chairman of WaterFX, looks at California's water issue like a classic entrepreneur. Where others see problems, he sees opportunity for improvement and profit. And that opportunity is huge.

It is common knowledge that access to clean water is a mounting problem across the globe. However, few places have water issues as complex and challenging as California, which has been dealing with the water issue for generations (some may remember the 1974 Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway film "Chinatown" that focused on the California water wars of the early 1900s). In California, the issue is highly complex, layered in a complicated history of rights, claimants, and the physical reality of too much demand for a limited supply. Water issues are also inextricably linked to energy issues: it takes an enormous amount of energy to pump, treat, and move water. So the water problem is not only limited to H₂O, it's a costly energy issue as well.

Mandell hopes to change that reality. He has a vision for how to make that happen, starting with a clean and modular technology and an open source approach that he hopes will stimulate a growing community of solutions providers. His company, WaterFX, has created a solar-powered desalination system to treat agricultural drainage that is not only benign from an energy standpoint, but also leaves the agricultural environment in better shape.

[Read the whole story](#)

No snow: Non-Tahoe entity capitalizing on conditions

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The Napa Valley Wine Train is trying to benefit from Lake Tahoe's lackluster snowfall.

A press release says, "To put those neglected Tahoe season passes to a good use, we are offering a discount of \$30 off our Gourmet Express lunch and/or dinner experiences through March simply by mentioning The Napa Ski Pass when booking and presenting your Tahoe season pass during check-in."

The wine train is recognizing all Lake Tahoe area season passes, not just resorts in the basin.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Blogger's incarceration raises First Amendment issues

By Campbell Robertson, New York Times

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – For over six years, Roger Shuler has hounded figures of the state legal and political establishment

on his blog, Legal Schnauzer, a hothouse of furious but often fuzzily sourced allegations of deep corruption and wide-ranging conspiracy. Some of these allegations he has tested in court, having sued his neighbor, his neighbor's lawyer, his former employer, the police department, the sheriff's department, the Alabama State Bar and two county circuit judges, among others. Mostly, he has lost.

But even those who longed for his muzzling, and there are many, did not see it coming like this: with Shuler sitting in jail indefinitely, and now on the list of imprisoned journalists worldwide kept by the Committee to Protect Journalists. There, in the company of jailed reporters in China, Iran and Egypt, is Shuler, the only person on the list in the Western Hemisphere.

A former sports reporter and a former employee in a university's publications department, Shuler, 57, was arrested in late October on a contempt charge in connection with a defamation lawsuit filed by the son of a former governor. The circumstances surrounding that arrest, including a judge's order that many legal experts described as unconstitutional and behavior by Shuler that some of the same experts described as self-defeating posturing, have made for an exceptionally messy test of constitutional law.

Read the whole story