

RENO HAPPENINGS

Efforts made to upgrade Reno Cable

It's both a good time and a bad time for Reno to negotiate a new cable television franchise.

On the plus side is the fact that the area's aging and problem-plagued system is being bought by the largest cable operator in the country.

City officials believe the firm, Tele-Communications Inc. of Denver, will be more willing than the current franchise holder Group W Cable Inc., to spend money to upgrade service. And they see the franchise negotiations as an opportunity to exact concessions from the company.

The downside is that the rules have changed dramatically since Reno granted the current franchise in 1977. And those changes strongly favor the cable industry in general and the current franchise holder in particular.

Reno is virtually required by a 1984 federal law to deal exclusively with Group W.

and its new parent company, TCI. It cannot shop around among several competing cable companies for the best deal.

Still, the stakes involved in the negotiations are huge.

For Group W, it's a chance for a franchise that will be worth millions of dollars in future revenue over at least a 15-year period.

For Reno officials, it's an opportunity to substantially upgrade a service that's been a thorn in the city's side for several years.

And for TV watchers, the talks will determine the availability and quality of cable television in the Truckee Meadows for years to come. Whatever Reno gets in terms of better service, more channels and local access programming will extend automatically to the entire Group W service area in the Truckee Meadows and its nearly 40,000 subscribers.

Area top-rated for vacation

The Reno-Lake Tahoe area had been rated the No. 1 location for outdoor fun in a new book, "Vacation Places Rated," published by Rand McNally.

The book ranks 107 destinations in the nation, using such factors as climate, outdoor activities, scenery, cultural activities, entertainment and historic sites.

"The No. 1 ranking of Reno-Tahoe for fun in the great outdoors shows that the rest of the country is beginning to recognize Nevada's many recreational opportunities," said Stephen Richer, executive director of the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

In receiving the top ranking, Reno-Tahoe beat such well-known outdoor recreation areas as Miami, Hawaii and Yellowstone National Park.

The book rated Reno-Tahoe 54th as an overall vacation spot.

Advisory posts open

The Washoe County Commission is accepting applications from residents who want to be on a special county board that recommends how money should be allocated to non-profit human service agencies.

Applications for the Community Support and Development Board can be obtained from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays in the Washoe County Manager's Office, or by calling 785-4179. Applications must be received by 5 p.m., July 18.

Final consideration of the board's recommendations is made by the commission, which plans to fill three positions on the panel.



Delores Feemster, Reno Sentinel-Voice General Manager. For news, weekly locations of paper and advertising information, contact her at 323-3577.

The Reno-Sparks NAACP TV program will now be aired at 12:30 p.m. Saturdays by KOLO-TV Channel 8.

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WARD

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relying on efforts by both political parties to woo Westside voters to increase the number of black voters in Ward 3.

West Las Vegas, which traditionally votes Democrat, is considered potentially pivotal in the close race to succeed Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev.

Also expected to provide new black voters in the race for the West Las Vegas Assembly seat currently held by Gene Collins, a Democrat who switched to the Republican Party. Collins will

face one of three Democratic challengers in the general election.

"There'll be a spillover advantage to us after the election," McMillan predicted.

Between the fall and the spring elections, Scott said, the biggest obstacle to electing a black councilman will be getting black voters to the polls.

"Nevada's notoriously bad on that — blacks and whites," Scott said. "We're not terribly different than anyone else."

One of the ways McMillan hopes to interest West Las Vegas voters in the council race is through proposed

legislation that would increase the number of councilmen from four to five, and allow the mayor to vote only in the case of a tie.

McMillan said he will ask Collins and other Assembly candidates to support the proposal, which would require that new boundaries be drawn to include the additional council ward.

Scott said the NAACP's role in the council race will be to remind voters of the problems the West Las Vegas community is facing, including high unemployment and a stagnant economy.

"If the issues won't motivate people, what will?" he asked. "We've got strength. I feel change is going to come — eventually."

—By Review Journal

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