Hospital Growth and Expansion in Southern Nevada
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**ON THE COVER**
Sunrise Mountain View Hospital and Medical Center
Cover photo by Tom Craig

**U.S. Senator Randolph Townsend**

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Those familiar with Southern Nevada’s phenomenal growth rate shouldn’t be surprised to hear that area hospitals are also growing by leaps and bounds. 1995 was a year of growth and expansion for Las Vegas hospitals, and January 1996 saw the opening of the first new acute-care hospital in Clark County in 25 years, Sunrise Mountain View Hospital and Medical Center. During that same period, the county population has quadrupled. Approximately 6,000 new residents relocate to Southern Nevada each month, many of them senior citizens, who are estimated to use hospitals at a rate five times higher than the general population. During the recent winter months, peak season for influenza and respiratory complaints, all six area emergency rooms were operating at full capacity.

The population explosion seems to have canceled out the effects on the local economy of the national trend toward shorter hospital stays. State statistics report that the number of hospital days per 1,000 residents declined from 603 in 1990 to 559 in 1994, repeating a pattern found all across the country. The managed care system, which aims to reduce costs by shortening stays, has affected the mix of services offered by health care companies. Many health plans are saving money by keeping their members out of expensive acute-care hospital beds and diverting them into outpatient surgical centers. Some health insurers, including Medicare, will pay for certain surgical procedures only if done on an outpatient basis, where procedures generally cost 25 to 50 percent less than comparable inpatient procedures. Acute-care hospitals are either increasing in-house outpatient surgery areas or opening separate surgical centers, as Sunrise Hospital did in November 1995. Day surgical units, which can handle as many as 30 or more patients in a day, are doing many procedures formerly reserved for inpatients, like cataract surgery, dilation and curettage and skin lesions. Evolving technology, such as lasers and scoping...
equipment, and the development of new drugs have also played a part in the growth of ambulatory surgical centers.

The trend toward shorter hospital stays and more outpatient services may have slowed the growth of full-service hospital beds in the community, but the increase of the medical needs of our large population more than compensated for the managed care phenomenon. In 1990 there were 1,273 people in Clark County hospitals on an average day. 1995 figures are projected to reach 1,472. In order to serve these additional patients, Southern Nevada hospitals enjoyed a building boom in 1995, with plans for more expansion this year.

**SUNRISE HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER**

Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center, serving Southern Nevada for more than 35 years, has 688 beds, including the 144-bed Sunrise Children’s Hospital. In January of this year its parent company, Columbia/HCA Healthcare Corporation, the largest healthcare company in the country, announced the opening of the $65 million Sunrise MountainView Hospital and Medical Center. Located on 30 acres in the Las Vegas Technology Center at Cheyenne and Tenaya Way in the fast-growing northwest part of the Valley, the new facility contains more than 200,000 square feet and is a full-service hospital including an emergency room, inpatient and outpatient surgery facilities, intensive care, and labor-delivery-recovery rooms.

Mark Howard, president and CEO of the new hospital, says the need to expand medical services is obvious with the Las Vegas Valley’s enormous population growth. “With the addition of a second major medical center,” he states, “residents in the northwest communities will have more direct and convenient access to the same innovative, quality care that is offered at Sunrise Hospital.” Sunrise MountainView contains 120 beds now, and expects to have at least 300 beds by next January. In fact, plans for additional
construction are proceeding so rapidly that the staff held its first expansion meeting even before the grand opening. They plan to add two more floors to the four-story structure in the next few years.

Sunrise MountainView includes a full-service emergency department with 22 stations and four inpatient units including medical/surgical, intensive care, progressive care and obstetric beds. It is implementing some of the latest healthcare technology. For example, admitting information will go directly from a laptop computer in the patient’s room to the hospital’s central computer. Physicians will be able to access the hospital’s computer system from home or office and read the patient’s test results. The hospital has its own CT (computerized tomography) and MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) machines.

Located next to the hospital will be a 205,000-square-foot five-story outpatient medical office building that will be easily accessible to the hospital via an enclosed, climate-controlled corridor. It will include a laboratory, radiology office, pharmacy, pediatric clinic, orthopedic center, physical therapy and physical rehabilitation center. Medical specialists will also have offices there. Hospital staffers estimated that the opening of Sunrise MountainView created about 400 new jobs, with more planned as expansion progresses.

Sunrise’s main hospital on Maryland Parkway opened a new $28 million, 60,000-square-foot department of surgical services in November of 1995. With 24 surgical suites in one location, the complex is the largest surgical facility in Nevada and among the largest in the United States. The surgical suites are divided into four pods, each containing six operating rooms. Though each room is designed and equipped for specific types of surgeries, each can also be adapted for other types of surgeries if needed. The surgical suites contain ceiling-mounted orbitors which provide one central location for all medical gases and surgical equipment. Endoscopic viewing capabilities allow video transmission of surgeries to other locations, such as
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classrooms, doctor's offices and pathology, for consultation and educational purposes. For neurosurgeries, a computerized brain navigation system, called the "viewing wand" is used to reproduce images of the brain to a three-dimensional picture, giving surgeons a better view of various areas of the brain.

The new surgical complex also contains the prep, post and procedural care unit (PPCU), comprised of 28 adult beds and five pediatric beds. The new post anesthesia care unit (PACU) includes 44 adult beds and 21 pediatric beds. The surgical complex includes a sterile processing department, a classroom, conference room, doctors' lounge and staff lounge. A MAG system (magnetic data collection system) computer provides a system to make sure surgical instruments remain in top condition. The computer tracks instrument usage between each surgical suite and the sterile processing department. Sunrise is the only hospital in Nevada participating in the MAG system pilot program.

ST. ROSE DOMINICAN HOSPITAL

At the opposite corner of the Valley from Sunrise MountainView, St. Rose Dominican Hospital is planning to construct a $13 million medical center on a 6.3-acre parcel in the master-planned community of Green Valley. The new facility, to be located at the corner of Lake Mead Drive and Green Valley Parkway, will be developed by a partnership involving American Nevada Corporation, St. Rose Dominican and several area physicians. American Nevada Corp., a Greenspun Inc. company, is the primary developer of Green Valley and Green Valley Ranch. Green Valley Parkway Medical Center will be a three-story building containing more than 92,000 square feet. The first floor will include an outpatient medical facility, while physicians in a variety of medical specialties will occupy the upper two floors. The medical center will provide ambulatory care, outpatient surgery, women's care, diagnostics and a
this June, with completion scheduled for May 1997.

Rod Davis, president and CEO of St. Rose, said the new center will help the hospital better serve the needs of the rapidly growing population of the Henderson/Green Valley area. Henderson's population has mushroomed along with the rest of the Valley, growing from under 25,000 in 1980 to approximately 120,000 today.

The only religiously-affiliated hospital in Southern Nevada, St. Rose Dominican's main facility was established in 1947 and contains 147 licensed beds. It has four buildings on its Henderson campus at Lake Mead Drive and Boulder Highway, as well as two other outpatient facilities in the southeast part of the Valley. Another satellite facility, Hartwell Medical Center, is slated for completion in early 1997.

UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

University Medical Center (UMC), Southern Nevada's only public hospital, has seen many changes in the community and in medical technology since it opened in 1931. It is now the second-largest acute-care hospital in the area, with a total of 545 beds. Last year, UMC remodeled the entire labor and delivery unit, including construction of seven labor/delivery/recovery suites that provide mother and baby with a homelike surrounding. Labor, delivery and recovery are all experienced in one intimate room, where any advanced equipment needed is within reach, but tucked out of sight. Each suite has a monitoring crib and a hidden surgical light. According to Dale Pugh, UMC's public relations director, "UMC has the high-tech and the medical expertise, yet we're able to blend that with a home-like, pleasant and warm setting." UMC delivers approximately 4,000 babies a year.

University Medical Center also opened the UMC Children's Center in 1995, which houses a range of pediatric services, including the state's first free-standing emergency department specifically for children. The 21-bed unit on the third floor of the trauma center building is staffed 24 hours a day by pediatric emergency physicians. It is adjacent to a new, expanded pediatric outpatient clinic and in the same building as the intensive care and general medical beds for children. The trauma and pediatric center, located on Rose Street, was recently linked to the main hospital building by an enclosed walkway.

University Women's Center, an office specializing in prenatal care and women's health issues, also opened in 1995. The hospital lobby was refurbished, the cafeteria was remodeled, and one entire unit was converted into private rooms. A new parking lot, with nearly 300 additional parking spaces, was completed, and a state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization lab was built.

Following the nationwide trend toward more outpatient care, UMC opened two additional Quick Care Centers in 1995 (one on Nellis and Charleston and one on Russell Road near McCarran International Airport), bringing the number of centers to a total of five. 1996 plans call for the construction of two more Quick Care Centers, one in Spring Valley in the southwest and one in the Summerlin area in the northwest.

VALLEY HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

Valley Hospital, the third-largest acute-care hospital in the Valley, contains 398 beds and 400,000 square feet of facilities, with a staff of 1,300. There are more than 1,000 physicians on staff, representing over 30 specialties and sub-specialties. Recent additions include a third cardiac catheterization laboratory and a FASTER emergency center, which added an additional 4,800 square feet of space for patient services. Universal Health Services, Inc., Valley's parent company, has developed the Valley Health System, which includes Valley Hospital, Summerlin Medical Center, Goldring Diagnostic and Surgical Center, and various clinics throughout the city. Future plans include Summerlin Medical Center, a $70 million project under construction in the master-planned community of Summerlin. The new medical center will encompass 40 acres and include a major medical office complex, an outpatient surgery center, a diagnostic center and an acute-care hospital.

DESERT SPRINGS HOSPITAL

Desert Springs Hospital, with 225 beds, is embarking on a new endeavor this year with the construction of a birthing center. It did not previously have facilities for delivering babies. A new free-standing three-story building on the Desert Springs campus, now in the construction stage, will house a birthing center and outpatient surgical center on the first floor. The remaining floors of the 106,000-square-foot structure will house medical offices.

LAKE MEAD HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

Located in North Las Vegas, Lake Mead Hospital Medical Center also expanded in 1995, with the addition of a new recovery room at its main building. It has 196 beds and a staff of 682. At the beginning of this year, Lake Mead Hospital opened two new operating suites, each of which contains over 600 square feet. Future plans include expansion and renovation of the kitchen and cafeteria. The parent company also constructed Stewart Medical Center, an office building for family practice physicians, and internal medicine specialists, containing offices for interns.

BOULDER CITY HOSPITAL

Boulder City Hospital, with 73 licensed beds, already includes a hospital-based skilled nursing facility with 47 beds. They recently entered into a joint agreement with Volunteers of America to build an assisted-living facility on their campus. Scheduled to open in spring 1997, it will offer residents meal preparation, housekeeping and supervision of medications.

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Construction crews prepare home sites for some of Sun City MacDonald Ranch's anticipated 4,750 residents. The master-planned community for active adults aged 55 and older began selling homes in November 1995.

Rich MacDonald Had A Ranch...

by David Hofstede

Every year, people begin to wonder whether Las Vegas has, at long last, reached some sort of saturation point after a decade of non-stop, record-breaking growth. Then the new population figures come out, and three more hotel-casino megaresorts are built, and 50,000 new jobs are created, and the question is tabled for one more time.

This year, in fact, the ongoing concerns over water and tortoises and traffic congestion seem even more restrained than usual, and all systems are firmly set on 'go' for Nevada's builders and developers. The anti-growth factions, usually composed of people who still have their blue Nevada license plate, have finally started to realize that bigger, in every way that counts, is better.

Del Webb's newly announced Sun City MacDonald Ranch, for example, will do more than turn another strip of desert into a burgeoning community; it will also inject millions of dollars into the already booming local economy. "Building a Sun City has a tremendous positive economic impact on the surrounding area," said Del Webb Senior Vice President LeRoy Hanneman. "Be it the creation of new jobs or the disposable income brought to the community by our new residents, the financial impact will be felt throughout the Valley."

Research conducted by ESI Corporation, a real estate and economic development counselor, supports Hanneman's statement. According to an ESI study, the total estimated economic impact of Sun City MacDonald Ranch construction will be more than $313 million. That figure does not include the money that will be spent by the community's new residents, estimated to top $46 million annually.
Sun City MacDonald Ranch plans include a community recreation center, an executive-style golf course, and approximately 2,500 single-family homes.

"Residents of Del Webb communities have a high level of discretionary income which is traditionally spent throughout the immediate area," Hanneman added. "Also, our residents generally do not compete in the job market and instead give back tremendous volunteer time to their new community."

The construction of Sun City MacDonald Ranch is projected to create 540 construction jobs annually for a period of more than seven years. Other Valley residents will feel the impact made by the development through its contribution to the tax base; ESI estimates residents of the newest Sun City will pay more than $2.25 million in property taxes annually, with nearly $1 million of that going to the Clark County School District. These same residents will also be major contributors to the state's budget, paying approximately $1.6 million in sales tax annually, and that doesn't even count ongoing expenditures at area casinos, which indirectly keep taxes low for everybody.

Sun City MacDonald Ranch, nestled in the foothills of the Valley's southern Black Mountains, is located one mile south of Lake Mead Drive on Green Valley Parkway in Henderson. The new community will encompass 564 acres; 447 acres for residential development, 90 acres for a golf course, 15 acres of open space and 12 acres for a community center. Approval has been granted by the Henderson City Council for 2,500 single family homes, in addition to the premiere recreational facilities that have distinguished Del Webb communities in the past.

Like Sun City Summerlin, its sister community in the northwest part of the Valley, MacDonald Ranch is master-planned for adults aged 55 and over. A variety of clubs and social activities available to all residents complete the Sun City lifestyle.

"This is a first for our company," said Hanneman. "Never before have we had two separate properties operating in the same market at the same time. This is a clear indication of the strength of our product, and the Las Vegas market itself."

"Our focus is low-density," said Rich MacDonald. "We want to downscale things, to preserve more open spaces, and allow for more room around each house, while still keeping the prices down." This had become more difficult recently, MacDonald feels, because of escalating land values, and other costs and fees that get passed on to the consumer. "Builders and developers are having their profits squeezed, but because of competition, there is a lot of pressure to keep prices low, which makes Southern Nevada a great market to buy in. People who figure out price-per-square-foot and other amenities can't go wrong." Homes in the community start as low as $90,000.

Del Webb's tentative plans call for 1,875 detached homes ranging from 1,150 square feet to 1,190 square feet, and 625 attached residential units ranging in size from 1,040 square feet to 1,200 square feet. Each floor plan has three optional exterior elevations. "The Las Vegas Valley doesn't have any real luxury condominiums yet, we're now attempting to alleviate that shortage," MacDonald said. However, apartments remain a tough sell.

"The entire MacDonald Ranch project covers over 3,200 acres, but there is only one apartment project. It's one of the best in the Valley, though."
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The 3,845-yard, par-60 Desert Willow Golf Course, designed by renowned golf course architect Greg Nash and Hall of Fame golfer Billy Casper, will be open to the public for its first few years of operation, but is ultimately intended for the exclusive use of MacDonald Ranch residents. “It will be a unique course because of the topography of the area,” said Rich MacDonald. “Some of the elevated tee boxes look out upon the entire valley.”

The community recreation center will contain a golf pro shop, restaurant, fully-equipped fitness center, outdoor recreational facilities, art and crafts center and a 250-seat social hall and gathering areas. One of the most exciting additions to the area, still in the early development stages, is a history museum and amphitheater. “There is a series of special exhibits that travel the country, and we think Las Vegas is big enough now to support a place for them,” MacDonald said. Plans for the exterior call for a 30,000-square-foot reproduction of an Egyptian tomb, but without the cheesy laser-show that is performed at the Luxor.

Reaction to the development thus far has been overwhelmingly positive, another Del Webb tradition. When the corporation built the original Sun City in 1960, it had the amenities — swimming pools, golf course, shopping centers — built before the first home was constructed. Cars lined the road to the project for two miles as more than 100,000 people came to see one of the archetypes of the master-planned community. That first weekend, the company sold 237 homes.

The 2,500-acre Sun City Summerlin opened in November, 1988, and its success rivaled that of the original Sun City. As the company finalized plans to construct its second Las Vegas development, MacMillan Travel’s retirement living guide, Retirement Places Rated, proclaimed Las Vegas the nation’s most desirable retirement destination. Good timing.

Even before the sales center opened, several hundred interested home buyers drove through the construction sites to make appointments with Del Webb representatives. “Interest has been phenomenal,” said Sun City MacDonald Ranch sales manager Jim Bond. “I’ve never seen the kind of enthusiasm people have shown for this community.”

As a result, sales associates have begun shuttling home buyers from the temporary sales center to the models. “The eight models are decorated and nearly open, and the sales pavilion will be ready very soon,” Bond said. “However, the streets are under construction, so we’ve been escorting buyers to the models for a first-hand look. Our biggest challenge is keeping up with the demand.”
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Robert Lewis Story
by Tom Dye

Homebuilder Robert Lewis is confident that 1996 will be a banner year for his company.

Lewis, president of Lewis Homes of Nevada, said the company is off to a fast start in 1996 and he predicts that it will take advantage of Las Vegas' strong housing market.

The company remained on top in Southern Nevada in 1995 by selling 1,168 new homes. However, Lewis Homes slipped slightly from its record year in 1994 when it sold 1,545 homes and captured 8 percent of the local market in new-home sales. The company sold 6.5 percent of the homes sold in Southern Nevada last year.

"We are looking at 1996 as being as strong as 1994 was," he said. "We and other builders experienced delays in getting subcontractors out on jobs and in the governmental approval process for our projects."

The reason for these problems was that Las Vegas experienced growing pains last year. Government agencies had a hard time keeping up with applications from the increasing number of builders who are taking advantage of the Las Vegas boom and subcontractors also had trouble keeping up with the demand for their services, Lewis said.

Las Vegas continues to grow at a rate of 4,000 to 6,000 new residents per month, depending on which local expert you talk to, and Lewis sees this growth continuing. Lewis has faith that his company, which entered the Las Vegas market 35 years ago, will be able to use its expertise to cut through government red tape and get its projects approved more rapidly. He also believes that subcontractors will begin to catch up this year which will mean that houses will be completed more quickly.

The veteran homebuilder disagrees with the prophets of doom who see the quality of life in Las Vegas eroding because of its growth. He says Las Vegas is doing a far better job improving roads and dealing with water and school issues than communities in California have done in trying to keep up with their growth.

"I think we have done a pretty good job of managing our growth," he said. "You always hear people griping about road construction, but at least we are building new roads."

Lewis does not fear a slowdown because of an economic slump in Las Vegas.

"The amount of hotel construction and new jobs in the area are encouraging to us," he said. "We also see that the economy is diversifying with new jobs being created in such fields as health care and credit-card processing."

His company will continue to build a variety of homes in almost every area of the Las Vegas Valley. The company targets first-time buyers with smaller homes (1,100 square feet) in the $100,000 range and also sells homes nearly three times as large in the $200,000 range. The company also caters to buyers who want to buy homes in the medium ranges.

"The interest rates are very favorable so buyers should be able to get more home for the same monthly payment," he said.

The company will sell homes in three developments in Summerlin in northwest Las Vegas. It also has big plans for its two developments in the McDonald Ranch master-planned community in the southern area of the Las Vegas Valley.

Also in the works is Emerald Valley, a 700-home development near the new Galleria mall at Sunset Road and Stephanie Street. Lewis believes this area, on the fringe of Green Valley, is very promising.

Lewis Homes' success in Southern Nevada can be attributed to its "accurate crystal ball" in being able to forecast the demand for housing, said Glenn Barton, director of the Las Vegas area for the real estate information service, The Meyers Group.

"We have been in the top three (in new-home sales) in Southern Nevada for about the last 10 years," Lewis said.

Lewis Homes was started in California in 1955 by Lewis' parents, Ralph and Goldy. The company expanded to Nevada in 1961 and started modest development by building $12,000 homes in North Las Vegas. Lewis' parents are no longer active with the company. He and his brothers, Richard, Roger and Randall now run the show.

The company has annual revenue of about $450 million. About one-quarter of its 900 employees are based in Las Vegas.

Lewis Homes, which has a smaller operation in Reno (about 200 homes sold last year), plans to become more active in developing retail and commercial project in Las Vegas, Lewis said. The company built the Hacienda/Polaris Business Park and the Enterprise Industrial Park in North Las Vegas. It also developed Rainbow Plaza, a commercial-retail center near the Charleston-Rainbow intersection. Lewis has an 11-acre parcel at Lake Mead Boulevard and Tenaya Way and is on the lookout for more acreage for retail and commercial development.
Unfortunately, the need for independence leads many seniors to procrastinate putting their financial affairs in order. Some fear they will lose control of their affairs, while others believe financial or estate planning will be too costly.
Are you tired of getting dinner time calls from MCI, Sprint, AT&T and others wanting to become your long distance company? Well stand by. Someday soon you may be getting phone calls from as yet unknown companies seeking your electric utility business.

There are changes coming at the federal level that will dramatically reshuffle the electric utility business. Customer prices will be shifting and changing; the companies that provide electric service could change dramatically.

Historically, electric utilities developed as large, vertically integrated organizations that performed all three major electric utility operations: generating, transmitting and distributing energy. All across the country, these all-service companies were granted exclusive geographical franchise territories, monopolies, by the utility commissions.

Now, all that is about to change. Much of it will be change for the better. Competition is being introduced into the electric utility industry.

Our experience deregulating airlines, natural gas pipelines and telecommunication tells us that restructuring the electric industry will result in lower costs. That’s good. Deregulation will create competition producing innovative new services and less government oversight, also positive results.

However, experience also tells us that deregulation brings upheavals. After deregulation of the airlines, the number of flights between Reno/San Francisco and Las Vegas/Phoenix dropped significantly. Some cities that had enjoyed airline service lost that service all together.

Ultimately, these services were filled by new, more efficient competitors. But when it comes to a life necessity like electricity, we cannot afford unpredictable shifts or interrupted services, no matter how temporary.

Without hard work and careful planning, unpredictability could result from electric service changes. There are many reasons.

Example: It is well known that large industrial customers in Nevada pay rates well above the cost utilities incur to service those customers. These higher charges are in place so that residential and small business customer rates can be held lower than would be necessary in a deregulated market. How a fully competitive market will treat these residential and small business customers, without careful management, is a serious concern.

Example: Nevadans rightly expect the lights to go on when they turn a switch. Regulation required immediate service to every customer on demand. We absolutely must make certain that every customer can get service, at reasonable rates, whenever they need the service. Deregulation must be carefully implemented to insure this is true.

Careful management of the changing environment can deliver lower cost service in a market that provides choice, more efficient use of our resources, innovative service options and reliable service. But the challenges to achieving all this are great.

We in Nevada absolutely must be prepared for that era of change ahead. Therefore, we have established a legislative subcommittee to study competition in the generation, sale and transmission of electrical energy. This vitally important study is capably chaired by Assemblyman Pete Ernaut of Reno.

We want to be ahead of the curve, prepared to properly manage change as it comes.

We need a bi-partisan approach to ensure the benefits are maximized while the potential for adverse impacts on residential customers, utilities, their shareholders and the environment are avoided.
Most employees enter the service of a company eager to please and earn their keep as a member of the team. But what happens when an employee has other priorities or comes aboard with a profit-threatening problem in tow?

Consider the drug and alcohol abusers. Statistics show that employee/addicts display a far greater tendency than the average employee to be absent or come to work late, receive sick benefits, have on-the-job accidents and file compensation claims.

Employees who abuse the workers compensation system are another drain on company finances. With the average total cost per lost-time claim at about $19,000, employers take a hard blow to the bottom line every time an employee deceives them into paying for the treatment of a non work-related injury or illness. Companies who don’t test new employees for existing problems or proneness to accident can get hit often and hard.

Then there are the company pilferers. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reports that white-collar crime costs American business $40 billion a year. Harder to put a price tag on is a more insidious form of pilfering—the poor work ethic. Inefficient employees who are unmotivated and have poor attitudes can rob their employers blind just as methodically as those who plunder the supply cabinet. So how can employers protect their financial well-being from the damaging effects of dysfunctional and abusive employees? The best way, advises one expert, is to use extensive pre-employment screening to weed them out before they get in the door.

Writing in Safe Workplace magazine, R. Bruce Haskell, senior vice president of Boston-based insurance broker Hogg Robinson, Inc., stressed that “identifying a difficult employee before she or he is hired is just as crucial as confronting the problem once that person is on the job.”

To help support the pre- and post-hiring screening process, Haskell and his company have developed the following tools employers can use to acquire and retain the best employees:

1. The Structured Interview. This computerized Q&A lets a company conduct an in-depth interview with a job candidate via a toll-free number. Posing questions designed to survey key issues, it can reveal information usually not available in the pre-screening process. For example, the question, “Is it difficult for you to work quickly and safely...” can give an indication of a candidate’s performance initiative.

2. Observation and Attitudes Survey. This highly effective communication tool has employees anonymously provide their observations and attitudes about their jobs to a third party for professional analysis. Management is provided with a summary report of the findings.
3. Alert Line. Also an anonymous communication tool, Alert Line helps management understand the issues that prevail at a particular company and tailor programs that best address them. Employees are provided with a 24-hour toll-free number that they can call to share their feelings or observations with a trained professional.

4. Fitness-for-Work Test. Picking up where the pre employment drug screening leaves off, this simple, computerized 30-second test measures employee impairment caused by drugs, alcohol, stress or fatigue. A failure to complete the test satisfactorily can signal to a manager that an employee is not fit to perform his or her job at that particular time and save the company accidents and lapses in product or service quality.

Through these and other screening methods, employers can keep weak-link or bad-seed employees from squandering their hard-earned financial health.

Companies that make pre-employment screening a priority will wind up with better people, higher profits, greater productivity and stronger morale among their honest and motivated workers. For more information on the employee screening products and services mentioned in this column, write to: Hogg Robinson, Inc., 800 Boylston Street, Suite 4500, Boston, Mass. 02199. Or call (617) 236-8200.

Bill Hager is president of NCCI (National Council on Compensation Insurance, Inc.), the nation's largest information company serving the voluntary and involuntary workers compensation marketplace.

Future Looks Bright for Home Building Industry

by Randy Schaefer, 1996 SNHBA President

As I take over the gavel as the 1996 president of the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association, I am excited about the positive indicators for the continued success of our industry. Two critical factors that have a strong influence on new construction are job expansion and the fluctuation of interest rates. If the current trends continue as expected, 1996 looks to be yet another prosperous year for residential construction.

As we all know, new employment opportunities are a fundamental component of growth. As in years past, the expansion of gaming will continue to provide new jobs for thousands of future Southern Nevada residents. With numerous mega-resorts either on the drawing board or under construction, we expect the housing demand to increase or continue at current levels throughout 1996. To accommodate the expansion of gaming, I expect the construction of new homes to maintain a steady pace similar to production levels for the last two years.

Many, if not most, of our new home buyers are Nevada residents either looking to buy a larger house, or move from an apartment into their first home. The increase in interest rates early last year severely limited opportunities for many potential home buyers. With the recent decline in interest rates, quality housing has become accessible to hundreds of potential buyers who previously could not qualify for the necessary financing. Hopefully, the decline in interest rates will be a continuing trend, putting the dream of home ownership in reach for many more local residents.

With numerous mega-resorts either on the drawing board or under construction, we expect the housing demand to increase or continue at current levels throughout 1996.

With the dawn of a new year, our industry will continue to provide quality housing essential to the social and economic future of our region. The continued migration of our thriving economy and the positive reaction to dropping interest rates may make '96 our best year ever!
American Nevada Corporation becomes a partner in Seven Hills master-planned community

by John Brame Witmer

American Nevada Corporation, the primary developer of Green Valley and Green Valley Ranch, has become a partner in developing Seven Hills master-planned community. The 1,300-acre residential development is now open near Eastern and Lake Mead Drive.

An agreement was recently signed between Forest City Enterprises and Terry Johnston selling American Nevada Corporation one-third ownership in the master-planned community, according to Bob Monchien, president of the Land Division for Forest City Enterprises.

Forest City Enterprises, a national publicly-traded real estate company headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, had owned 55 percent of the master-planned community and Canadian developer Terry Johnston had owned 45 percent of the development. The new agreement provides all partners equal one-third ownership, with Forest City continuing as the managing partner and American Nevada Corporation becoming the development manager.

"Efforts to complete Seven Hills as an exceptional and unique residential community will continue," says Monchien. "We're enthusiastic to become a partner with American Nevada Corporation with their strong reputation for enhancing the quality of life in Southern Nevada."

According to Tony Traub, president and CEO of American Nevada Corporation, a partnership in Seven Hills provides American Nevada's Community Development Division with the opportunity to continue developing in Southern Nevada after Green Valley and Green Valley Ranch are sold out.

"We're anticipating a strong housing market in Southern Nevada for the next two or three years. We want to make certain we stay on the cutting edge," says Traub. "We believe Seven Hills helps us achieve that objective."

"An additional benefit of working with Forest City and Terry Johnston is the potential for making Seven Hills one of the foremost master-planned communities in the country," says Traub.

Seven Hills is located in the foothills of the Black Mountain range south of Henderson. Lewis Homes, J.M. Peters, Desert Wind Homes, Kimball Hill Homes, and Greenpark are building approximately 1,000 homes in the first phase of Seven Hills. In addition, Fairfield will construct 320 executive apartment homes on the northeast parcel of the community.

Upon completion, the community will have approximately 3,400 homes in 25 neighborhoods, including 420 luxury estate homes; an 18-hole, par 72 championship golf course designed by golf course architect Rees Jones; nine public and private parks with tennis courts, volleyball quads, baseball diamonds and children's...
play equipment; eight-and-a-half miles of pedestrian walkways with recessed passageways, night lighting and bicycle security patrols; and an amphitheater which overlooks the Las Vegas skyline.

Seven Hills is located two miles west of American Nevada Corporation's Green Valley Ranch, a 1,300-acre mixed-use community currently under development on Lake Mead Drive between Pecos and Valle Verde. Approximately 775 acres of Green Valley Ranch have been dedicated to residential development.

Both Forest City Enterprises and American Nevada Corporation have garnered awards and recognition for building superior master-planned communities. Developer Terry Johnston is known for building exceptional golf course communities in Hawaii and Canada.

In 1993, Forest City's Silver Lakes community in southern Florida was named the best master-planned community in the country by the National Association of Home Builders. Green Valley has been recognized by the Urban Land Institute as an outstanding master-planned community.

Forest City Enterprises is currently building the Galleria Mall at Sunset, which will open the end of February, and The Showcase Mall near the MGM Grand on the Las Vegas Strip.

American Nevada Corporation is a division of Greenspun, Inc., which owns the Las Vegas Sun, Hospitality Network and Prime Cable. Established in 1978, the company's mission is the residential, commercial and community development of 8,400 acres comprising Green Valley and Green Valley Ranch.

Green Valley was the first master-planned community in Southern Nevada and is now home to over 10,000 families.

Green Valley Ranch combines the tradition of Green Valley with a network of parks and trails that enable residents to walk or bike to virtually any destination within the community.

A broad expanse of windows in Seven Hills' newly-opened sales and information center highlights one of the community's most marketable features - expansive views.
Wybtrak Offers
Health Care Solutions
to Reduce Costs,
Expedite Service

More than 24 cents out of every healthcare dollar goes to administering health care, making the cost to healthcare professionals, and ultimately the consumer, enormous. While they understand the importance of reducing administrative costs, many healthcare professionals just don’t have enough time to research, purchase and implement the necessary automation software programs.

Wybtrak, Inc., offers the solution to bringing the healthcare field up to speed using the latest technologies of electronic commerce. Wybtrak is a Nevada-based medical software development and electronic communications company.

“Electronic commerce is revolutionizing the way business is conducted,” said Loren Spurgeon, president of Wybtrak. “What was once done on paper, or over the phone, can now be done with the computer keystroke. Our medical software products and systems will reinvent the way healthcare functions by expediting services and reducing costs for medical officers, HMOs, PPOs, payers, reviewers and insurance companies.”

Wybtrak’s integrated bundle of software provides a comprehensive system for most of the time-consuming, but necessary, office procedures that are both labor intensive and cumbersome. Wybtrak software systems electronically automate such functions as patient eligibility, claims status and processing, referral, prior authorization, pre-admission certification, medical records and even the ordering and inventory of medical supplies.
**Managed Care Consultants selected**

Managed Care Consultants, Inc. (MCC) was recently selected by a number of prominent Nevada employers for their statewide PPO network. Utilization Management and Benefit Third Party Administration services.

The following groups are now using MCC on their benefits and workers' compensation programs: Federal Express, Sprint Nevada, Desert Inn Hotel & Casino, Clark County, AVI Hotel & Casino and Kidd & Company.

**Sierra Pacific Reports Nine Percent Increase in Per-Share Earnings**

Sierra Pacific Resources recently reported earnings per share of common stock for 1995 of $1.95, up nine percent from $1.79 per share in 1994. Earnings available for common stock for the 12 months ended Dec. 31, 1995, were $58.1 million compared to $52.4 million in 1994.

Sierra Pacific's earnings increased in 1995 despite $11.6 million in expenses related to the company's pending merger. The company also reduced Nevada electric prices by $12.3 million annually in the spring of 1995, and refunded $6 million to Nevada electric customers.

**Longtime Local Doctors Start Las Vegas Family Medical Group**

Six local physicians have formed the Las Vegas Family Medical Group, a practice devoted to family medical care. The doctors involved are Jerald Malone, M.D., Michael Honak, M.D., Kian Kaveh, D.O., Wayne Buchwald, D.O., Matthew Hemstreet, M.D., and Carl Noback, M.D.

**Sprint/Central Telephone-Nevada to offer ISDN high-speed network service**

Sprint/Cellular Telephone-Nevada's (S/CTN) customers can now work more efficiently when using their computers. S/CTN has introduced integrated services digital network (ISDN) technology to its Southern Nevada service area.

ISDN allows voice, video and data to travel on the copper wiring already installed in most homes and businesses. The new service also provides high speed access to and transmission of information. An ISDN subscriber can use a digital modem-type device to send and receive data at speeds from four to 10 times faster than using a traditional modem tied to a personal computer and a standard telephone line.

**BofA Nevada Grants Support Community Outreach Programs**

Bank of America announced that it has awarded BankAmerica Foundation grants totaling more than $11,000 to four nonprofit organizations throughout the Southern Nevada area.

The recipients of these grants include Nevada Council on Economic Education, Nevada H.A.N.D., North Las Vegas Neighborhood Housing Services and Nevada Fair Housing Services.

**Galleria at Sunset Opens**

Henderson's first enclosed shopping center and one of the largest regional shopping centers in the state of Nevada recently opened. The one million square-foot mall is the first major enclosed regional retail shopping center built in Southern Nevada in 14 years. It is located at 1300 W. Sunset Road.

The two-level shopping facility, boasts 110 specialty retailers, a 600-seat food court with a special children's seating section, and a 6,000-vehicle parking area with valet parking available. The Galleria at Sunset is anchored by Dillards, Mervyn's, JC Penney and Robinsons-May, with future plans to open two more.

**U.S. Bancorp Continues Success in the New Year**

U.S. Bancorp closed 1995 on a high note with improved core performance, a dramatically lower overhead ratio and a stronger franchise in its northwest geographic region—a result, in part, of its acquisition of Boise-based West One Bancorp.

U.S. Bancorp's stock price has increased 49 percent from year-end 1994 to year-end 1995.

**Nevada's first Nicklaus Golf Course Opens at Lake Las Vegas**

Nevada's first Jack Nicklaus 18-hole signature, championship golf course...
recently opened at Lake Las Vegas, the $3.8 billion, 2,245-acre, world-class residential and resort community under development 17 miles east of the Las Vegas Strip. The debut of the private course and the interim SouthShore Golf Clubhouse was celebrated with a member/guest tournament.

The 6,925-yard, private course draws upon Lake Las Vegas' unique characteristics to provide a golfing challenge with forced carries over canyons and water, strategic bunkering, elevations ranging from 1,400 to 1,750 feet and striking scenery. For golfers of varying degrees of expertise, the par-71 golf course also provides generous fairways and up to five tee boxes per hole.

Desert Orthopaedic Center Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Desert Orthopaedic Center (DOC) is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. DOC was founded in 1970 by Doctors John H. Payne and Chester W. Eskey who provided care for problems of the musculoskeletal system, including bones, joints, muscles, ligaments, tendons and nerves.

Desert Orthopaedic Center has offices located at 3121 South Maryland Parkway and 105 Pecos in Green Valley.

Marin Credit Card Services Operational

Marin Credit Card Services, Inc. (MCSI), a 33,000-square-foot credit card processing center, recently held its grand opening. The facility, located at Bermuda and Sunset Roads, is currently servicing the MasterCard and Visa portfolio of First National Bank of Marin.

In addition to credit card processing for First National Bank of Marin, the center will process credit cards for other financial institutions.

Dennis Stein, former president of NDA, is the president and CEO of MCSI. He is credited with expediting the opening of the center, which became operational in October and currently employs almost 300 people. The company expects to increase the number of employees to 500 within the next year. Original projections made when the company announced it would locate in Southern Nevada called for 200 employees during its first year of operation.

Sun State Bank Begins Construction in Henderson/Green Valley

Construction is underway on a $1 million Sun State Bank regional lending center and branch office in Henderson that will begin serving businesses and depositors this summer.

Located on the south side of Sunset Road west of Athenian Drive in Green Valley, the bank’s four branch will cover 6,000 square feet and will include two drive-up service windows, a first for the community business bank since its founding nearly 14 years ago.

Dain Bosworth Inc. Moves to BofA Building

Dain Bosworth Incorporated has moved its Reno office to the Bank of America building, located at 5905 S. Virginia St., Suite 300.

The new office, which spans 8,000 square feet, has space for 19 brokers and a support staff of 10. Currently, Dain Bosworth employs 14 brokers and seven support staff in Reno.

U.S. Bank Establishes Niche as Gaming Lender

U.S. Bank of Nevada executives recently announced the bank is acting as managing agent for a $90 million loan agreement with John Ascuaga's Nugget in Sparks, strengthening the lender's position as a major player in the state's gaming industry.

The loan agreement will enable the Nugget to expand its operation with the construction of an 800-room hotel tower. U.S. Bank is building a strong niche as a mid-sized gaming lender with a knowledgeable local staff and the resources of a major financial institution. The bank's parent company is Portland, Oregon-based U.S. Bancorp with assets of over $21 billion.

Nevada Architects Honor Local Architectural Firm

The Nevada chapter of the American Institute of Architects recently awarded Holmes Sabatini Associates Architects its highest honor by presenting the Henderson firm its Award of Honor as the state's top architectural firm for 1995.

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February/March 1996 • Nevada Business Journal 27
Somer Hollingsworth, CEO
Nevada Development Authority

by Kathleen Foley

Somer Hollingsworth, who took over as president and chief executive officer of the Nevada Development Authority in December 1995, reports that his first few months at the helm were busy ones. "December is usually slow," he says, "but during that month we had visits from some major players who were thinking about relocating to Southern Nevada. The number of recent inquiries has been unbelievable."

A non-profit organization, NDA is dedicated to the economic development and diversification of Southern Nevada. It includes approximately 600 member businesses which aim to attract new companies to the area and also assist in the expansion of existing businesses. Hollingsworth is proud that NDA's board now includes representatives from all Southern Nevada communities, not just from Las Vegas.

The new CEO brings a wealth of experience to his position. Not too many people can claim to have lived in Southern Nevada for 42 years, or to remember when Decatur Boulevard was merely a graded road at the far west end of Las Vegas. The Hollingsworth family moved to Southern Nevada in 1953, and the new CEO has been here ever since, observing and assisting in the development of one of the nation's fastest-growing communities. He has been involved in banking for most of his career, serving as president of Pioneer Citizens Bank from 1986 to mid-1989, and senior vice president of Sun State Bank from 1989 to 1994. He also owns a consulting firm which finds financing for commercial projects in Southern Nevada.

"We need to diversify," emphasizes Hollingsworth. "Diversification has two advantages: it gives us another source of revenue outside gaming, and it also helps protect the gaming industry. As it is now, whenever the state has a revenue shortfall, it looks to the casino industry to make up the difference through increased room taxes or other means. Diversification can take some of the pressure off the gaming industry."

During the past three years, NDA has shown many companies how to look beyond the neon to find the real Southern Nevada. Among the major businesses who have moved here are Levi Strauss, Ocean Spray, Citibank's credit card processing facility and Household Credit Service. NDA reports that in fiscal year 1994, new companies that located to the area provided almost 3,000 new jobs for area residents and had a total impact of over $137 million on the local economy.

Hollingsworth reports that in some localities, a business faces so many regulations, restrictions and delays involved in getting permission to expand, it's cheaper to build an entirely new plant in Southern Nevada than it is to expand a facility in the company's present location. "Once they start checking out the area," he says, "they find they like the quality of life here: the climate, affordable housing, the available work force. Nevada's tax structure is also very attractive. I've always admired the work the Nevada Development Authority has done," states Hollingsworth. "I'm hopeful I'll be able to add to what they have accomplished."
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Laurie S. Kalnin has been promoted to the position of business development officer with Truckee River Bank’s Small Business Administration (SBA) loan production office in Las Vegas. Kalnin has been with Truckee River Bank since 1994. Previously she had been executive director of the Southern Nevada Certified Development Company.

Valley Hospital Medical Center’s Medical Staff has elected Edwin Flip Homansky, M.D. as chief of staff for the term 1996-1998. Dr. Homansky has been on staff at the hospital since 1979. He is president of Doctor’s Emergency Services, director of emergency services for Valley Hospital and chairman of the Clark County Emergency Medical Services Board, overseeing prehospital care.

Southwest Medical Associates, Inc. (SMA), is pleased to announce the recent appointment of its new president, Dr. Allan J. Ebbin, M.D., M.P.H. Dr. Ebbin is certified by four American boards: pediatrics, preventive medicine, medical genetics, and the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review Physician.

Les Conway has joined Del Webb as the director of construction for both the firm’s local properties, Sun City Summerlin and Sun City MacDonald Ranch. Conway has over 26 years of experience in various residential and commercial construction projects.

The Howard Hughes Corporation has named Michael W. Byrne as director, construction for the company’s Commercial and Industrial Division. In his position, Byrne will focus primarily on commercial, industrial and infrastructure projects.

Lucinda Dahlberg, CCIM, CPM has joined as vice president of their commercial division. Lucinda previously owned her own brokerage firm before teaming up with Terra West. A resident for more than 17 years, Ludinda is past president of the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) Las Vegas Chapter; Trustee for the Nevada Development Authority (NDA) and a member of the Commercial Investment of Real Estate Institute (CIREI).

Linda Kirk has been promoted to employment officer at Nevada State Bank, where her responsibilities will include managing and recruiting staff and coordinating job placement.

Nevada State Bank has promoted Terry McConnell to vice president/corporate sales officer. His duties include originating loans of more than $250,000 and developing new business among business and community leaders. His extensive banking career includes vice president/loan portfolio manager and loan officer.

Richard Green has joined Nevada State Bank as vice president/real estate construction loan officer, where his duties include coordinating commercial construction loans for major developers, contractors, builders and mortgage lenders.

During his 25-year banking career, Green has held such executive posts as vice president/manager, vice president/senior loan officer, vice president/unit manager and regional manager.

Las Vegas Business Bank has appointed Ron Risk as vice president and executive officer responsible for business development and the coordination of business banking and private banking services.

With 17 years of experience in banking and finance, Risk was previously vice president and manager of Bank of America Center.

The Las Vegas offices of R&R Advertising/The PBN Company have named Randall Putz to the newly-created position of director of technology. In his new role, Putz is responsible for creating and building R&R’s computer network and overseeing the implementation of emerging media and computer-based technologies.

Dan Ripps has recently joined Christopher Homes as chief financial officer. With over 18 years of real estate finance experience.

Robin Civish has been promoted to the position of assistant property manager for The Vista Group. Civish was formerly an accounting assistant with Vista for the past four years. Civish has been a resident of Las Vegas for 16 years.

Western Technologies, Inc., announces the promotion of Richard C. Stone, P.E., to managing director of the Las Vegas office and the addition of three new professionals to the staff.

The additions include Randall L. Stone as director of environmental services, Peter Cloven, C.E.M., R.H.S.P. as
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senior environmental project manager, and Teri Askew as director of marketing.

Randall L. Stone brings ten years of experience as a professional geologist in the fields of hazardous waste and underground storage tank management, environmental assessments, regulatory compliance and energy resource development.

Cloven is also in the environmental services department, bringing more than eight years of professional experience in the fields of environmental assessment and clean-up, hazardous materials management and regulatory compliance.

Askew is responsible for business development, client relations, advertising and budgeting for the marketing environmental services, geotechnical engineering and materials testing and inspection services for the Las Vegas office.

Barbara Gomez, vice president, CFO, and co-founder of Gomez Consulting, has been honored as the 1995 Associate Member of the Year by the Associated General Contractors (AGC). Horizon Communities, Inc. recently announced the appointment of Kathy Hoskins as director of sales and marketing. Hoskins has been heavily involved in real estate development over the years.

The Public Relations Society of America, Desert Sands Chapter has named its board of directors for 1996. Kayla Callas, manager of public affairs, FHP Health Care, president; Lisa Story, communications manager of marketing and media relations, Bechtel Nevada, president-elect; Colleen Curran-Griego, director of public and employee communications, Bechtel Nevada; Sharon Chayra, president of Chayra Communications, vice president-administration; Howard Stutz, special project manager, R&R Advertising/PBN Co., vice president-finance; Sharon Rorman, ABC, APR, public communications, Southwest Gas Corp., vice president-professional development; Vicki Taylor, APR, assistant to county manager, Clark County, assembly delegate; Larry White, APR, vice president of Joyce Advertising and Public Relations, member-at-large; Shelley A. Munscholt, vice president-promotions, Dunn Reber Glenn Marz Advertising and Public Relations, member-at-large, and Katherine Williams, APR, manager of corporate communications, The Howard Hughes Corp., member-at-large.

Kenneth W. Fong, a partner-manager in Wing Fong and Associates has recently completed the educational requirements of the certified property manager (CPM) designation.

Daniel Watterson joined Terracon Consultants Western, Inc. as a senior hydrogeologist. He provides management, technical expertise, oversight of field investigations, data evaluations and report writing for national resource projects.
Sold on Managed Care
Erin MacDonald, President, CEO, Sierra Health Services, Inc.

Erin MacDonald’s strong belief in the managed care concept began about 20 years ago when, as the head nurse in a critical care facility, she had a patient diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which is commonly known as Lou Gehrig’s disease.

The terminally ill patient required numerous stays in the unit during the course of her disease process and was determined to spend her last days surrounded by her family in the comfort and warmth of her own home. In response to her understandable plea, MacDonald and her staff organized a team and developed a plan to deliver critical care to this special patient in her home setting.

“We didn’t know it at the time, but we were adhering to the true principles of managed care,” MacDonald said. We were delivering her care in the setting most appropriate for her and her family and each member of the care team relied strongly on the other teammates to ensure the care delivered was completely comprehensive.”

It was that experience, MacDonald said, that gelled the concepts of managed care in her mind and has helped her to be one of its biggest supporters now.

Today, MacDonald is president and chief operating officer of Sierra Health Services, Inc. (SHS), a publicly-held managed health care company that owns and operates 12 vertically-integrated health care subsidiaries that primarily provide or arrange for comprehensive managed healthcare and administrative services. She oversees a staff of more than 2,300 in six states and at the end of 1995, the company served more than 300,000 individuals.

Subsidiaries include Health Plan of Nevada, Inc., the state’s largest health maintenance organization (HMO); Southwest Medical Associates, Inc. Nevada’s largest multispecialty medical group; Sierra Health and Life Insurance Company, Inc., a California-domiciled life and health insurance company; and Sierra Healthcare Options Inc., which provides administrative services such as utilization review to self-insured employer groups and workers compensation services to companies enrolled in the Nevada State Industrial Insurance System (SIIS). Other health-related subsidiaries include a home health agency, a hospice and a behavioral health company.

MacDonald has been with the company and its predecessor entities for 18 years. Starting on the ground floor and working in such positions as nurse coordinator and then operations manager for Southwest Medical Associates, this highly qualified leader has the hands-on experience of actually having done much of what she oversees today. Prior to her current position, MacDonald was senior vice president of operations for SHS and also held the positions of president of Health Plan of Nevada, Inc. and Sierra Health and Life Insurance Company, Inc. The depth of her more than two decades of medical expertise reflects the depth of the SHS care delivery system.

“We strive to make our healthcare delivery systems seamless,” she said. “It’s a total system in which everyone is accountable for their actions.”

It is that accountability which is at the heart of managed care, according to MacDonald.

“The practice of medicine in a managed care setting must be a total team concept in which doctors, patients, patients’ families, other providers and case managers work in concert to develop the best possible and most cost-effective treatment plan,” she said. “All players on the team must be accountable for their actions to ensure the system works in the most effective manner and the patient receives the most effective treatment.”

MacDonald takes that team concept from the care delivery side of the business to the day-to-day operations.

Improvements, additions and new ideas are commonplace at SHS and its family of companies. Recently, Southwest Medical Associates opened a new, ambulatory surgery center adjacent its main campus on Charleston Boulevard and Rancho Drive.

Sierra’s plan members will be the first Southern Nevadans to take advantage of Sierra’s Breast Care Center allowing patients access to the essential medical specialists and services at one location, rather than through several appointments in different locations.

Southwest Medical Associates recently enhanced its medical software system by adding on-line access to electronic medical records. Now, a physician can call up pertinent data from a patient’s chart via a terminal in his or her office. This allows for more informed treatment decisions to be made at the time of the office visit or phone call. The group expects to add new features to this service, including electronic access to radiology and laboratory results. The use of voice recognition computer technologies also promises more rapid access to treatment information.
Operating a home-based business may entitle you to special tax breaks that help maximize income and offset some of the day-to-day expenses of maintaining home and office.

According to the Nevada Society of CPAs, if your home-based business meets certain guidelines, you may be able to deduct business expenses for your car, personal equipment, and entertainment, as well as a portion of mortgage interest, property taxes, utilities, and other costs associated with home ownership.

Unlike employee business expenses that are subject to the two-percent of adjusted gross income limitation, you can deduct qualified home-based business expenses in full on your individual income tax return. But before you start dreaming of tax write-offs, you’ll need to be sure your home-based business qualifies.

**Business or Hobby?**

Your challenge is to distinguish your business from a hobby. Generally, a home-based business is entered into with the primary intent to make a profit, while a hobby is pursued without the intention to make a profit — although your hobby may incidentally produce income. In general, an activity is presumed not to be a hobby if profits result in three or more of the five consecutive tax years ending in the current year, unless the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) proves otherwise.

Business expenses must be “ordinary” and “necessary” to qualify as deductions. An “ordinary” expense is one that is common and usual for your type of business, trade, or profession, while a “necessary” expense is defined as “appropriate” or “helpful” for your particular business.

**Automobile Expenses**

If you use your automobile in connection with your home-based business, you may claim a deduction equal to 30 cents per mile plus the business portion of parking, fees, and tolls, or write off the actual costs of operating your automobile in connection with your business. These costs include gas, oil, tolls, parking, depreciation, and maintenance expenses. Keep in mind that if you lease a car for business purposes, you must use the actual-cost method.

**Equipment Costs**

The tax law allows a business to deduct up to $17,500 in qualifying property in the year the property is placed in service, rather than depreciating the cost over a period of years. If you are in need of some new equipment, consider the benefits of immediate expensing. Be aware, however, that the expensing deduction is phased out once the cost of the property placed in service during the year exceeds $200,000.

In some cases, home-based business owners find it more cost-effective to lease a business asset. If the leased asset is used strictly for business purposes, you generally can deduct the entire leasing expense. When the asset is used for both business and personal use, only the portion attributable to business use is deductible.
Keep Track of Meal and Entertainment Expenses

You can deduct 50 percent of the cost of business-related meal and entertainment expenses incurred in entertaining a client, customer, or employee. To qualify, a bona fide business discussion must take place immediately before, during, or immediately after the meal or entertainment. Also, your records of business meals and entertainment must reflect the amount, time, place, and business purpose of the expense, as well as your business relationship with the person entertained.

Look into the Home Office Deductions

You may qualify to deduct the costs of operating and maintaining the portion of the home you use for business only if your home office is used regularly and exclusively as (1) your principal place of business or (2) a place where you meet customers, clients, or patients. You will not meet the exclusive-use test if the business portion of your residence is not used solely for the purpose of carrying on your trade or business. To claim these deductions, you must file Form 8829, Expenses for Business Use of Your Home.

You’re in Charge

When you operate a home-based business, you take on a number of other financial responsibilities, such as paying estimated taxes, insuring your business, and creating retirement savings plans. For this reason, you may want to seek professional advice from a CPA with small business experience.

Prepared by members of the Nevada Society of Certified Public Accountants.
Nothing cheers me up more than learning everybody else is miserable too.

The ‘90s, it seems, are turning into the Lithium Decade. In a poll to unearth marketing trends, Advertising Age Magazine discovered 41 percent of the population is having less fun now than two years ago. Some 29 percent of us are having more fun, 26 percent are having the same amount of fun, and 4 percent are so zoned out on Prozac they have no idea what fun is.

The survey said the fun drink of choice is beer. The fun food was pizza. And an all-you-can-eat buffet is the fun place to go. People said a great video game was more fun than a striptease, which frankly relieved me because after all that beer, pizza and buffeting who wants to see any of these people naked? It’s depressing enough to see myself naked in the bathroom mirror. Why did that donut place have to open next door at the same time the chain on my exercise bike snapped? Great! Now I feel miserable again too!

People in the survey thought virtually every decade was more fun than the ‘90s. The only exception was decades with truly cataclysmic events, such as World Wars or the release of a new Barry Manilow album. Why is everybody so glum? When I want to get to the heart of popular culture, I can always count on one reliable resource — Madonna. But she wasn’t around (she probably entered a convent after learning about the demise of the striptease).

So I skimmed covers of news magazines to try to discern where the fun went.

I read:

*Newsweek:* “Killer Virus: Beyond the Ebola Scare — What Else Is Out There?”

*US News & World Report:* “They’re Armed and They’re Dangerous.”

*Time:* “Vietnam: 20 Years Later It Haunts Us Still.”

No wonder people think having warm milk and cookies (the Ad Age survey again) is more fun than going someplace exotic. After all the headlines, I was terrified to leave the house. If I put one foot out the door, I started hearing the “Bad Boys, Bad Boys” theme song from *Cops.*

Of course, the news magazines need to titillate. Business publications are boosters of the economy and purveyors of level-headed journalism.

The cover of *Fortune Magazine* said: “So You Fail. So What?” At first I thought this was a variation on “try, try again.” Then I realized *Fortune* meant, “you failed — so what?” in the sense that a colleague, to whom you’ve just confessed your innermost fears, says, “who cares — I just came here for coffee and you’re blocking the pot.”

Even *Fortune* is declaring, “We got ours, you get yours.” Then I thought I was being paranoid — until I saw another *Fortune* article about Intel CEO Andy Grove. It was headlined: “His Law: Only the Paranoid Survive.”

*Forbes’* cover said: “Heart Attack: Calculate Your Odds.”

Of course, by now my blood pressure was higher than a member of the Kennedy family on any given Friday night. Still I took the test. The test asked me to count my total cholesterol, my serum cholesterol, my HDL cholesterol and my LDL cholesterol, and I came to a startling conclusion: I had no idea I had so many damn kinds of cholesterol in my body!

This takes the fun out of pizza, beer and all-you-can-eat buffets. I am falling apart! Does anybody out there know how to fix an exercise bike?

Fortunately, just at this moment, *CIO Magazine*, a publication for corporate technology executives, put everything into perspective. Its cover story was “How to Enhance Your Negative Capacity.” In other words, *CIO* says we should all try to be MORE negative, not less. This is the ‘90s. A time for doom and gloom. Say no to everybody! No, no, NO! That might make them feel worst, but you’ll feel a whole lot better.

My new slogan is, “I’m OK, You Go to Hell.”

Hey, these ‘90s might be fun after all!
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WHERE NEWS COMES FIRST
LAS VEGAS • NEVADA
The national economy’s rate of growth slowed in mid-1995, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the third quarter of 1995 posting a 4.73 percent rate of growth. On an inflation-adjusted basis, most predict real GDP over all of 1995 should exceed 3 percent. At year’s end, nonetheless, most forecasters have been revising downward their estimates for the fourth quarter. The most likely scenario for 1996 is growth, though at a somewhat slower pace than in 1995.

The Federal Reserve (Fed) at its mid-December meeting felt that sufficient softness in some economic sectors warranted early action. They took a step toward more expansionary conditions by lowering the Fed fund rate, the rate banks charge for lending to each other for very short-term borrowing. Long-term securities, less directly affected by the Fed and more dependent on market influences, have trended downward during much of 1995, flattening the difference in rates of return. This picture of interest rates, at least for some, has been a signal of a slowing economy.

Not surprisingly, most forecasters anticipate lower interest rates in 1996, at least for the early months. Given the relative strengths of investment and the supply of loanable funds, market forces should keep rates on the current path. In addition, should the Fed find the economy slowing further in the months ahead, the Fed will, no doubt, take additional steps to lower rates.

Nevada, on the other hand, enjoyed continued economic expansion in 1995. By all accounts, the state’s economic momentum will continue through 1996 with some regions and sectors of the state experiencing a pick up in activity. Indeed, construction activity in Southern Nevada gives reason to think in terms of yet another wave of expansion for Las Vegas, beginning in late 1996 and 1997. By almost any measure, Nevada continues to rank as one of the fastest-growing states. Generally, however, activity, as measured by the percentage change over year-ago levels, is likely to remain bland for some of the early months of 1996, with things picking up at year’s end.

Gross gaming revenue, shows meager percentage changes over year-ago levels for recent months, declining 0.69 percent in October 1995, down 1.59 percent for Clark County and up by 1.45 percent for Washoe County (Reno).

The state’s taxable sales, on the other hand, increased by a significant 14.48 percent for October 1995, unquestionably some of the state’s sectors recorded strong economic performance. But, the regions of the state shared in the growth. Clark County reported a gain of 14.21 percent and Washoe County grew at a 8.69 percent rate. Since the state’s rate exceeds the rates for the state’s two urban areas, we also know that the rural areas outperformed the urban areas. Thus, we can conclude that all regions of the state shared in the growth.

Perhaps no one area best describes the economic momentum Nevada is experiencing than the current push in construction activity. Since construction projects will not be available until completed some time into the future and then most will have a long life thereafter, the level of construction activity measures the pulse of confidence people have in an area’s future economy. Both Las Vegas and Reno report double-digit rates of permitting activity for commercial projects, 71.6 percent for Las Vegas and 38.98 percent for Reno. Not surprisingly, recent employment data also show double-digit growth rates for construction employment. All in all, we might conclude that some construction projects represent “catch up” and others reflect anticipated future activity and thus might be classed as “get ahead”—but, regardless of which circumstance, there is a strong vote of confidence in Nevada and its future.

R. Keith Schwer, UNLV Center for Business & Economic Research
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>UNITS</th>
<th>LATEST PERIOD</th>
<th>PREVIOUS PERIOD</th>
<th>YEAR AGO</th>
<th>CHANGE YR AGO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNEMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>November, 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>-16.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas MSA</td>
<td>November, 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-15.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reno MSA</td>
<td>November, 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>-21.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>seasonally adj.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-3.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RETAIL ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada Taxable Sales</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>1,781,009</td>
<td>1,831,554</td>
<td>1,533,041</td>
<td>14.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark County</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>1,156,928</td>
<td>1,169,641</td>
<td>1,012,964</td>
<td>14.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe County</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>323,090</td>
<td>360,046</td>
<td>297,246</td>
<td>8.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Retail Sales</td>
<td>September, 1995</td>
<td>$ million</td>
<td>197,514</td>
<td>196,992</td>
<td>188,901</td>
<td>4.56%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GROSS GAMING REVENUE</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>621,226</td>
<td>650,542</td>
<td>625,540</td>
<td>-0.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark County</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>472,671</td>
<td>490,299</td>
<td>480,315</td>
<td>-1.59%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washoe County</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>89,666</td>
<td>97,695</td>
<td>88,382</td>
<td>1.45%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Las Vegas Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Residences</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td># permits</td>
<td>5,245</td>
<td>5,271</td>
<td>4,953</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Commercial Permits</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td># permits</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>71.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reno Area</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Residences</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td># permits</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>-6.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Commercial</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td># permits</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>38.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Starts</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>1,337</td>
<td>1,389</td>
<td>1,451</td>
<td>-7.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Construction</td>
<td>September, 1995</td>
<td>$ billion</td>
<td>535.0</td>
<td>528.7</td>
<td>218.3</td>
<td>145.08%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSING SALES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Las Vegas Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Sales Price(1)</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>141,971</td>
<td>134,097</td>
<td>120,475</td>
<td>17.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Cost/Square Foot</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>$ per. sq. ft.</td>
<td>85.47</td>
<td>80.78</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>11.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Mortgage Rate(2)</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>-13.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe County</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Sales Price(1)</td>
<td>2nd Half 1994</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>178,711</td>
<td>168,199</td>
<td>170,325</td>
<td>4.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Cost/Square Foot</td>
<td>2nd Half 1994</td>
<td>$ per. sq. ft.</td>
<td>95.55</td>
<td>92.67</td>
<td>96.88</td>
<td>-1.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Mortgage Rate(2)</td>
<td>2nd Half 1994</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>26.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Home Sales</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ thousand</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>5.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSPORTATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Passengers(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarran Int. Airport, LV</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>passengers</td>
<td>7,140,650</td>
<td>7,079,738</td>
<td>6,956,897</td>
<td>2.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reno/Tahoe Int. Airport</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>passengers</td>
<td>1,531,391</td>
<td>1,482,052</td>
<td>1,443,020</td>
<td>6.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Taxable Gasoline Sales</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>thousand gal.</td>
<td>66,429</td>
<td>64,478</td>
<td>64,657</td>
<td>2.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION ESTIMATES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada(5)</td>
<td>July, 1995</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>1,582,280</td>
<td>1,494,230</td>
<td>5.89%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark County(5)</td>
<td>July, 1995</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>1,036,180</td>
<td>971,680</td>
<td>6.64%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washoe County(5)</td>
<td>July, 1995</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>294,290</td>
<td>282,630</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATIONAL ECONOMY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Price Index(4)</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>1982-84=100</td>
<td>153.7</td>
<td>153.2</td>
<td>149.5</td>
<td>2.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money Supply – M1</td>
<td>October, 1995</td>
<td>$ billion</td>
<td>1,129.8</td>
<td>1,139.7</td>
<td>1,148.2</td>
<td>-1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Rate</td>
<td>November, 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>12.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Month U.S. T-Bill</td>
<td>November, 1995</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
<td>3rd qtr 1995</td>
<td>$ billion</td>
<td>7,113.2</td>
<td>7,030.0</td>
<td>6,791.7</td>
<td>4.73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES: (1) houses, condos, townhouses; (2) 30 yr. FHA; (3) enplaned/deplaned passengers; (4) all urban consumers; (5) preliminary SOURCES: Nevada Dept. of Taxation; Nevada Employment Security Department; UNLV, Center for Business and Economic Research; UNR, Bureau of Business and Economic Research; US Dept. of Commerce; US Federal Reserve. COMPILED BY: UNLV, Center for Business and Economic Research

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