

# Lake Tahoe News about to launch redesign

*Lake Tahoe News* has gone through a redesign that will be launched Sunday.

This means you won't be seeing any new content here for about 12 hours. Technological upgrades can also bring some hiccups, so please bear with us. Based on all that needs to be transitioned from today's *LTN* to tomorrow's *LTN*, the exact amount of time needed can't be precisely calculated. And once the new design is live, there are bound to be tweaks to the news site. Worst case scenario is there is some glitch and we'll just keep plugging along with the current design for a few more days.

We ask for your patience and understanding for the next few days.

Comments posted between now and the launch may disappear into some black hole, so you might want to save your thoughts for a few hours. And, yes, comments will be part of the new site. In fact, we've built-in a 20-minute period where you can edit your own comments.

We hope you like the redesign. The goal is to make the news site more fresh, bright and active – but still be full of news, easy to navigate and provide readers with a forum to voice their opinions.

Thank you for being such loyal readers.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff*

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# Clock ticking on South Shore loop road time line

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – In two months the Tahoe Transportation District board expects to know which alternatives for the loop road will be studied in the environmental documents, what businesses in the affected area think about the economic analysis, and it hopes to have finally appeased the South Lake Tahoe City Council with a nighttime airing of the issue.

Much of Friday's TTD board meeting centered on what the newly created U.S. 50 South Shore Community Revitalization Project Business Review Committee should actually do.

This group has been tasked with reviewing the economic analysis that has been prepared. While it was stated they would perform a "peer review" of the financial document, that phrase was loosely used with acknowledgement it has many meanings.

They will determine the pros and cons of the economic analysis.

Their exact tasks will be outlined in a letter still to be written.



The area that would be impacted by the loop road.

Photo/TTD

The following people will be on the committee, with those with

an asterisk having until Feb. 15 to complete their form. Next to their name is the business or property they represent and classification/criteria they meet, according to TTD. Parenthetical information is from *LTN*.

- 986 Park Hotel, Chris Minnes, small local owned tourist accommodation. (Minnes manages the property. The owners are from Southern California.)
- Heavenly Mountain Resort, Pete Sonntag, large corporate recreation provider.
- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, B Gorman, local collective business representative.
- Tahoe Prosperity Center-Carson City rep, Lee Plemel, regional collective business representative. (TTD employee Alfred Knotts called the TPC a neutral party.)
- Sidestreet Boutique, Barbara Parina or Tara Parina, local small retail.
- Edgewood Companies, Mitchell Mize, local recreation provider-large commercial property owner.
- Tahoe Beach Club, Bob Mecay, large tourist accommodation. (Their project is undeveloped at the end of Kahle Drive in Stateline where the trailer park is.)
- Naked Fish landlord, Mike McKeen, small commercial property owner.
- Village Center landlord, Terry Hackett, large commercial property owner.\* (TTD calls it Crescent V Center.)
- Dog Dog Cat, George Richter, local small retail owner.\*
- Duck Tours, Shawn Kerney, small local recreation provider.\*
- Holiday Inn Express, Pete MacRoberts, large corporate tourist accommodation.

- Raley's, TBD, large corporate retail.\*
- Stateline Brewery, Debbie Brown, local restaurant-dining.\*
- Pacific Crest Gallery, Rosemary Wool, local small retail.
- Basecamp Pizza, Ted Kennedy/Ray Villaman, regional-local restaurant dining.\*
- MontBleu, Jack Fisher, large corporate tourist accommodation.
- 7-Eleven-Subway landlord, Glyn Burge, small commercial property owner.

The board agreed to see if someone from the commercial real estate industry wants to be on the committee.

McKeen suggested Kathay Lovell, who owns the Bottle Shop, and Dave Jinkens, a consultant to opponents of the loop road, be added.

The economic analysis, according to TTD Executive Director Carl Hasty, will also undergo independent review by HDR consulting, which he said has expertise in resort finance.

While the TTD board will consider the committee's recommendations, they are only that. Nothing that group suggests is binding. The committee is expected to meet Feb. 27, March 6 and March 20. Meetings will be open to the public. The facilitator has yet to be named.

Mark Rayback with Wood Rodgers, the firm hired by TTD to do work on the loop road project, will be the project engineer going forward.

The loop road is a proposal to make Highway 50 near Heavenly Village and then beyond the Stateline casinos into a city street and turn the city street behind Harrah's-MontBleu into a state highway.

There will be a meeting in a month before the South Lake Tahoe City Council to discuss all things loop road. The expectation is a bit of history will be told, why the loop road is being considered and the alternatives still being considered.

Norma Santiago, El Dorado County's TTD board member, wants the public to understand "no decision has been made."

"This is just the kickoff for land use and economic vitality choices for that area," Angela Swanson, who is the city's rep to the TTD board, said. The city will begin working on its Stateline area plan in March, too.

#### **Dates to know:**

- March 12, 6pm South Lake Tahoe City Council meeting to discuss loop road; Lake Tahoe Airport.
- March 22, 9:30am Tahoe Transportation District meeting to receive progress report from Business Review Committee; Market Street office in Stateline.
- April 12, Tahoe Transportation District meeting to hear final report from Business Review Committee. (Time, location forthcoming.) Board likely to decide what should be studied in environmental documents.

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## **Survey: All but one Nevadan in Congress own guns**

**By Erin Kelly, Gannett News Service**

WASHINGTON – All but one member of Nevada's congressional delegation own guns, bucking a trend in Congress in which Republicans are much better armed than their Democratic counterparts.

A USA Today survey of lawmakers released this week showed that 119 Republicans and 46 democrats identified themselves as gun owners.

But gun ownership in the Nevada delegation is more of a bipartisan affair.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat, and Sen. Dean Heller, a Republican, both said they own guns.

Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Carson City, who represents the Reno area, owns several guns, according to his spokesman, Brian Baluta.

"Mark owns several guns, including hunting rifles, shotguns and handguns," Baluta said. "He purchased one pump action shotgun and one handgun. The rest he inherited from his father and grandfather."

Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., also owns a gun she inherited: a 32-caliber revolver passed down to her from her grandfather. Rep. Joe Heck, R-Nev., also owns a gun, although his office did not say what kind.

The only lawmaker from the six-member congressional delegation who does not own a gun is Rep. Steven Horsford, a Las Vegas Democrat and the first African-American to serve in the Nevada delegation.

There is no public record of gun ownership by members of Congress and it is not part of the information lawmakers are required to reveal in their annual financial disclosure forms. So USA Today and the Gannett Washington Bureau contacted every congressional office to ask: Does the lawmaker own a gun?

The results show a highly partisan – and regional – divide.

Only 10 percent of Republicans who responded said they do not own a gun, while 66 percent of Democrats said they are not gun owners.

Plotted on a map, the survey results speak to the cultural chasm between those districts where guns are a talisman of individualism, and those where they're viewed more as a criminal tool.

Only 12 lawmakers from the Northeast, including Pennsylvania, said they own firearms, while 77 Southerners said they do.

Congress's gun gap suggests that cultural factors are at least as important as the influence of the gun lobby in determining where members stand on President Barack Obama's package of gun control proposals.

Gun ownership is clearly correlated with members' voting records.

Over the past two years, the National Rifle Association's political action committee gave 10 times more campaign contributions to House members who own guns than to those who don't, according to an analysis of campaign finance reports filed last week.

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## **Gardnerville pilot identified as plane crash victim**

Douglas County officials have confirmed that the man who died in a plane crash in the Pinenut Mountains was pilot Keith Jorgenson of Gardnerville.

The wreckage was discovered Feb. 7.



It was a Cessna 172 that crashed.

Jorgenson had left the Minden Airport on Wednesday and was expected back that night.

The cause of the accident is unknown at this time. It is being investigated by the Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Sandoval wants immediate action on online poker

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – Gov. Brian Sandoval has asked the state Legislature to act within 30 days on an Assembly bill to allow Nevada to join with other states to offer online poker games.

The bill would permit the governor to enter into agreements with other states to allow online poker and would repeal an existing law barring interstate gaming until a federal law is passed.

In his message to the Legislature, the governor said, “Nevada

has always been the gold standard of both gaming regulation and agreements, and I intend to see to it that our state will lead the world into this new frontier.”

About 20 licenses have been issued to casinos and companies to conduct online poker within Nevada, but none of the computer systems to run the games have been approved by the state.

A.G. Burnett, chairman of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, said the systems are still being tested to ensure they comply with technical requirements.

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## **Caltrans apparatus clears more snow at one time**

**By Barbara Barte Osborn and Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee**

A new snowplow that can remove snow from two lanes at once should speed up the clearing of Interstate 80 over Donner Summit for skiers and other travelers.

Caltrans began using the new plow Thursday on I-80 from Kingvale to Truckee, said Rochelle Jenkins, Caltrans public information officer, in a news release.



The tow plow allows more snow to be removed at once.

Photo/Provided

State Department of Transportation snow-removal employees demonstrated the new \$80,000 "tow-plow" Wednesday at Caltrans' Kingvale Maintenance Station near the summit.

"The tow-plow is snow removal equipment never seen in California," Jenkins said in the release.

The new equipment will plow 28 feet of roadway at a time, whereas regular plows have a removal width of 10 feet to 12 feet, according to the release. Pulled by a vehicle designed for the purpose, the tow-plow can be activated to maneuver to the right of the vehicle, allowing for two lanes to be plowed at once.

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## Stateline casinos lead the charge in December gaming win

Stateline casinos had a spectacular December when it came to raking in money from gamblers.



Revenues were 57 percent higher than 2011 at \$21 million.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board on Friday released its figures for the last month of 2012. Statewide revenue was up 10.24 from the previous December to \$943.3 million.

In this same time period Reno casinos were down 4 percent with \$40 million in revenue.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## **Former Thunder Valley Casino manager going to prison**

A former Thunder Valley Casino employee is going to prison for 18 months.

Erika Michele Carlton, 38, of Roseville is guilty of embezzling from the tribal government.

According to court documents and admissions made in court, as human resources manager at Thunder Valley in Rocklin she embezzled and stole up to at least \$236,050 in cash and property between Nov. 12, 2006, and March 9, 2011.

Carlton had access to Thunder Valley credit cards and other sources of funds that she could use to buy items for the casino's employees. For instance, Carlton would use Thunder Valley funds to buy raffle prizes that were given out at employee functions such as Christmas parties. These prizes included gift cards from local merchants, electronics such as televisions, iPods, PlayStations and DVD players, and other consumer goods.

Along with these authorized purchases, Carlton also bought store merchandise and gift cards using Thunder Valley money for her own use.

Once out of prison she will be on three years of supervised release and will have to pay \$236,050 in restitution.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## Federal grand jury indicts Poland

South Lake Tahoe police Officer Johnny Poland was indicted Thursday by a federal grand jury on four similar counts to what he was charged with last month.

Three counts relate to tampering with a witness, victim or informant, and one count deal with obstruction of an official proceeding. He could be sent to prison for 20 years on each count if he were found guilty.



Johnny  
Poland

For now, he is out on bond. He is on unpaid leave from the department. Poland had been receiving a check up until the

date of his arrest Jan.23.

Poland is scheduled to be arraigned Feb. 14 in U.S. District Court in Sacramento.

Here is a copy of the Poland indictment.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Plane wreckage found in Pinenut Mountains

**Updated: Feb. 7 4:35pm:**

Douglas County sheriff's officials have confirmed the plane located in the Pinenut Mountains is the one belonging to Keith Jorgenson of Gardnerville.

There is one body in the plane. Identification of the remains is pending.

**Updated: Feb. 7 3:35pm:**

KRNV-TV in Reno is reporting aircraft wreckage was found today at 2:40pm in the Pinenut Mountains about 10 miles east of Minden. FAA says there is no confirmation yet on the fate of the pilot, who was the only person on board.

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Search crews are looking for a Gardnerville pilot who did not return with his plane to Minden on Wednesday as expected.

A red and white Cessna 172 left Minden Feb. 6 at 5pm. The plane was piloted by Keith Jorgenson, 46. He was the sole occupant of the plane.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies said Jorgenson had planned to return to the airport by dark, however he never returned. A check of surrounding airports in Carson City and Mono County revealed that Jorgenson did not land there either.

The tail number is N328SP.

Douglas County's search and rescue team has been deployed to assist. They will be using an emergency locator transmitter to search for any signals from a distress radio beacon.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*