

The problem with U.S. marijuana DUI laws: science

By Jenny Kane, Reno Gazette-Journal

Gagan Singh rolled a “fat blunt” before he hit the slopes at Lake Tahoe on a sunny Wednesday morning.

By the end of the day, he needed a refill, so he drove to Reno and stopped at one of the local medical marijuana dispensaries. With his Patagonia jacket and bleached-blond man-bun, Singh was eager to head to his hotel and smoke.

The only reason he wouldn’t be smoking while driving to the hotel was because he believes Nevada cops are stricter than the ones in the Bay Area.

“Yeah, I roll my blunts while I’m driving. I smoke while I’m driving,” said Singh, 26, who owns a logistics business and a “party bus” in Oakland, Calif. “I don’t get high after two blunts. I just get tired and lazy.”

With the passage of recreational marijuana in November, Nevada is grappling with questions of how to handle the issue of driving while stoned. And while driving high is still illegal, determining what exactly constitutes “high” is not as easy as it sounds.

Read the whole story

‘People of the Passion’ at St. Theresa Church

To celebrate the season of Lent and Easter in a unique way, St. Theresa’s Catholic Church is presenting a production of the play “People of the Passion,” written by Mary Betten and directed by Susan Boulanger.

The free performance will be on April 14 at 6pm in the church, 1041 Lyons Ave., South Lake Tahoe.

“People of the Passion” presents the stories of a variety of gospel characters who witnessed or participated in the crucifixion of Jesus, and were forever changed by that experience. Through their personal stories the audience becomes witnesses to the Passion of Jesus in a personal way.

The St. Theresa’s Children’s Choir, under the direction of Maureen Leonard, will be performing musical interludes.

Members of the cast include Ryan Adams, Frank Dixon, Tessa Dixon, Maddy Evans, Sharon Kerrigan, Thomas Lopez, Alia Enriquez, Joanie San Agustin, and Elliott Smart.

For information, call 530.544.3533.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- South Lake Brewing Company will name a beer in honor of TAMBA and contribute a percentage of the proceeds to mountain bike group.

- Economist Rafael Betancourt will discuss Cuba: The

Limits of Reform and give his insights on Cuba and sustainable tourism at a free talk April 7, 10:30am-noon at Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, 128 Market St., Stateline.

- The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association is launching a statewide radio campaign urging Californians to tell their representatives “heck no” to the proposed \$5 billion a year gas and car tax increase.

- The Assistance League of Sierra Foothills’ 8th annual Gardens of the Hills fundraiser Tour and Crafts Fair will be May 6, 10am-5pm and May 7, 11am-5pm. The crafts fair will be at Valley View School gymnasium in El Dorado Hills and is open to the public. Tickets for the garden tour are \$27 for adults, \$10 for children 12 and younger. They may be purchased **online**.

- El Dorado County Supervisor Shiva Frentzen has been appointed to the California controller’s committee on county tax collecting procedures.

SLT finances in the black; raises for workers

By Kathryn Reed

With more money rolling in than originally planned for this fiscal year, the South Lake Tahoe City Council on Tuesday opted to invest in the city and its employees.

The city has \$721,000 more in tax revenue than anticipated from when the 2016-17 budget was approved in the fall.

Hotel, sales and property taxes are the three main sources of cash for the city. The hotel tax is up 7 percent from the

previous year, though that is down from the 15 percent spike a year ago. The hotel tax is \$250,000 above projections, property tax is up \$200,000 and sales tax is \$125,000 higher.

Councilman Tom Davis said to expect transient occupancy tax collections to be down significantly in February because “we had too much weather.”

Debbie McIntyre, chief financial officer for the city, said the city is being cautious as things move forward. This spring could be more of a true shoulder season compared to the past few years. This is because the South Shore ski resorts will be closing this month, but all that snow has the mountain biking and hiking trails off-limits. This may mean fewer people will be coming to town until summer sports are playable, so to speak.

A significant amount of discussion centered on the overtime pay for the fire department. While OT is budgeted, an additional \$220,000 is needed. This is the first time since at least 2011 when Jeff Meston became chief that the department has exceeded its overtime budget. The reason is mostly because a couple people are out on workers comp and some are gone on family medical leave.

The three capital improvement projects receiving mid-year funding include:

- Bijou Park Creek (aka Knights Inn) – \$870,000
- Pot holes – \$300,000
- SLT Police Department remodel design – \$30,000.

Also on April 4, the Placer County Board of Supervisors approved paying South Lake Tahoe \$800,000 for some of the tourist accommodation units associated with the Knights Inn.

Councilwoman Brooke Laine questioned whether the 25 percent reserves should be reconsidered, especially when it was not

needed during the recession. She likes the idea of being able to tap that fund for one-time expenses.

As the city's operating budget goes up, it means that pot has to keep increasing. It could possibly become more of a flat amount. Many cities do a three-month reserve, which for South Lake Tahoe would be about \$8 million. It would take a four-fifths vote of the council to change the allocation.

The midyear budget adjustment uses \$1,411,582 from the undesignated reserves. This in large part is for the Bijou-Knights Inn project.

Included in the revise was a salary increase for employees.

This is the final year of three-year contract the city has with its four bargaining units. A contingency said if the city coffers were flush for two years, the employees could reopen the contract to discuss salaries.

The council agreed to give everyone a 2 percent raise that is retroactive to March 11. The city manager and city attorney are not included in this and will be evaluated separately later this spring.

The money to pay for these increases will not impact the General Fund for this fiscal year or in 2017-18. The city set aside money in the last two years when the memorandums of understanding were adopted three years ago. That pot is at \$724,000.

A problem that will be rearing its head is the ongoing pension costs that the city has no control over.

"These pension costs are the problem. Let us negotiate," City Manager Nancy Kerry said. The Legislature would have to change the law to let jurisdictions change CalPERS.

The city's unfunded CalPERS liability will be a separate agenda item at a future meeting. This will include the

possibility of trying to pay down the debt a bit, possibly with the undesignated reserves.

Letter: Hellman clan donates to Bread & Broth

To the community,

“This is our fourth time volunteering and our family loves it,” said Lenny Hellman on behalf of himself and his wife, Sarah, and daughter, Samantha Lee. “Our experience is rewarding as we are able to contribute to the community.”

Hosting their first Adopt A Day of Nourishment on March 27, the Hellman family members were welcomed by the Bread & Broth volunteers as they joined in helping with the meal’s setup, serving and cleanup.

While taking a break from the dinner’s serving line, Hellman commented that, “We appreciate Bread & Broth and value their service to the people of South Lake Tahoe. We hope to continue our contribution and donate our time every year. Thank you for allowing us to host and join the wonderful team of volunteers. We served 91 patrons.”

The enthusiasm of Lenny, Sara and Samantha was contagious and they made the dinner guests feel welcomed, which was an extra added bonus to the hot, tasty dinner consisting of roast pork loin, mashed potatoes, cole slaw and a wide assortment of yummy desserts. Sponsors like the Hellman family are wonderful examples of how family members can share the experience of doing good works and creating lasting memories of the joy of helping others.

Youth tennis lessons available in Zephyr Cove

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club will be offering tennis lessons at the end of the school year and in the summer for ages 4-12.

To get youngsters back in the groove after the winter, a free clinic will be offered June 3 from 11am-1pm. This will be a refresher for those who have played before and an introduction to the sport for newcomers.

Space is limited and preregistration is required by calling Kahle Community Center at 775.586.7271 or Douglas County Community Services at 775.782.9828. If weather cancels the June 3 lesson, it will be rescheduled for June 4 at the same time.



Brooklyn Laramore practices her forehand at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club. Photo/ZCTC

For those looking to build upon their skills, three sessions will be available in June and July:

- Session 1: June 6-8 and June 13-15:

- 4- to 7-year-olds from 3:15- 3:45pm

- 8- to 12-year-olds from 4-5pm

- Session 2: June 20-22 and June 27-29

- 4- to 7-year-olds from 3:15-3:45pm

- 8- to 12-year-olds from 4-5pm

- Session 3: July 11-13 and July 18-20

- 4- to 7-year-olds from 1-1:30pm

- 8- to 12-year-olds from 2-3 pm.

The six-day sessions for 4- to 7-year-olds are \$35 each; 8- to 12-year-olds are \$75. To sign up for and pay for these lessons, go online: <http://www.zctennis.com/schedule/kids-clinics>. Space is limited.

For all of the clinics – free and paid – a limited number of rackets will be available. It is important to come dressed ready to play, which means athletic wear and non-marking shoes. Be sure to bring water and wear sunscreen. Arrive 15 minutes before the start time.

From the garden to the party

By Melinda Myers

Make every meal a special event by bringing the garden to the table. Serve your favorite dishes made from homegrown ingredients. Then allow guests to add their own herbal seasonings right from the garden or container.

Start by growing the ingredients for your favorite recipes and beverages. Consider those, like tomatoes, that taste best fresh from the garden. Or create a salad bar by filling window boxes and raised beds with greens, hot peppers, green onions and more. Just hand your guests a plate and let them create their own fresh salad.

Dress up the table or balcony with a few containers of herbs on your patio, deck or near the grill. Use small herb containers as edible centerpieces. Just include a pair of garden scissors and allow your family and guests to season the meal to their taste.



Add a bit of color and interest to salads with edible flowers like nasturtium. Photo/Melinda Myers

Add a bit of color to your meal with edible flowers. Try nasturtium and daylily blossoms stuffed with cream cheese, calendula petals sprinkled on your salad and mint leaves atop a slice of chocolate cake.

Include a few herbs and vegetables that can be blended, muddled or added to your favorite beverage. Use the hollow stems of lovage as a straw for your tomato juice or bloody Mary. You'll enjoy the celery flavor this edible straw provides. Or pluck a few mint or rosemary leaves to flavor iced tea and lemonade.

Just be sure the vegetables and flowers you select are free of pesticides. Remove the bitter tasting pollen from edible flowers.

Start your party preparation in the garden. Once you compile your list of favorites prepare your garden and containers for a productive growing and entertaining season.

In the garden, add several inches of organic matter such as compost to the top 8-12 inches of soil. You'll improve drainage in clay soil and increase the water holding ability in sandy soils. This is also a good time to incorporate an

organic nitrogen fertilizer into the soil. This slow release fertilizer provides needed nutrients for six to eight weeks. Then be sure to add a mid-season boost to keep your garden healthy and productive.

For container plantings, select a pot with drainage holes and fill it with a quality potting mix. This is also a good time to add an organic nitrogen fertilizer which will eliminate the need for weekly feedings. Just give containers a second application mid-season.

Mulch the soil with shredded leaves, evergreen needles or other organic matter to suppress weeds and conserve moisture. As the mulch breaks down it improves the soil for future plantings.

Harvest regularly to keep your plants looking good and producing. Cut the outer leaves of leaf lettuce when four to six inches tall and it will keep growing new leaves. Pick peppers and tomatoes when fully ripe, so the plant continues flowering and forming new fruit.

And dress up the table with a bouquet of your favorite garden flowers. Pick a few extras to send home with your guests and they'll surely remember your special gathering filled with homegrown flavor and beauty.

Gardening expert Melinda Myers has more than 30 years of horticulture experience and has written more than 20 gardening books, including "Small Space Gardening" and the "Midwest Gardener's Handbook." She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening For Everyone" DVD set and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment" TV and radio segments.

Sullivan helping future American downhillers

By Megan Harrod, USSA

Not only does Squaw Valley's Marco Sullivan have the most inviting smile and demeanor on and off the mountain, he's a four-time Olympian who has stood on top of the Audi FIS Ski World Cup podium in Chamonix, France.

He also holds the record among American downhillers for the most downhill World Cup starts, with 105—Bode Miller (Franconia, N.H.) has 104—locked in during the Kvitfjell, Norway World Cup in 2016 and he is the mastermind behind the American downhiller concept. He also might have the biggest and most dedicated official fan club there is. Because he's just that darn likable. Seriously. He has a heart so big and a spirit so warm he could melt the snow off the mountain.

Like many other hard-charging U.S. Ski Team athletes, Sullivan grew up in Squaw Valley, crushing Lake Tahoe and skiing for the Squaw Valley Ski Team. In fact, one of his earliest memories was crushing it down a snow-covered gravel hill in his backyard at the age of 3. That's where his passion for the mountain all started, and it carried him through a 15-year career with the U.S. Ski Team.



Marco Sullivan celebrates with teammates and fiancée Anna Goodman following the final run of his career at U.S. Alpine Championships in Sun Valley, Idaho, in 2016. Photo/USSA

While he was on the team, Sullivan created his personal website, americandownhill.com. Little did he know that website would grow into something much bigger than himself, including a series of webisodes created by Ski Racing and POC, a line of clothing and accessories by POC, a Spyder speed suit for the American downhillers men, and now, a business—with the introduction of the American Downhill Speed Skills Camp at Mammoth Mountain this spring.

The American Downhillers crew's mission? To empower young ski racers to approach their career with champion-grade passion, genuine curiosity and formidable tenacity. Sullivan and teammates came together in this endeavor in an effort to pay it forward to the next generation of American Downhillers.

"My ex-teammates and I have spent the majority of our adult

lives learning how to ski fast and practicing those skills over and over,” said Sullivan. “We are part of a small group who have lived that journey and we feel the need to pass along what we have learned to the next generation of kids who want to represent their country as downhill ski racers.”

Those “ex-teammates” Sullivan speaks of? None other than the legendary Daron Rahlves (Sugar Bowl), Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah), Alice McKennis (New Castle, Colo.), Leanne Smith (North Conway, N.H.), Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) and former U.S. Ski Team World Cup downhill coaches Johnno McBride and Chris Brigham. Talk about an all-star staff.

Their vision for the camp stems from the fact that competing at the World Cup level is extremely difficult, and lessons learned by athletes and staff en route to becoming the best in the world are invaluable. As Sullivan noted, “The whole American Downhiller crew is very enthusiastic about passing those lessons on to the next generation of racers. Ultimately, I want American Downhiller to be the link between current World Cup racers and the kids who are chasing that dream of becoming the best.”

Sullivan is looking forward to creating that bridge and staying connected to the sport that has helped him grow into the special soul he is. After one year of retirement, Sullivan has reflected on just how special it is to live the life athletes experience, traveling the world and seeing places most would only dream of. What does he miss most about traveling the “white circus”?

“It was always cool rolling into town and being part of the show,” Sullivan reflected. “Nice hotels, all the best amenities, racers on the World Cup are definitely spoiled and that was always fun. I skied a ton this winter, mostly with powder skis and mostly when nobody was watching so that was fulfilling in a different kind of way.”

Indeed it was a good year in California, with record snowfall and a ton of opportunity to get some good skiing in with former Alpine Canada World Cup athlete Anna Goodman—also his future wife.

Sullivan ended his career with the U.S. Ski Team in style, donning lederhosen and that signature Marco Sullivan grin in Sun Valley in 2016. Plus, you can also find him as a NASTAR pacesetter – inspiring kids to ski as fast as he can. We asked Sullivan our three questions on what he believes makes a champion.

U.S. Ski Team: *In your words, what makes a champion?*

Marco Sullivan: A champion to me is someone who fulfills their dream. We all have something that we want, but to go after that and make it a reality takes courage, confidence and hard work. Champions have the ability to find their own path, amid all of life's distractions, and achieve their dreams.

U.S. Ski Team: *Do you remember the first time you felt like a champion?*

MS: At the 2002 Olympics, after a great result in the downhill, I was standing in the finish area with my parents, family and friends. We were all so happy, and I understood then that it was not about me, it was about the moment and the journey that everybody had taken to get there. Champions have the ability to make everybody around them a better person and that moment inspired me through the rest of my career.

U.S. Ski Team: *What is the biggest piece of advice you have for U.S. Ski Team athletes who want to be sitting where you are today?*

MS: Set your goals high and surround yourself with people who will inspire you and help you along your path. Whatever you truly want in your heart you can achieve it. Don't get distracted, but also don't take yourself too seriously, and

have a lot of fun along the way.

Opinion: Stop blaming California for Trump

By Joe Mathews

Is California to blame for Donald Trump?

That may seem a preposterous question to ask of a state that voted so decisively against the new American president that it was responsible, all by itself, for his loss of the popular vote.



Joe Mathews

Yet, the president's opponents and allies have fingered California as the place that produced Trumpism.

The case starts with hard geographic facts. Twitter, which the president uses to spew bile, is a California creation. Reality television, which turned the real estate developer into a national entertainer, is a Hollywood gimcrack. And Breitbart—the alt-right media entity that modeled the toxic mix of xenophobia, authoritarianism, and conspiracy-mongering that is Trumpism—is based in L.A.

Also, many leading figures in Trump's world have California ties. Among these are top White House strategist Steve Bannon, who lived in L.A. while working in Hollywood; top Trump policy aide Stephen Miller, from Santa Monica; Breitbart writer-turned presidential special assistant Julia Hahn; influential Trump national security official Michael Anton; and UC Irvine economist Peter Navarro, now helping Trump un-make the global trade system.

More broadly, as Jason Willick and James Hitchcock showed in "The American Interest," California thinkers—including billionaire Peter Thiel, the Hoover Institution's Victor Davis Hanson, Bay Area entrepreneur Ron Unz, software developer Curtis Yarvin, journalist Mickey Kaus, blogger Steve Sailer, and affiliates of the Claremont Institute—have helped build a case for Trump's disruptive, anti-immigrant nationalism.

The leap from this roster to the idea of Trumpism as California product involves many competing narratives, most of which divide into two camps.

Those who dislike Trump point out that Trumpism draws from various historical strains of prejudice that California incubated: anti-Chinese laws in the 19th century, the Japanese internment during World War II; the California Legislature's persecution of people for "un-American activities" (before Joe McCarthy), and anti-immigrant politics in the second half of the 20th century. Even today, our most high-profile industries—Hollywood and Silicon Valley—practice exclusionary policies, visible in everything from the paucity of minority leads in films, to the sexism in the executive suite at Uber.

Those more sympathetic to Trump argue the converse proposition—that California has been far too welcoming to immigrants, embracing demographic change at a pace that's too fast for too many people. "The American Interest" essay identified Trumpism as a backlash against "mass immigration... which produced a demographic transformation of the Golden

State without parallel in the rest of the country.”

The Trumpians themselves have gone further, justifying their own bigotry as a rebellion against California’s supposedly tyrannical liberalism and political correctness. Miller railed against diversity programs at his own Santa Monica High; Bannon has called the presence of Asian American CEO’s in Silicon Valley a sign of breakdown in American civil society.

It’s tempting to dismiss such flawed logic out of hand. Most children know that it’s wrong to blame one’s own poor conduct on the conduct of others. And California contains so many multitudes that it has always been a big, rich, easy target for any narrative of blame. “Success makes so many people hate you,” Marilyn Monroe, child of Los Angeles, once said.

But the “Trump as California product” narratives, while bogus, touch on just enough truth that they deserve a more impassioned response.

That response starts with acknowledging California’s problematic history, and present. The liberals in charge here really do have feet of clay, prejudice remains too present, and the state faces big challenges in infrastructure, housing and schooling.

But we also should assert our hard-earned success: California has made profound progress in becoming a more inclusive place. It was not easy—we had to survive the L.A. riots and divisive 1990s ballot fights over immigration and affirmative action.

Despite predictions from the left (especially the writer Mike Davis) and from the right that a diverse California would come apart, our state is better off by nearly every measure. As we became more diverse, our inner cities became safer, our valleys less polluted, our people better educated.

California is thus the most effective rebuttal of Trump’s false and bigoted claims that American inner cities are full

of violence, that immigrants bring danger and voting fraud, and that foreigners are taking American jobs. Which is why the Trumpians are so fixated on discrediting California.

It's tempting to call such people traitors to California, but that would give them too much credit and feed their overdeveloped sense of victimhood. They're really opportunists, who irresponsibly scapegoat a whole state for its supposed bigotry when their own bigoted appeals have elevated them to power in Washington.

California has its problems and prejudices. But that's no excuse for Trumpians to put their crap on our home state.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Study: Hungry kids lag behind peers in school

By Rhitu Chatterjee, NPR

Growing up in a hungry household in the first couple of years of life can hurt how well a child performs in school years later, according to a study.

An estimated 13.1 million children live in homes with insufficient food, according to the most recent figures from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Many of those children experience hunger during their first few years of life, or their parents are hungry and stressed out about food during those years – the most crucial time for

a child's development.

Read the whole story