

## “IT’S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE...”

By Bryan Wachter

**WITH LESS THAN THREE WEEKS BEFORE BLACK FRIDAY,**

retailers are already underway meeting the expectations of this year’s holiday revelers. It’s a complicated process that often draws many comments about how sudden and early the holiday season appears to brighten our stores, malls, and streets.

The ancillary companies and employees that work hard to provide our holiday cheer begin the process many months ahead of schedule. The direct employees that are hired by our members to help with the increased foot traffic, inventory, and demand, account for more than 7,600 additional jobs in Nevada alone, and are often hired in October for the season ahead (for more information on holiday hiring, please see RAN’s economic release located on page 2).

The reason there’s a tree in the Grand Hotel and one in the park as well, is because that is what most holiday shoppers expect. There’s something exciting about the pomp and circumstance surrounding Christmas, Chanukah, and Kwanza that

seems to put folks in high spirits. And while the gift-giving season can seem hectic, retailers are here to make the season bright.

One way retailers try and help is by extending the sale season pre-Black Friday. By providing deals, incentives, and savings earlier in the year, many shoppers can spread their holiday budgets over several paychecks or months, rather than waiting and competing in a limited time frame.

According to National Retail Federation President Mathew Shay, “Retailers have plenty of reasons to be optimistic this holiday season, and one of the most important pieces of evidence is the confidence holiday shoppers are exuding in their plans to spend on gifts for their loved ones; while not completely throwing caution to the wind, Americans’ frugal spending habits will still be visible this holiday season as they continue to rely on discounts and sales and comparison shop. Consumers will put retailers to the test when it comes to the product mix and value companies can offer today’s shopper who is focused on much more than

just price.”

RAN is in the process of modeling Nevada-specific holiday spending patterns and will be releasing that data shortly. Nevada needs a healthy holiday season in order to boost economic activities as well as state sales tax, which provide the largest single source of revenue to the State General Fund. In December, Nevada’s Economic Forum will meet to forecast state revenues that the Governor will use to create his budget to present to the Nevada Legislature. ■

### INSIDE

Nevada Expected to Add Up to 7,600 Seasonal Jobs .....	2
Nevada Medicaid Implemented New Pharmacy Rules.....	3
Service Animals Guidelines in Public Establishments .....	3
Medication Synchronization.....	4
NRF Membership Opportunity.....	6
Food 4 Less Stores in Las Vegas to Convert to Smith’s in 2015 .....	7



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# NEVADA EXPECTED TO ADD UP TO 7,600 SEASONAL JOBS

## EMPLOYMENT AND TAXABLE SALES GROWTH SUGGEST STRONG HOLIDAY SEASON

**AS THE  
WEATHER  
BEGINS TO  
TURN, SO**

have retailers large and small begun to plan ahead for a strong holiday season in 2014. Already, many major retailers are announcing plans to employ more seasonal employees than last year. National estimates from employee-placement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas suggest seasonal employment from October to December could reach 800,000 this year, up 1.8 percent from last year and the highest level since 1999. The Retail Association of Nevada (RAN) estimates retailers will add up to 7,600 seasonal jobs in Nevada to meet the demand of the upcoming holidays.

National retailers such as Kohl's, Walmart, Macy's, and Game Stop all have plans to increase their seasonal workforce this year. Kohl's is planning to hire 17,000 more employees this holiday season (up 34.0 percent from last year), with roughly 50 employees added per store. Walmart

is increasing its seasonal workforce by about 10 percent, or up to 60,000 employees this year, and nearly one-fourth of these employees are expected to stay on permanently after the holidays. Macy's will hire 86,000 workers, an increase of 3.6 percent from last year. Game Stop is hiring nearly 50 percent

and e-commerce outfits throughout the state are expected to be consistent or better than last year, and anecdotal reports suggest that many of these local hires end up staying on in some capacity after the peak of the holidays has passed.

While not considered "traditional" retailers,

85,000 seasonal employees instead. Contributing to UPS's hiring plans this year are growing e-commerce sales expectations by both online-only and bricks and mortar stores with an online presence. While the largest e-commerce company, Amazon, has yet to release holiday hiring plans, EMarketer estimates e-commerce sales will reach \$72.4 billion this year, up 17 percent from last year, comprising 8.4 percent of total holiday sales.

Bryan Wachter of RAN said, "Nevada has continued its upward trend in terms of both employment and

National Retailer	Estimated Statewide Hiring
<b>Macy's</b>	<b>926</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>742</b>
<b>Walmart</b>	<b>622</b>
<b>Kohl's</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Toys "R" Us</b>	<b>515</b>
<b>Game Stop</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>JCPenney</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Total, Major Announcements</b> <i>(Based on Company Announcements &amp; Nevada-based Locations)</i>	<b>3,747</b>

more seasonal employees this year, or from 17,000 last year to 25,000 this year. Target, JCPenney, and Toys "R" Us are planning to stay consistent with 2013 hiring levels with 70,000, 35,000 and 45,000 seasonal employees, respectively.

Consolidating the major hiring announcements made thus far in the season, RAN estimates national retailers will hire about 3,700 seasonal employees in Nevada this year. Seasonal hires by local retail shops

shipment companies like UPS and FedEx are of increasing importance to the success of the modern holiday shopping season. FedEx plans to add more than 50,000 workers for the upcoming season, up from 40,000 last year. Similarly, UPS plans to add between 90,000 and 95,000 workers this holiday season, up from 85,000 last year. Notably, UPS planned to hire 55,000 seasonal workers last year, but high package volume led to the addition of

taxable retail sales. Total employment in Nevada has experienced 44 months of consecutive year-over-year growth, while retail trade employment has shown 47 months of consecutive year-over-year growth. On the spending side, overall taxable retail sales have had 49 months of consecutive year-over-year growth. The addition of seasonal hires will likely add to overall holiday spending this year." ■



# NEVADA MEDICAID IMPLEMENTED NEW PHARMACY RULES

By Liz MacMenamin

## THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REQUIRES ALL

referring practitioners to be enrolled in Medicaid if they prescribe or provide services that require a providers order, prescription or referral. This requirement changes the claims and provider enrollment process in the Nevada Medicaid programs. This new requirement was

implemented and effective on October 15, 2014.

This information was provided by email to members of RAN on August 13, 2014, to enable the pharmacies that will be impacted to prepare for these upcoming changes. The provider will need a valid practitioner National Provider Identifier (NPI) and be enrolled in Medicaid as either a full-service provider or as an Ordering, Prescribing,

and Referring (OPR) Practitioner.

The pharmacy claims will be working on a soft edit 45 days prior to implementation and they will be notified if the prescriber is either not enrolled in Medicaid or if they do not have prescriptive authority. After October 15, 2014, claims submitted by those without the ability to prescribe within guidelines required by Medicaid will

be denied. This will enable the pharmacy to notify the recipient to notify the prescriber with an understanding that after the implementation date their claims will be denied.

The Catamaran Technical Call Center at (866) 244-8554 can answer any questions the prescriber or the pharmacy may have about these billing changes and the new OPR provider enrollment category. ■

# SERVICE ANIMAL GUIDELINES IN PUBLIC ESTABLISHMENTS

By Lea Tauchen

## RAN HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL INQUIRIES

regarding customers bringing animals into grocery stores and restaurants. Our members want to know what to do when someone comes into their business with a pet. Fortunately, the federal, state, and local laws are clear on this subject. Only service animals are allowed in food establishments.

Federally, the U.S. Department of Justice implements the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). This topic is addressed in Title II, which covers state and local government services,

and Title III, which covers public accommodations and commercial facilities. Here is the Department's publication providing guidance. This information can be found at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

### HOW IS "SERVICE ANIMAL" DEFINED?

**Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.** Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to

take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

### WHERE ARE SERVICE ANIMALS ALLOWED?

Under the ADA, State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals

to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go. For example, in a hospital it would be inappropriate to exclude a service animal from areas such as patient rooms, clinics, cafeterias, or examination rooms. However, it may be appropriate to exclude a service animal from operating rooms or burn units where the animal's presence may compromise a sterile environment.

### SERVICE ANIMALS MUST BE UNDER CONTROL

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed,

Continued on page 4





## ANIMALS *Continued from page 3*



### ***perform the work or task.***

● Allergies and fear of dogs are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people using service animals. When a person who is allergic to dog dander and a person who uses a service animal must spend time in the same room or facility, for example, in a school classroom or at a homeless shelter, they both should be

leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

### **INQUIRIES, EXCLUSIONS, AND OTHER RULES**

***When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to***

accommodated by assigning them, if possible, to different locations within the room or different rooms in the facility.

● A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove his service animal from the premises unless: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. ***When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.***

● Establishments that sell or prepare food must allow service animals in public areas even if state or local health codes prohibit animals on the premises.

● People with disabilities who use service animals cannot be isolated from other patrons,

treated less favorably than other patrons, or charged fees that are not charged to other patrons without animals. In addition, if a business requires a deposit or fee to be paid by patrons with pets, it must waive the charge for service animals.

● If a business such as a hotel normally charges guests for damage that they cause, a customer with a disability may also be charged for damage caused by himself or his service animal.

Staff is not required to provide care or food for a service animal.

### **MINIATURE HORSES**

In addition to the provisions about service dogs, ADA regulations have a separate provision about miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. (Miniature horses generally range in height from 24 inches to 34 inches measured to the shoulders and generally weigh between 70 and 100 pounds.) Entities covered by the ADA must modify their policies to permit miniature horses where reasonable. The regulations set out four assessment factors to assist entities in determining whether miniature horses can be accommodated in their facility. The assessment factors are (1) whether the miniature horse is housebroken; (2) whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control;

(3) whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size, and weight; and (4) whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

In Nevada, this issue is found in Nevada Administrative Code 446.625. This regulation states that except for service animals or dogs with security or police officers, live animals are not allowed on the premises of a food establishment or on adjacent areas under the control of the holder of the permit for the operation of the food establishment. Additionally, it stipulates that food handlers must not care for or handle any pets while on duty.

In Clark County, the Southern Nevada Health District covers this in Section 6-501.21 of the 2010 Regulations Governing the Sanitation of Food Establishments. And in Washoe County, this is addressed in their Environmental Health Services Food Code 160.155.

Additionally, it is a best practice for food establishments to have an internal policy that requires staff to clean and sanitize shopping carts, hand baskets, or motorized cart baskets that have had animals placed in them.

If you have any questions, please contact Lea Tauchen at RAN. Please note that this is not legal advice, as it is intended for information purposes only. ■



# MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

By Liz MacMenamin

## THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION

(NCPA) recently released information regarding the synchronization issue, and that four states have currently enacted laws to adopt synchronization legislation. Pharmacists and patient advocates are

working in state legislatures around the country to educate elected officials on the importance of this legislation.

Medication Synchronization, known as med sync, leads to better adherence to medication regimes for patients with chronic illnesses. The patient reports that the

convenience of this system allows them to make only one visit a month to their pharmacy. This also allows the pharmacist more time to spend with the patient to discuss any concerns and the contact with the patient takes on a more personal experience. This new system has the potential to improve the outcomes of a patient's therapy and to decrease the drug costs to the patient and to the health care plans.

The NCPA requested a poll that was conducted by Langer Research Associates. Using a random sample telephone survey of medication users 40 years and older, the poll found:

Eighty-three percent of patients participating in med sync programs find them "extremely or very" helpful in managing their medication refills,

and 74 percent say they are helpful in improving their overall adherence to their prescribed medication regimen.

Fifty percent of survey respondents who are not enrolled reported being "very" or "somewhat" interested in med sync. Their interest increased as they learned more about the program's individual components. For example, 68 percent of non-participating patients were "very" or "somewhat" interested in receiving day-ahead reminders from the pharmacy of when their prescriptions will be ready for pickup.

These findings indicate that the patients are interested in a med sync system and this method could be extremely valuable to the future of health care in our state and nation. ■



There's a recently released FDA Consumer Update:

**"Finding Food Allergens Where They Shouldn't Be."**

<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm416577.htm>

<http://go.usa.gov/GKbk>

**Undeclared allergens are the leading cause of food recalls by the FDA.**

**Which foods are most often affected, and which allergens are involved?**

<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/default.htm>





# NRF MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

## THROUGH RAN'S PARTNERSHIP WITH

the National Retail Federation (NRF), our Nevada-based business members are invited to receive complimentary membership in NRF. As a member of NRF, you will have exclusive access to a number of benefits including the latest industry news and trends, important updates about how policies in Washington affect your business, networking opportunities, and discounts to NRF events.

In the coming weeks, you will receive communication directly from NRF in the mail on how to get started with your NRF membership. However, if you would like to register right away, please visit [www.nrf.com](http://www.nrf.com). Click on the "MyNRF" link in the upper right corner of the page. This will take you to a page to create your new account. Click on the "Create a Free Account" button below the question that asks, New to MyNRF? You will then be on the MyNRF Account Registration page where you will click on the "MyNRF Registration" button. You will then be asked to enter your email address. Please follow the

prompts from there to complete the registration process.

Here are some of the great NRF resources that you will have access to:

### KEEP UP WITH RETAIL'S LATEST TRENDS AND CRITICAL DATA

- STORES Magazine — subscribe to the print or digital edition of our monthly magazine.
- Newsletters—subscribe to SmartBrief, STORES Weekly and a number of other newsletters.
- Research—including members-only resources like the State of Retailing Online and Monthly Economic Review.
- Webinars—hear from experts on marketing, digital retailing and more from the comfort of your desk.
- Buying Guide — find the right products and services for your business.
- Industry Data—explore the Retail Insight Center for consumer research and industry data.

### LEARN HOW WASHINGTON AFFECTS YOUR BOTTOM LINE— AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

- Stay informed about how your representatives vote and how legislation affects

your business.

- Gain access to important policy issue experts.
- Voice your concerns on important retail issues such as sales tax fairness, tax reform, health care reform, privacy issues and organized retail crime.

### NETWORK WITH COLLEAGUES

- As a member, you'll have access to complimentary opportunities to network with colleagues, including:
- Conference calls and webinars
  - Invitation-only retail executive summits
  - Regional networking dinners
  - Membership to the Council of Independent Merchants—make your voice heard on policy and legislative issues.

### RECEIVE BIG DISCOUNTS FOR NRF EVENTS

- NRF hosts a number of conferences, expos, and summits each year. NRF members receive significant reductions in the fees for these events such as:
- Retail's BIG Show
  - Loss Prevention Conference & EXPO



- Shop.org Annual Summit
- Washington, DC Retail Advocates Summit

### RAISE THE VISIBILITY OF SMALL BUSINESS RETAILERS

- Complimentary membership in the Small Business Retail Council (SBRC) to ensure small business retailers have a voice in the federal policy making process.
- Provide an advisory role to NRF on the policy issues affecting small business retailers
  - Network with other like-minded small retail business owners
  - Stay informed about how legislators vote and the impact federal policy issues have on small business retailers
  - Attend teletownhall meetings and events with federal elected officials and NRF's President and CEO, Matthew Shay
  - Participate in NRF's annual Retail Advocates Summit in Washington, D.C.





# FOOD 4 LESS STORES IN LAS VEGAS TO CONVERT TO SMITH'S IN 2015

## LAS VEGAS — FOOD 4 LESS AND SMITH'S FOOD & DRUG

Stores are announcing that six Food 4 Less stores in the Las Vegas area will convert to Smith's stores in early 2015. Food 4 Less will close its remaining Las Vegas stores in January 2015 and exit the Las Vegas market while continuing to operate in California and Chicago.

Food 4 Less and Smith's are both divisions of The Kroger Co. (NYSE: KR). Smith's and Food 4 Less joined the Kroger family in 1999. Food 4 Less currently operates 14 stores and employs 900 associates in Las Vegas. Smith's currently operates 30 stores and employs

3,500 associates in the market area. All Las Vegas Food 4 Less associates will have offers to join the Smith's team following the conversion.

"We are delighted that Food 4 Less associates from both the converted and closed stores will be able to continue their careers with Smith's," said Jay Cummins, Smith's division president. "The addition of these 900 talented associates along with six stores will strengthen Smith's areas of service and help us better serve the community with fresh quality products and services."

The following stores

will be remodeled as Smith's Food & Drug stores in early 2015:

- #503 3013 W. Craig Road

- #790 4001 S. Decatur Blvd.

- #792 3602 E. Bonanza Road

- #794 2255 Las Vegas Blvd. N

- #798 4965 E. Sahara Ave.

- #799 8180 S. Las Vegas Blvd.

Food 4 Less stores that will close in early 2015 include:

- #510 Green Valley Parkway

- #512 2545 South Eastern Ave.

- #514 1955 N. Nellis Blvd.

- #515 3864 W. Sahara Ave. (November 2014 closure)

- #516 120 S. Rainbow Blvd.

- #785 1301 S. Boulder Hwy, Henderson

- #791 3250 E. Flamingo Rd.

Kroger, one of the world's largest retailers, employs more than 375,000 associates who serve customers in 2,638 supermarkets and multi-department stores in 34 states and the District of Columbia under two dozen local banner names including Kroger, City Market, Dillons, Food 4 Less, Fred Meyer, Fry's, Harris Teeter, Jay C, King Soopers, QFC, Ralphs and Smith's. ■

## Smith's

FOOD & DRUG STORES



## BARBARA WALTERS (STILL) MAKING NEWS AS NACDS FOUNDATION DINNER KEYNOTE NEARS

**B**ARBARA WALTERS WILL SPEAK AT THE NACDS FOUNDATION DINNER just 11 days prior to a major ABC special, in which the not-really-retired media legend will interview those she has selected as 2014's most fascinating people. The announcement of another Barbara Walters special, to air on Dec. 14, comes less than a year after she announced her retirement — at least from regular work. "I know we said last year was our last, but there are just too many fascinating people out there," said Walters in an announcement, as quoted by *The Washington Post*. The 16th Annual NACDS Foundation Dinner will be held Dec. 3 at the Sheraton New York Times Square. **The Washington Post, NACDS Foundation Dinner. ■**



# Nevada Notes

## 2015 UNEMPLOYMENT TAX WOULD EFFECTIVELY BE SAME

The Employment Security Council voted to recommend a rate schedule for unemployment insurance that will have most businesses effectively pay the same amount in 2015 as they paid this year.

Carole Vilardo of the Nevada Taxpayers Association and Jim Nelson of the Nevada Association of Employers both recommended the council stick with the 1.95 percent rate imposed this year.

But member Paul Barton moved for a 2 percent rate he said would result in the same overall payment for businesses, "while giving us a benefit to the Trust Fund."

At 2 percent, more money would go into rebuilding the Unemployment Trust Fund in case of a future recession. But the total premiums would actually go down a tiny bit because the special assessment paying off the bonds sold to eliminate the debt owed the federal government is lower by seven tenths.

All but one member of the council voted for the 2 percent rate.

The council recommendation will be reviewed in a small business workshop Oct. 28 and Olson will make the final decision

on whether to accept the plan in early December.

*Nevada Appeal*

## WAL-MART, GO BANK TARGET UNBANKED CLIENTS

Welcome to Wal-Bank, how may we help you? After years of trying and failing to break into banking, Wal-Mart is extending its low prices and expansive retail footprint to checking accounts through an exclusive distribution of Green Dot Corp.'s Go Bank.

According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., 7.5 percent of Nevadans are unbanked and 31.2 percent are categorized as under banked.

The Bentonville, Ark.-based retail giant already offers money transfers, cashes checks and sells prepaid debit cards. In 2012, Wal-Mart announced a partnership with American Express to offer a prepaid card and debit accounts. Retailers like Target also offer prepaid cards throughout Southern Nevada.

Will Target in Las Vegas also begin to offer low-cost checking accounts? Perhaps but it will hinge on the success of Go Bank's checking accounts at Wal-Mart. The goal is to boost traffic in its stores and ultimately boost sales.

*LVRJ*

## RANKING THE BEST AND WORST STATES FOR BUSINESS TAXES

Wyoming, South Dakota, and Nevada rank among the best business tax climates, while companies in New Jersey, New York, and California struggle with the worst tax codes in the country, according to the newest edition of the Tax Foundation's annual State Business Tax Climate Index. The report's key findings include:

● The 10 most competitive states are: Wyoming (#1), South Dakota (#2), Nevada (#3), Alaska (#4), Florida (#5), Montana (#6), New Hampshire (#7), Indiana (#8), Utah (#9) and Texas (#10).

● The 10 least competitive states are: New Jersey (#50), New York (#49), California (#48), Minnesota (#47), Vermont (#46), Rhode Island (#45), Ohio (#44), Wisconsin (#43), Connecticut (#42), and Iowa (#41).

The report, now in its 11th edition, measures how well structured each state's code is by analyzing over 100 tax variables in five different categories: corporate, individual income, sales, property, and unemployment insurance taxes.

*Press Release*

## SEC. OF STATE CAUTIONS INVESTORS ABOUT EBOLA-RELATED SCAMS

Following the outbreak

of Ebola in western Africa and its appearance in North America, Nevada Secretary of State Ross Miller cautioned investors to beware of opportunistic Internet-based schemes tied to investments in Ebola-related treatments or cures.

Investors should approach with caution any unsolicited Ebola-related investment opportunities, especially those received through the Internet. Pie-in-the-sky promises of quick wealth generally are red flags signaling fraud ahead.

Miller urges investors to use common sense and for individuals to contact the Secretary of State Securities Division to determine if both the promoter of the investment and the investment itself are licensed and registered. If not, they may be operating illegally. The Securities Division can be reached at (702) 486-2440. To file a complaint, visit the "Securities Center" on the Secretary of State's website, [www.nvsos.gov](http://www.nvsos.gov).

*Press Release*

## LOWE'S CUSTOMER SERVICE LOOKS TO ROBOTS

The robots are coming. Lowe's is testing whether new bots on wheels can improve its customer service, like helping a shopper find a match for something as simple as a nail.

*Continued on page 11*





# National Notes

## MACY'S TO OPEN AT 6 P.M. ON THANKSGIVING

The Black Friday fight is on with the announcement that Macy's will open stores at 6 p.m. on Thanksgiving, two hours earlier than last year.

Macy's is the first major retailer to announce store hours for the Black Friday weekend, often seen as the kickoff to the holiday shopping season. Last year marked the first time the department store opened its doors at 8 p.m., after opening at midnight in the several years before.

The company said the earlier opening is "in response to the significant, sustained customer interest in last year's opening on Thanksgiving." Most stores will remain open until 10 p.m. on Black Friday.

Macy's also said the majority of the Thanksgiving Day shifts have already been filled voluntarily by employees.

What used to be a one-day shopping event the day after Thanksgiving has turned into a practically week-long retail showdown as stores compete for customers during the biggest shopping period of the year. And with a shorter shopping season this year — there are 28 days from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve — a couple of more

hours of shopping could be a significant boost to store sales.

Macy's owns Thanksgiving morning with their parade.

*USA Today*

## CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

When the mercury rises, so do burger sales.

Like most retailers, Walmart has been basing decisions on weather data for years in obvious ways, such as putting up umbrella or snow-shovel displays in advance of rain or snow.

But now, in the second year of an extensive partnership with the Weather Co., the Earth's largest retailer is delving far deeper into sometimes-unlikely correlations between weather and store sales. Even when those correlations make no obvious sense, Walmart has been acting on them -- and achieving big results, according to U.S. Chief Marketing Officer Stephen Quinn.

● Forecast: Clear and sunny with a high of 75, light winds with an 80% chance of blueberries, blackberries and raspberries. (Walmart's data show these are in fact perfect conditions for berry displays and ads.)

● Forecast: Sunny

with a high of 85. Winds light at 5 miles per hour, with a 90% chance of salad. (Salads do better with temperatures above 80 and light winds, Walmart has found.)

● Forecast: Cloudy early with winds 25 miles per hour and 80 degrees, with highs later in the day reaching 90 degrees with clouds dissipating and light winds. Steaks will change over to hamburgers. (Yep, it turns out cloudy, windy and warm weather prompts steak buying, but hot, dry weather and light winds work better for hamburgers, according to Walmart data.)

*Advertising Age*

## STATES ASK CONGRESS TO INTERVENE ON DRUG PRICES

Medicaid chiefs from red and blue states are urging Congress to stem the cost of revolutionary new drugs for hepatitis C, cancer, and other diseases. In a letter to key congressional committees, the National Association of Medicaid Directors said lawmakers should consider everything from outright price controls on manufacturers to federal help for states trying to pay for the new medications.

Concern about drug prices has been stoked

by Sovaldi, a \$1,000-per-pill cure for hepatitis C, now with an even more expensive successor.

The pharmaceutical industry has successfully beaten back previous efforts on Capitol Hill to curb its pricing power, but now the debate seems to be starting again. Medicaid is the federal-state health program for the poor.

*AP/St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

## RETAILERS PREPARING FOR SURGE IN ONLINE SHOPPING

With expectations higher than ever for a merry omnichannel holiday season, retailers are assertively preparing their shipping operations to avoid delivery and service hiccups. According to Shop.org's eHoliday survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics, nearly eight in 10 (78.8%) retailers surveyed will set their standard shipping deadlines for guaranteed Christmas delivery to expire at least a week before the big day, compared to 73.7 percent who said so last holiday season.

Additionally, approximately one in five (21.2%) will set those deadlines to expire December 19 or later, compared to more than

*Continued on page 11*



**Retail Association of Nevada • [www.rannv.org](http://www.rannv.org)**

## Important Information for SIG Members

*NRS requires all existing members of a self-insured group to be notified of all new members.  
NRNSIG new members are listed below.*

ABC Plating Inc.

DHC LLC dba Signature Nails

Lake Tahoe Brewing Company LLC

Premiere Production Payroll Services LLC

R&R Market Inc.

Rock The Tea LLC

SLE Investments LLC

Travis Ogburn dba Budget Blinds of Las Vegas

**NRNSIG** members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, please write NRNSIG at 575 S. Saliman Road, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

## NOTE FOR MEMBERS

If you would like us  
to profile your  
business in our  
newsletter,  
or have any  
questions about  
RAN or the NRF  
Partnership,  
please contact Piper  
at [Piper@rannv.org](mailto:Piper@rannv.org) or  
call the business office  
at 775-882-1700.

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**Carson City Office**  
575 S. Saliman Road, Carson City, NV 89701  
(800) 859-3177 or (775) 887-2480

**Las Vegas Office**  
175 E. Reno Avenue, Suite C9, Las Vegas, NV 89119  
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**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:** Find out more about RAN's self insured group. Call Mike Olson, **800-859-3177**,

10 ♦ or the RAN office at **775-882-1700** (toll free in Nevada 800-690-5959). Don't forget to check out our website, [www.RANNV.org](http://www.RANNV.org).



## NEVADA NOTES *Continued from page 8*

Four robots are being tested an Orchard Supply Hardware store owned by Lowe's Companies Inc. in San Jose, California.

The robots dubbed OSHbots look like white columns with two large black screens on either side of them, and wheels to help them move. They are equipped with 3D cameras so they can scan and identify items. And customers can research items they want to buy on their screen. Then the robot can lead them to the aisle where an item is located. The robots also have

a database of what inventory is in stock at the store, so they can let customers know if something is out of stock or not.

The robots can speak in English and Spanish. Lowe's started working with Fellow Robots, a technology company in Silicon Valley, in November to develop the robots. The cost of the project is undisclosed.

*AP/LVRJ*

### SECURE SMART PHONES TO BLOCK ID THEFT

Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto says

owners of smart phones need to take precautions to ensure someone doesn't steal the information in their phones.

She said smartphones are essentially small computers that make telephone calls so if one is lost or stolen, the owner would be vulnerable to ID theft, credit card fraud and other problems.

She said the first step is to set a passcode on the phone so other people can't access your applications or private information. It's also a good idea to set the phone to automatically lock after a

certain amount of idle time. Masto said GPS software should be turned off except when needed for a specific purpose because criminals can use location information to target you.

Log out of websites and apps when finished — especially banking sites or sites where your credit information is stored.

Finally, she said people should reset a phone to factory default settings when selling it.

*Nevada Appeal*

## NATIONAL NOTES *Continued from page 9*

one-quarter who said so last year (26.3%).

"It's important to remember that the 2013 holiday season was impacted by a multitude of factors that affected the supply chain in the days leading up to Christmas, including bad weather and a shortened holiday calendar. That said, retailers and their delivery partners this year are proactively planning to make sure they meet customer expectations for delivery and customer service," said Shop.org Executive Director and NRF Senior Vice President Vicki Cantrell. "In addition to ramping up their online promotions earlier to entice customers to start

shopping earlier in the season, many companies this year also have invested in functionalities such as live chat, checking in-store product availability and buy online — pick up in store."

*NRF*

### J.D. POWER REPORTS: PHARMACISTS AND STAFF PLAY INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLES IN PHARMACY CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Pharmacist and staff interactions with customers are increasingly important drivers of satisfaction and share of wallet for brick and mortar as well as mail order pharmacies, according to

the J.D. Power 2014 U.S. Pharmacy Study(SM). Overall satisfaction with chain drug store (840 on a 1,000-point scale), and supermarket (843)—up year over year by 12, 8 points, respectively—while satisfaction with mass merchandiser pharmacies (830) remains relatively even with 2013.

The importance of customers interacting with a pharmacist increases across the pharmacy segments in 2014.

Satisfaction improves notably when pharmacists explain the potential side effects of medication to customers as well as costs they may incur. In brick and mortar stores, speaking to a pharmacist

increases store spending.

However, only 1 in 25 customers initiate a conversation with a pharmacist in a brick and mortar store, so it's essential for staff to ask customers if they would like to speak with a pharmacist.

Topics of conversations with a pharmacist and store staff that impact overall satisfaction the most are ensuring a continuous supply of medication; taking the time to clearly explain medications or costs; and providing customers with access to health and wellness care.

*PR News Wire*





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## WASHINGTON RETAIL INSIGHT NRF STATEMENT ON MOBILE PAYMENT SERVICES THERE ARE A NUMBER OF NEW MOBILE PAYMENT TECHNOLOGIES REACHING THE MARKETPLACE, AND A NUMBER OF OTHER SYSTEMS ON THE HORIZON

### THE NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION ISSUED THE

following statement from Senior Vice President and General Counsel Mallory Duncan regarding retailers' adoption of mobile payment platforms and services:

"Merchants large and small make business decisions every single day based upon what makes the best sense for the business, their associates and most importantly, their customers. The payment systems they decide to implement are no different. Data security is paramount, but so

are flexibility, cost and ease of use.

"There are a number of new technologies reaching the marketplace, and a number of other systems on the horizon. It is easy to second guess why a specific retailer chooses one technology or another, or what payments they will or will not accept, but you can be sure that the bottom line consideration is what is best for their company and their consumer."

NRF is the world's largest retail trade association, representing discount and department stores, home goods and specialty stores, Main

Street merchants, grocers, wholesalers, chain restaurants and Internet retailers from the United States and more than 45 countries. Retail is the nation's largest private sector employer, supporting one in four U.S. jobs — 42 million working Americans. Contributing \$2.6 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation's economy.

NRF's *This is Retail* campaign highlights the industry's opportunities for life-long careers, how retailers strengthen communities, and the critical role that retail plays in driving innovation. [www.nrf.com](http://www.nrf.com) ■

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NRF THE BIG SHOW

#### THE BIG PICTURE

Convention Jan. 11-14, 2015;

Expo Jan. 11-13, 2015

Jacob K Javits

Convention Center, NYC

See what the future  
looks like.

### NRF FOUNDATION GALA

#### THE EVENT

Sunday, January 11, 2015

6:15pm-10:00pm

Pier Sixty, Chelsea Piers,  
New York, NY

Uplifting, inspirational and celebratory, the Gala is more than just dinner and drinks; it's a chance to gather with the industry's best and brightest while supporting tomorrow's retail stars. The evening will include recognition for The List of People Shaping Retail's Future 2015, along with a spectacular auction of one-of-a-kind experiences.