

Lecture to focus on prescription drug abuse

Barton Health has put together a panel to discuss prescription drug abuse on March 1 from 6-7pm at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Topics include:

- History of opioids and prescribing for pain
- Best practices for managing pain and complimentary therapies
- Safe keeping and disposal of prescription drugs
- Antidote for opioid overdose.

For more information, call 530.543.5537.

Agreement clears way for Caesars emergence from Chapter 11

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The terms of a merger of two subsidiaries of Caesars Entertainment have been amended, clearing a path for the company's emergence from Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission Tuesday, the company reported new terms for the merger of

Caesars Entertainment Corp. and Caesars Acquisition Co.

The amendment is a milestone toward launching the New Caesars and completing Caesars Entertainment Operating Company, Inc.'s court-supervised restructuring process. The New Caesars will result from the combination of Caesars Entertainment and Caesars Acquisition.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys in Stateline.

Read the whole story

Some Liberty customers still without power

Liberty Utilities is making in-roads into the power outages that were triggered this week from the latest round of storms.

Issues remain at:

- Portola: A couple single service issues remain that should be completed Thursday.
- River Road/Silver Creek/Fir Crags/Highway 89: Avalanche danger has been reduced to moderate so crews plan to begin repairing the four cross arms that were damaged. If weather cooperates, power could be restored by Friday night/Saturday morning.
- Floriston: Lots of wire down in this area that will take time to repair. Crews attempted to install a generator Wednesday night, but had difficulties; they are trying again this morning.

Nave: 'La La Land' to dominate Oscar winners

By Howie Nave

One thing for sure at this year's 89th Academy Awards ceremony, there is way more diversity than at last year's Oscars show (and the year before that).

In fact, having nine nominations in the Best Picture category alone offers up quite a diverse selection of films ranging from the human struggle, life in a musical and all things extraterrestrial (involving an alien that doesn't get political). No doubt there will be acceptance speeches with a political tone to them as it seems to be the norm at any Hollywood awards show lately.

Will comedian/host Jimmy Kimmel set the stage for things to come by being political? He has vowed that he won't, but I can tell you from experience comedians tend to go off script after feeling the room out. I mean, I thought Chris Rock did one of the best jobs ever addressing the elephant in the room at last year's Oscar for the lack of minorities nominated. It was brutal and well, for me, the highlight of the evening. This Sunday should be an interesting one with Kimmel as he has such a wide range of topics to cherry pick from given the spectrum of movies nominated this year.

That said let's see who's going to win, or more important, who should win. In the Best Picture category we have nine, count'em nine movies in the running that include:

"Arrival"

"Fences"

"Hacksaw Ridge"
"Hell or High Water"
"Hidden Figures"
"La La Land"
"Lion"
"Manchester By the Sea"
"Moonlight"



There's no shortage of color at this year's event with contenders "Hidden Figures," "Fences," "Lion" and "Moonlight." Obviously being the biggest science fiction geek in this universe I'd like "Arrival" to be the upset, but sci-fi never gets the top prize. ("ET: The Extra-Terrestrial" I feel still should've won back in 1983 even though it was nominated). "La La Land" with its 14 nominations (the most ever tying with "Titanic") is the favored, but personally I think it's overrated. Still, it does represent total escapism from the ugly reality of the real world so yes, I'm going to say "La La Land" wins for Best Picture.

In the category for Best Actor we have:

Casey Affleck, "Manchester By the Sea"
Andrew Garfield, "Hacksaw Ridge"
Ryan Gosling, "La La Land"

Viggo Mortensen, "Captain Fantastic"

Denzel Washington, "Fences"

The odds are that it's going to go to Ben's younger brother, Casey Affleck and, yes, he did a remarkable job (and was nominated for an Oscar in the Supporting Actor category for the 2007 flick, "The Assassination of Jesse James"). He has a good shot and if Casey wins this Sunday he and Ben will become the 16th Oscar-winning sibling pair in history. Denzel Washington could be the spoiler as he was brilliant (and wore several hats also directing "Fences"), but I'm going with Casey Affleck for Best Actor.

In the category for Best Actress we have:

Isabelle Huppert, "Elle"

Ruth Negga, "Loving"

Natalie Portman, "Jackie"

Emma Stone, "La La Land"

Meryl Streep, "Florence Foster Jenkins"

Hollywood has a way of making love to its own and odds are Emma Stone is going to win and, yes, she was very good and won several of the other awards that lead up to the Super Bowl of motion pictures so she's probably going to snag it. I don't think anybody saw "Elle" in part because it is a foreign film. As much as I enjoyed Natalie Portman's performance in "Jackie" it's all about Emma. It's worth noting here that Meryl Streep (who was hilarious in "Florence Foster Jenkins") has been nominated now 20 times (winning three in this category), but it'll be Emma Stone for Best Actress.

Moving on to the category of Best Supporting Actor we have:

Mahershala Ali, "Moonlight"

Jeff Bridges, "Hell or High Water"

Lucas Hedges, "Manchester By the Sea"

Dev Patel, "Lion"

Michael Shannon, "Nocturnal Animals"

I'm slightly biased on this one being a huge fan of actor Jeff Bridges (who won an Oscar for Best Actor at the 2010 Oscars for "Crazy Heart") and had him on my morning radio show and podcast. His movie, "Hell or High Water" is also up for Best Picture and Best Original Screenplay. Bridges said his flick "shines a light on why the election went the way that it did." The favorite though seems to be leaning toward both Mahershala Ali for "Moonlight" and Lucas Hedges for "Manchester By The Sea," but I'm still going for Jeff Bridges to win for Best Supporting Actor.

In the Best Supporting Actress category we have:

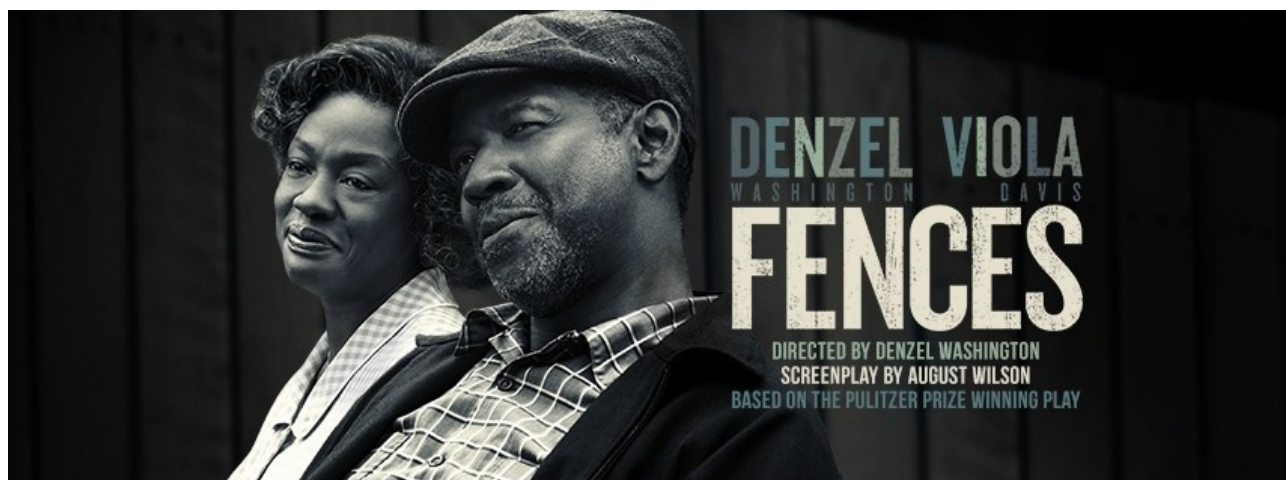
Viola Davis, "Fences"

Naomie Harris, "Moonlight"

Nicole Kidman, "Lion"

Octavia Spencer, "Hidden Figures"

Michelle Williams, "Manchester By the Sea"



I love Viola Davis! Not just her acting, but if you ever get the time research her personal life, she is one amazing woman. I know all actors have had their personal struggles to get where they are, but I'm just so impressed with Davis who was nominated in 2009 for Best Actress in "Doubt" and in the supporting role for 2011's "The Help." Viola Davis will win an Oscar for her brilliant portrayal of wife and mother Rose Maxson, who is the bedrock in the family opposite Denzel Washington as her husband (and up for Best Actor) in "Fences."

We're at the halfway point here with Best Director that includes:

Damien Chazelle, "La La Land"

Mel Gibson, "Hacksaw Ridge"

Barry Jenkins, "Moonlight"

Kenneth Lonergan, "Manchester By the Sea"

Denis Villeneuve, "Arrival"

Again, wouldn't it be nice if just once, a director would win for their mind-expanding helmsmanship beyond this planet in a sci-fi epic like "Arrival" on this planet? No? All right, but as you may have guessed "La La Land" is going to take home a treasure trove of awards and will give itself a pat on the backside by giving the statue to Damien Chazelle. And it must be mentioned how much of a survivor Mel Gibson is after being shamed for being such a Jew hater that his work is being recognized in this category? I forgave him a long time ago what with the "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" verse from the bible. "Hacksaw Ridge" is an amazing and beautiful piece of filmmaking, so Gibson should be nominated. If you haven't seen his movie, you are really missing out. But for now it's "La La Land" all the way here with Damien Chazelle getting the nod for Best Director.

Let's get a fun category and that is the nominees for Best Animated Feature:

"Kubo and the Two Strings"

"Moana"

"My Life As a Zucchini"

"The Red Turtle"

"Zootopia"

Remember earlier when I said that politics will definitely be part of the agenda at this year's Academy Awards? Well, try weaving the current attitude going on in our country

subliminally in only a way an animated flick can pull it off while at the same time entertaining the entire family and you've got "Zootopia" folks. And this is a Disney flick too! Say what? Who know the folks from that legendary studio could tell a message so subversive involving race, drugs and policy all centered around cute furry creatures? Well, they did and some might find that uneasy, but I have always felt sometimes one can get away with a lot more when you infuse animation into the picture and "Zootopia" does that. I am hoping that it will win for Best Animated Feature.

It's all about the story and up for Best Original Screenplay we have:

Damien Chazelle, "La La Land"

Yorgos Lanthimos and Efthimis Filipou, "The Lobster"

Kenneth Lonergan, "Manchester By the Sea"

Mike Mills, "20th Century Women"

Taylor Sheridan, "Hell or High Water"

Screenwriter Kenneth Lonergan's "Manchester By the Sea" was also directed by him. Truth be known I wasn't too familiar with him. I am now, though. Wow, what an incredible output of creativity. He should win. It's no coincidence his words couldn't have taken shape as his vision from the written page to being behind the camera has given us a Best Actor nominee in the way of Casey Affleck, a Best Picture nod, Best Supporting Actor (Lucas Hedges), Best Supporting Actress (Michelle Williams) not to mention himself as Best Director. This is literally an East Coast vs. West Coast with Lonergan's movie taking place in New England in the namesake town of Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts with "La La Land" taking place in well, you get the picture and so will "La La Land" for Best Original Screenplay.

In the Best Adapted Screenplay the nominees are:

Luke Davies, "Lion"

Eric Heisserer, "Arrival"

Barry Jenkins, "Moonlight"

Allison Schroeder and Theodore Melfi, "Hidden Figures"

August Wilson, "Fences"



Please, oh please, let it be Allison Schreoder and Theodore Melfi for the story based on what really happened at NASA and tuned into a heartwarming and inspiring movie, "Hidden Figures." Am I grateful "La La Land" wasn't nominated? Yes! I wouldn't mind either if Barry Jenkins took home an Oscar for his story (also based on real experiences) for "Moonlight." Again, very inspiring. I wish it was a tie. Both amazing stories and a testament to the human spirit. In fact, I'm going to go out on a limb here and say that both movies, "Hidden Figures" and "Moonlight" will win. It's just too close folks for this category.

In the Best Foreign-Language Film category the nominees are:

"Land of Mine" (Denmark)

"A Man Called Ove" (Sweden)

"The Salesman" (Iran)

"Tanna" (Australia)

"Toni Erdmann" (Germany)

Full disclosure, I only saw three of these because it's not easy getting access for screenings (especially living in the high Sierra of Lake Tahoe). I was able to see "Toni Erdmann" through another film critic/friend and loved it. This German gem is a comedy that clocks in at almost three hours. After watching it my accent changed some. Also saw Sweden's "A Man Called Ove" because it actually played locally (at the Fandango in Carson City). It centers around a retired gentleman who is isolated from society visiting his wife's grave, has decided to give up on life (man, this sounds familiar except for the dead wife part) and develops an unlikely friendship when he least expects it. I'm hoping this one wins but I think it's going to go to "The Salesman" from Iran again because of political reasons. Writer/director Asghar Farhadi said he won't attend this year's Academy Awards to protest President Trump's ban on Muslim countries, so how much you wanna bet the Academy will award the Oscar as a statement against the current administration? Exactly.

For Best Documentary Feature the nominees are:

"Fire At Sea"

"I Am Not Your Negro"

"Life, Animated"

"O.J. Made in America"

"13th"

I love documentaries (when they're done right) as they convey the filmmaker's opinion so explicitly, especially on a budget. These films are a definite backlash against last year's all white nominations and are all pretty darn good. Standouts include "I Am Not Your Negro" threading I feel the civil rights movement from the 1960s to the Black Lives Matter movement in our current time in history. That said and because

of America's undying fascination with the trial and outcome, I'm giving the Oscar to "O.J. Made in America" hands down.

Music always plays an integral part to any motion picture and this year's Best Original Score nominees include:

Nicholas Britell, "Moonlight"

Justin Hurwitz, "La La Land"

Mica Levi, "Jackie"

Thomas Newman, "Passengers"

Dustin O'Halloran and Hauschka, "Lion"

Let's be realistic here, OK? Since the entire movie is one long musical, Justin Hurwitz wins this one hands down. It would be a major upset if "La La Land" didn't take home the Oscar in this category.

For Best Original Song the nominees are:

"Audition: The Fools Who Dream," "La La Land"

"Can't Stop the Feeling," "Trolls"

"City of Stars," "La La Land"

"The Empty Chair," "Jim: The James Foley Story"

"How Far I'll Go," "Moana"

Again, "La La Land" will win in this category for "City of Stars" which is very catchy. But how about this for an upset? Justin Timberlake's mega hit, "Can't Stop the Feeling" is from the movie "Trolls" and that my friends could be one of the night's biggest upsets.

In one of my favorite categories because it is the canvass for the movie, the nominees for Best Cinematography are:

Greig Fraser, "Lion"

James Laxton, "Moonlight"

Rodrigo Prieto, "Silence"

Linus Sandgren, "La La Land"

Bradford Young, "Arrival"



Again, creating something literally out of this world isn't easy because we as humans have seen it all, so to see Bradford Young's epic science fiction fantasy "Arrival" is without doubt an amazing piece of imagery. But it's going to go (the Oscar) to Linus Sandgren's brilliant piece of cinematic artwork for "La La Land." I mean, just that opening sequence with Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling cinches it right there. So enjoy the after parties "La La Land" you're going to be hungover the next morning with Oscar love and all your agents will be asking for a much higher fee when your next movie comes around.

Howie Nave is host/emcee/manager of The Improv at Harveys. You can hear him Monday-Friday 6 to 10am on KRLT FM-93.9. He has been reviewing movies for years. They may be heard on four other stations each week where he does "A Jew Doing a Movie Review," and he occasionally writes reviews for Lake Tahoe News.

TRPA rethinking how to deliver transit in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Free transit throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin, integrated between the shores, and with service every 30 minutes. That's the goal by 2021.

Morgan Beryl, senior transportation planner with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, on Feb. 22 went over the highlights of the draft 2017 Regional Transportation Plan with the Governing Board.

Technology has allowed transportation officials to get a better handle on how many people are actually coming to the basin – 24 million a year, in 10 million vehicles.

Beryl showed two pictures – one of gridlock (today), the other open streets (the future). The goal of the plan, she said, is to create the future.

Unlike so many planning documents, this one isn't just ideas. It has some how-to components, with achievable short-term goals, and loftier long-term goals if money were not an obstacle. Managing congestion, free bus service, bike paths that connect to places people want to go, and alternative fuel infrastructure are the immediate goals. (Yes, resuming service to Meyers is in the plans.)

Beryl told *Lake Tahoe News* the free bus service is attainable with current federal funding and grants. What is collected at the fare box isn't a large part of the revenue stream. When BlueGo, the South Shore bus service, offers free rides through spare the air days, people take a seat, proving there is a local desire for free transit.

The problem is the funding needed to keep the system operational is not guaranteed. That needs to be worked out before free bus service is offered. Officials are studying how other areas pay for free transit. Many locales have some sort of tax so there is a more defined revenue stream.

If buses came more often – it's every hour now – the thinking is more people would get on board. If buses went to more recreation areas, more people are apt to forego their personal vehicle. If buses allowed more bikes or had storage underneath like Greyhound does for personal items, people might not drive themselves. If BlueGo and TART – the North Shore system – were linked, it would mean the ability to commute as well as play throughout the basin.

Whatever is created needs to be flexible to handle the

fluctuation in demand **Sass-y talk at TRPA**



An odd exchange with Austin Sass, who represents the city of South Lake Tahoe on the Governing Board, and staff involved the use of Lake Tahoe Airport and hotel rates.

Sass asked if the airport was part of the transportation study. Staff said not really other than to acknowledge it is a general aviation airport. Sass said, "The city's decision on commercial service can be reversed down the line. If you gave us a good reason, we might reverse it."

Perhaps Sass doesn't realize TRPA sued the city regarding the airport, which led to the 1992 Lake Tahoe Airport Master Plan Settlement Agreement. TRPA is not about to ask the city to resurrect commercial air service.

The city went through a lengthy master plan process recently that culminated in the council deciding not to pursue commercial service and to give up its certificate with the FAA that allowed for such operations. That master plan cost more than \$300,000.

It was obvious Wednesday that Sass has no idea what it takes to bring back commercial service. It's more than just taking a vote of the council.

On top of that, there would be the subsidy needed to make it happen even if an airline wanted to come to South Lake Tahoe.

Then Sass repeated things he read on Facebook where a marketing guy said higher hotel rates is the solution to getting fewer people to come here, which will help dissolve the traffic congestion issue.

In December, LosAngelesHotels.org reported that South Lake Tahoe had the highest hotel rates in the state for New Year's Eve. Clearly, higher rates don't stop people from coming to Tahoe.

Fewer people in town would help the roads, but not the economy.

Sass also asked if TRPA could mandate visitors use public transit. "No" was the answer.

—Kathryn Reed

Creating parking areas for people is something else that is being talked about. This would be a 180-degree policy change for TRPA. This bi-state regulatory agency has a penchant for approving projects with inadequate parking with the thinking it would get people out of their cars. The problem is people have nothing else to get into because bus service is abysmal.

Park and rides are common in larger areas. But even finding a spot to park at a public transit hub can be difficult as anyone who has ridden BART in the Bay Area knows.

Board member Shelly Aldean suggested areas with large lots might be encouraged to add space, albeit coverage would be an issue, that would be dedicated to those using transit. This would be for people who don't have immediate access to

transit, but could drive to a stop.

More long term goals include working with regional partners – Sacramento, Bay Area, Reno – to integrate ways to get tourists to Tahoe without them all driving. Rail is one idea. Having them park at an airport and come via bus is another. Or if they are flying into the region, to then have reliable shuttles to the basin.

It was acknowledged, though, that the basin needs to provide reliable public transit before regional transit solutions are solidified. Technology will help with that in being able to provide real-time information to customers and transit providers.

The TRPA transportation document was first approved in late 2012 and per federal law must be updated every four years.

Missing in action at Wednesday's meeting was half of the basin's local representation on the board. Neither El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel nor Douglas County Commissioner Nancy McDermid were in attendance.

Today the Governing Board will convene for its annual strategic planning session. More detail about the transportation plan and how to fund aspects of it are expected to be discussed.

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Notes:

- Comments on the draft plan will be taken until March 24; email them to mberyl@trpa.org.
- The plan is available **online**.
- The TRPA Governing Board is expected to approve the final plan on April 26.

Opinion: Calif.'s job to make America great again

By Joe Mathews

California is on the defensive in its battle with Donald Trump.

We need offense—now.

Trump is attacking our state as if it were just another political opponent. His strategy is not merely to push California; he wants to rob our state of its political legitimacy.



Joe Mathews

So the president of the United States has falsely claimed that California's elections are fraudulent exercises involving millions of illegal votes. He's frequently accused our biggest cities of endangering our country by failing to assist with immigration enforcement. He has called California "out of control" and threatened to "defund" state programs.

Such attacks are so potentially damaging (since California is the world's sixth-largest economy and a vital model of diverse peoples prospering together) that we need to be fighting Trump much more directly.

Put simply, California must delegitimize Trump before he delegitimizes us.

There are two ways California must go on offense. First, comes the fist: Californians should aggressively question Trump's legitimacy as president. Second, comes the outstretched hand: we must bolster our state's own legitimacy by reaching out to the rest of America and reaffirming how proud we are to be a part of this country.

Any outrageous allegation Trump makes against us should be answered with greater outrage. If Trump wants to make up claims of fraud in our elections, we should target his own frauds—from questionable business dealings to the confidence game of Trump University. When Trump threatens the funds for state programs, Californians should point out that Trump's budget and tax plans could bankrupt the whole country.

When Trump alleges that California is "out of control," California should press the president on those who control him. Why bother negotiating immigration or energy policy with you, Mr. President, when we can go to the Kremlin or Goldman Sachs, and talk with those who oversee you?

The most powerful line of attack against this president is to question his loyalty to the country. Trump has billed himself as an unapologetic nationalist, vowing to make America great again. But he's deeply vulnerable on nationalist grounds. He constantly slanders the country—lying about the murder rate, equating America's leaders with the murderous autocrat Vladimir Putin, tweeting false insults against important American companies and businesses. Californians must convince our fellow citizens that Trump's attacks on this most American of states are an attack against our entire country.

To emphasize Trump's lack of patriotism, we Californians need to put our American patriotism on full throttle. While Trump denigrates America on Twitter, California leaders should be

meeting with counterparts across the country, looking for areas of cooperation. When another state faces emergency, California should be the first to send help. And whenever another state celebrates a great triumph, our leaders should congratulate them in person.

Our message: We believe Trump is illegitimate, but we respect Republicans, including Trump voters. To make this sell, Californians should deploy the words of California's "great communicator"—Ronald Reagan—as weapons against the current president.

The Gipper left us bon mots for nearly every occasion.

To explain our fight with Trump: "When you can't make them see the light, make them feel the heat."

When we engage in protests: "No arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women."

As we counter Trump's war against immigrants: "I, in my own mind, have always thought of America as a place in the divine scheme of things that was set aside as a promised land... any person with the courage, with the desire to tear up their roots, to strive for freedom, to attempt and dare to live in a strange and foreign place, to travel halfway across the world was welcome here."

In that vein, California should shift its energies from opposing Trump's Wall—that's defense—and go on offense by demanding the removal of the California-Mexico border's existing wall, an ineffective eyesore that inconveniences tourists, businesses and those who live in the San Diego-Tijuana region.

Opposing the wall should be part of a California effort to develop our own foreign policy with allies Trump is offending. Governor Brown should convene summits with the leaders of

Mexico, Canada, Australia and Germany, and sign environmental, trade and tourism agreements with them. Then Brown should ask: Why doesn't the president make deals like that?

Sun Tzu advised, "If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him." This offensive strategy—reaching out to Americans while attacking Trump's legitimacy—would irritate and isolate him. That's the best way to weaken Trump—and protect our state and our country.

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

Nevada AP scores above national average

By Meghan Delaney, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada students appear to have broken the code in at least one education measure.

A new report released Wednesday by the College Board shows that 22.5 percent of Nevada high school students passed advanced placement exams, slightly higher than the national average.

Nationwide, 21.9 percent of students who take the placement exams earn a score of three or higher, on a scale of one to five. Massachusetts led the nation with 31 percent of students passing the courses.

[Read the whole story](#)

Nev. constitutional amendment would affirm same-sex marriage

By Seth A. Richardson, Reno Gazette-Journal

Despite being legal nationwide, a Nevada assemblyman wants to solidify same-sex marriage into the state constitution to prevent courts from overturning it in the state.

The U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage across the country with a 2015 ruling. Assistant Assembly Majority Leader Nelson Araujo, D-Las Vegas, is proposing to make that change a permanent part of the Nevada Constitution – which currently defines marriage as between one man and one woman – in case the 2015 decision is overturned.

Araujo announced his Assembly Joint Resolution 2 in January, which would amend the Nevada Constitution to “issue marriage licenses to couples regardless of gender.” The amendment had its first hearing on Tuesday and would essentially align Nevada’s Constitution with current federal law.

Read the whole story

Sierra’s Huck Cup a qualifier

for Freeride Tour

Sierra-at-Tahoe will host the second annual Huck Cup, a 2-Star Freeride World Tour qualifying event, on March 3-4.

The Freeride World Tour is a worldwide circuit of freeride skiing and snowboarding events. The event will take place in Huckleberry Canyon, 320 acres of backcountry terrain accessed by five gates at the summit of Sierra-at-Tahoe.

Sierra is the only Lake Tahoe resort to host a 2-Star Freeride World Qualifying event this year.

Competitors will battle for a \$3,000 cash purse.

4 electric vehicle charging stations at Northstar

Two Tesla charging stations and two Clipper Creek stations that can charge any type of zero-emission electric vehicle are now available for Northstar residents and guests for free.

In partnership with the Northstar Community Service District, Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation for two years will pay for the electricity required to power these four electric vehicle charging stations located at the Northstar Community Service District office in Truckee.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, depending on how they're driven, today's light-duty electric vehicles can exceed 100 mpge and can drive 100 miles consuming only 25-40 kWh. Use of these vehicles also has environmental benefits, including the reduction of tailpipe emissions that are

associated with greenhouse gases.