

Nevada lacking doctors, nurses

By Andrew Doughman, Las Vegas Sun

The chronic shortage of doctors that afflicts Nevadans may grow worse, lawmakers were warned Wednesday.

A group of health care experts reviewed the state's longstanding deficiency in providing an adequate health care workforce for Nevada's residents at a legislative committee, providing fresh data showing that Nevada still ranks poorly among states for the number of doctors and nurses it counts among its population.

That shortage of doctors, nurses and other health care professionals isn't going away anytime soon, experts say. Instead, it could actually be getting worse.

The advent of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act mandates and provides subsidies for people to get health insurance, and with hundreds of thousands of Nevadans predicted to get insurance, there's even more pressure on the health care system to have enough professionals to see patients like you.

Read the whole story

Senior gambling addiction

rates soaring

By Lynn Stuart Parramore, AlterNet

Atlantic City boasts fabulous amenities for America's senior citizens. See the broad boardwalk, perfect for fresh air and exercise. Notice the limited-mobility seniors rolling along on rented scooters and the wheelchair-bound joining the fun at easily accessible slot machines and blackjack tables. Feast your eyes on dozens of exotic and affordable buffets, and don't miss the drug discounts and free lunch coupons handed out at every turn. All day and far into the night, the buses zip to and from retirement centers, carrying promises of excitement. And did you hear? Tony Bennett's here tonight, crooning all those songbook classics grandma knows by heart. And she's not going alone. She found a date on an Atlantic City senior hookup site.

Look: just over there is your neighbor Mr. Jones, professional man and pillar of the community. At 68 he's the picture of respectability and sound judgment.

Only now he's hunched over a blackjack table, hands trembling over a stack of plastic chips. Mr. Jones has blown through \$200,000 of his retirement savings so far this year. He has fallen behind on his house payments. His children, who live far away, don't have a clue what Dad has been doing every afternoon these last few months since Mom died. Mr. Jones keeps his habit a secret. Once a sunny optimist, he feels humiliated. Mr. Jones hates the person he has become.

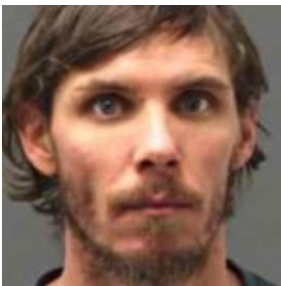
Seniors are the fastest growing population of gamblers. They are gambling away their income, their savings, and their chance for a secure future. When they lose, they can't make it up or start over. It's a no-win game, driven by a greedy industry united in unholy alliance with policy makers and politicians who turn a blind eye to the social and economic

costs of gambling.

Read the whole story

Burglary suspect arrested in Kings Beach

A Merced man is behind bars accused of multiple burglaries in the North Lake Tahoe area.



Jason Woodral

Jason Woodral, 35, was booked into the Placer County Jail on Jan. 8 on eight counts of burglary. His bail was set at \$200,000.

Early Wednesday, sheriff's deputies responded to the Kings Beach Laundromat for a reported burglary in progress. The subject was caught in a residential area.

Investigators believe Woodral is responsible for burglaries at local businesses in Kings Beach, including the Kings Beach Laundromat, Kings Beach Car Wash, Tahoe Cutting Company and Tahoe Pilates Studio.

Woodral had an outstanding arrest warrant stemming from a burglary committed in Merced in 2009.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

No snow: Aramark – sleds, boat cruises impacted

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 info@LakeTahoeNews.net.*

Zephyr Cove Resorts is being hit extremely hard by the lack of snow this winter.

The snowmobiles have not been fired up all season. The opening date has been pushed back three times. Now the projected start date is Jan. 15, but that is weather dependent.

Snowmobiling is a \$1.7 million money generator – usually – for Aramark. Aramark has the concession at the resort and also operates the two South Shore paddle-wheelers.

The M.S. Dixie paddle-wheeler is no longer able to get into Emerald Bay because the water level is so low. It gets to the edge and then turns around. Reservation specialists have finally been told this and have changed what they tell the public to be the truth.

A spokeswoman from Aramark, which runs the sled and boating operations, failed to return phone calls.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Truckee sailor dies in military crash

By CNN

The search has been suspended for a U.S. Navy sailor missing after the crash of a MH-53E Sea Dragon off Virginia's southern coast, a Coast Guard official said Thursday.

The search for the sailor lasted more than 30 hours and covered more than 500 square miles, Coast Guard Capt. John Little said.

At least two sailors have died and two were injured in the crash Wednesday about 20 miles east of Cape Henry.

The Navy has not identified the missing sailor. The dead were identified as Lt. Wesley Van Dorn, 29, of Greensboro, N.C., and Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Collins, 25, of Truckee.

Read the whole story

Brown's budget increases spending by 8.5 %

By Jim Christie and Sharon Bernstein, Reuters

Gov. Jerry Brown continued his message of fiscal restraint in his state budget plan, which would increase funding for education but not restore many recession-era cuts, including healthcare services for the poor.

Brown's plan, which was leaked Wednesday night and posted online, proposes spending \$106.8 billion from the state's general fund, and sets up a \$1.6 billion rainy day fund, according to a copy posted by the *Sacramento Bee* and confirmed to Reuters by an aide to a top Democratic lawmaker. The official release was planned for Friday, but was changed to today.

While the plan would increase general fund spending in the state's next fiscal year – by \$8.3 billion, or 8.5 percent – it does not include many programs pushed by his fellow Democrats.

[Read the whole story](#)

Pot stocks lighting up the market

Ben Rooney, CNN Money

The business of legal marijuana is booming in Colorado – and investors are catching a contact high.

Yes, there are pot stocks. Nearly all of them are thinly traded penny stocks available only on over-the-counter exchanges, but shares of companies that service the growing cannabis market have been blazing in recent weeks.

Medbox is the latest example. The company provides products and services for businesses that dispense medication, such as pharmacies. It announced plans Tuesday to tailor its products for use in recreational and medical marijuana facilities. Shares soared 65 percent. (Medbox, for the record, is not a penny stock. Shares trade for about \$66 and the company is valued at nearly \$1 billion.)

Read the whole story

Crystal Bay firm wants to reinvent South Shore

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS — A Crystal Bay company has been contracted to come up with two development proposals for the South Shore.

One was met with trepidation, a bit of suspicion and some optimism Wednesday. The other the co-founder and principal of One Globe didn't want out in the public. The first involves Meyers, the latter the Chateau project — aka the hole in the ground in South Lake Tahoe on the border of Stateline.

“There is no plan for Meyers from One Globe. That is not a plan for Meyers. That is a case study, an analysis of a possibility, a project concept,” El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago emphatically told *Lake Tahoe News* on Jan. 8.

Santiago was unable to attend the Meyers Community Advisory Council's meeting Wednesday night.



Sheri Woodsgreen on Jan. 8 explains her company's development concept for Meyers. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Sheri Woodsgreen of One Globe presented her concept to the council for the first time on Wednesday. She told *Lake Tahoe News* she was hired a year ago to start looking at what type of development project Meyers could sustain. However, some members of the Meyers group had no idea Woodsgreen had been hired; and knew nothing about the catalyst project until last month.

One Globe was paid about \$20,000 for the Meyers concept from the second round of funding from a Strategic Growth Council grant. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency was the pass-through agency for the federal grant.

One Globe also has a \$50,000 contract with the county to work on economic development in the basin. However, only half of it has been paid because all of the work has not been done. Chief Administrative Officer Terri Daly signed the contract. She has the authority to sign contracts up to \$50,000, so the Board of Supervisors never approved this. It is something Santiago advocated for.

The money comes out of the Economic Development budget, which

the CAO has control over.

“What they were putting together was a strategic implementation plan to get projects on the ground for El Dorado County,” Santiago told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The county contracted with One Globe without input from South Lake Tahoe officials or the party that is developing the site. The contract was signed last summer at about the same time the city issued permits for the current retail to be constructed.

Woodsgreen first told *Lake Tahoe News* that writing about her involvement with the Chateau would derail the project, but then said, “It is only in the concept and discussion phase.”

City National Bank and Owens Financial own the 11-plus acre parcel that until last year had been dormant because the previous developer went belly up.

Tahoe Stateline Ventures is the company property owner Bill Owens formed to develop part of the acreage his firm Owens Financial owns. The \$11 million retail project fronting Highway 50 is expected to open later this year.

When Lew Feldman, attorney for TSV, was asked if he knew about the Globe One contract, he told *Lake Tahoe News*, “No. Why would El Dorado have an agreement with One Globe for a project El Dorado has no jurisdiction over?”

That question has yet to be answered by El Dorado County officials.

Daly has not returned multiple calls, Assistant CAO Kim Kerr deferred detailed comment to Santiago, and Santiago on Wednesday said she didn’t have time to get into it.

Plans for Meyers

The first part of the Jan. 8 meeting in Meyers was about the area plan being putting together that will be the guiding

planning tool that will have to be approved by the Board of Supervisors and TRPA Governing Board.

The draft of the plan and associated environmental documents are expected to be released in early February, with a tentative date of Feb. 13 to have a public meeting to gather input. The documents will be in circulation for a 30-day public comment period.

It was decided the Meyers council will seek from the Board of Supervisors to be a more official governing body that would have first crack at any development plans for Meyers.

Making it easier for people to build is a goal of the area plan. This includes ironing out differences between the county and TRPA.

"We want consistency. That is why we want your area plan adopted into our General Plan," Kerr said.

TRPA and county staff are meeting next week to help get them on the same page.

Meyers resident Jennifer Quashnick is concerned about the height and density regulations. The Meyers Area Plan allows for a maximum height of 35 feet in the town center, which is what the California Conservation Corps building is. The One Globe proposal calls for 45 feet. Per the area plan, this higher height would be allowable if a series of criteria are met.

Quashnick also questioned whether the California Tahoe Conservancy would sell its non-contiguous 5.76 acres in Meyers under its Asset Lands Management Program. And then she wondered if it's possible to tie properties together for a larger project. (The CTC is meeting today from 10am-noon at Inn by the Lake to discuss the program.)

There is talk of making a website for coverage and CFA so

people would know who or what agency has what. And it's possible it could bring down the price of these commodities.

Some of the local property owners wondered why incentives were not being offered to current businesses – such as help with coverage and access from the highway, which Caltrans has banned.

“In the next year we are looking at transfer coverage policies. We hope to simplify that,” Adam Lewandowski with TRPA said.

But it was stated that incentives involving coverage are not likely.

According to the TRPA, there are 33,650-square-feet of commercial floor area available in Meyers.

“The Meyers Community Plan had requirements for CFA allocation that made it difficult to apply for. The Meyers Area Plan will likely revise the CFA allocation requirements to simplify it and make it easier to apply for new CFA,” Jeff Cowen with TRPA told *LTN*.

Catalyst project

While Santiago and Woodsgreen called the One Globe proposal “merely a concept”, the document comes across as more than that.

The 71-page document says, “The proposed theme is an Athlete's Village attraction or The Meyers Basecamp. This athlete's theme would attract complimentary [sic] entities such as 1) a multiuse education and event center that may include space for meetings and workshops, a cross-training area, or a physical therapy center; a sustainable food center; large anchor sponsor and/or retail store, such as a sport or outdoor adventure store; and lifestyle sports event services.”

Woodsgreen said this is needed because “athletes don't feel

comfortable on the South Shore. We know that.”

She did not explain her comment. Perhaps she has not heard of Maddie Bowman, Jamie Anderson, Elena Hight, Hannah Teter or Sho Kashima – all who live on the South Shore and all who could be representing the United States in the Olympics next month.

What worries some Meyers council members, who spoke off the record, is that Globe One came up with an idea that would fit into the area plan, so it could be a slam dunk based on legalities even if the community doesn’t want it.

Woodsgreen said her firm came up with the idea based on what people in Meyers have been saying they want.

In one breath Woodsgreen said, “... our infrastructure is outdated.” And in another she said, “Let’s leap from old technology. We don’t need broadband.”

In one breath she praised the Prosperity Plan, saying geotourism, wellness and the environment should be the focus of the basin. The irony is the Prosperity Center, while it has not produced anything tangible, has solely been working on establishing broadband for the basin – something Woodsgreen said is not needed.

In one breath Woodsgreen said the total maximum daily load issue is all about cars. In the next, she said, “If you want people off the highway, you have to have a place for them to be.” In other words, drive to Meyers and then park. Her plans call for underground parking for the sports facility as well as public parking at both ends of town.

(A factual correction: Cars are not the No. 1 issue with TMDL; it’s fine sediment.)

The project calls for melting snow at the sports center as well as what comes from snow removal and treating it in Meyers

so it is potable.

Instead of an overpass to get from one side of Highway 50 to the other, One Globe proposes an underground passage for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposal calls for bungalow-type lodging for athletes and the people they bring. However, currently only 10 tourist accommodation units are tied to Meyers. More could be transferred in if other jurisdictions are willing to do so.

Woodsgreen said she anticipates her project would cost \$200 million to build. She proposed the funding come via using the 63-20 IRS rule, which has been on the books since 1963. It involves a nonprofit overseeing the facility for the life of the 30-year bonds and a public agency taking over the aging facility when the debt is paid. (More info about the 63-20 is available here from the state of Washington.)

It was decided at a future date the One Globe proposal needed a full vetting by the Meyers Council, if not the entire community.

U.S. healthcare costs rising at slower pace

By Noam N. Levey, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — The relentless rise in healthcare spending — which had threatened government budgets and helped pave the way for President Obama's health law — continued to moderate in 2012, the fourth year of a historic slowdown, newly released federal data show.

Overall spending on healthcare rose less than 4 percent in 2012, less than half the rate of a decade ago, independent economists at the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services concluded.

For only the third time in the last 15 years, health spending grew more slowly than the overall economy as measured by the non-inflation-adjusted U.S. gross domestic product. That meant that healthcare shrank slightly as a share of the U.S. economy, from 17.3 percent in 2011 to 17.2 percent in 2012.

Read the whole story

Surplus military gear common in Calif. police forces

By Kevin Oliver, KCRA-TV

Local law enforcement agencies across California are recipients of surplus military gear, but some have been suspended from the program because of missing military equipment.

Grenade launchers, bayonets and armored vehicles were given to a number of California police departments.

The Davis Police Department received a mine-resistant vehicle, but decided not to keep it after an uproar by citizens, who said it wasn't needed and who didn't want it in their town.

The Amador County Sheriff's Department and the South Lake Tahoe, Yuba City and Vacaville police departments also got mine-resistant vehicles.

Data requested by KCRA 3 and just released by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services revealed more than 16,000 military surplus items – mostly guns – were turned over to police agencies all across California.

Read the whole story