

Nev. adopts emergency rules to combat weed bottleneck

By Chris Kudialis, Las Vegas Sun

Distributors previously operating in Nevada's medical marijuana program may soon enter the recreational marijuana market after the Nevada Tax Commission on Thursday approved emergency regulations to reopen distribution licensing.

The Nevada Tax Commission voted to let the Department of Taxation again determine whether limiting licenses for those who transport weed from Nevada cultivation and production facilities to dispensaries only to licensed alcohol distributors – as called on by November's Ballot Question 2, which legalized recreational use and possession of the plant – would result in a shortage of distributors for the new industry.

If so, it would be able to award licenses to previous medical marijuana distributors.

Read the whole story

Seat belts coming to Nevada school buses

By John Potter, KNTV

The worry many parents feel when putting their children on school buses won't be experienced in the future. After much debate, Gov. Brian Sandoval signed legislation that requires

new school buses bought after June 2019 to be equipped with seat belts.

But for school buses on the road right now, Nevada is still a “let ‘em fly” state, where kids and all are loose cargo going every which way in the event of a crash, like test rollover video shows. All you have to do is see those to understand the importance of seat belts in school buses.

The Nevada Legislature did, requiring lap-shoulder belts for new school buses in two years.

That may be a long time to wait, but putting your children on a school bus is much safer than driving them to school.

Read the whole story

Coast Guard Auxiliary adds layer of safety at Tahoe

By Susan Wood

When it comes to those who venture out into a vast and cold Lake Tahoe, it’s good to know the ones who provide backup for emergencies have backup of their own.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary achieved its 50th year in service to the Lake Tahoe region on April 20, serving as support for the station located in Tahoe City.

The service is much-needed, especially in years like this one in which the banner snowfall is resulting in a deluge of runoff that has raised the lake level so much the beaches have all but disappeared.

High water mixed with high temperatures in the two valleys east and west of Lake Tahoe usually equate to increased boating, swimming and even debris floating around. The latter can place even the most cautious boater in hazardous conditions.

In the last decade, the lake has averaged two to three drownings a year. But in the wake of stand up paddleboarding's immense popularity over the last few years, that number has at least tripled.

"The problem is, when something goes wrong, it goes terribly wrong," said Bruce Martin, who has volunteered in the Coast Guard Auxiliary in this district for five years.



Mort Meiers and Bruce Martin stand guard at Ski Run Marina during windy conditions. Photo/Susan Wood

The district has 21 South Lake Tahoe volunteers working the sidelines. Nationally, there are more than 30,000 men and women who have volunteered over the last 75 years. The Auxiliary is under the wing of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The volunteer organization has played a role in every major conflict since World War II. Most notably in recent times the Auxiliary helped with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

The Coast Guard itself is 226 years old, under the same U.S. cabinet – but can be transferred to the U.S. Navy by the president or Congress during times of war.

“Our main focus is recreational boating safety,” Martin told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The retired South Shore fire chief, whose father served in the U.S. Navy, knows the hazards that can occur in an emergency.

Hypothermia can set in less than 15 minutes in the most extreme of cases as in lake temperatures at 32.5 degrees. When it rises to double that, a victim may not even survive two hours. The cold water renders the muscles useless when hypothermia takes over, causing the swimmer to stop paddling. Some drowning cases happen when the swimmer dives in and gulps water during the shock of the temperature. Without a life jacket, the body may never surface. People have drowned close to shore.

That’s why in the Coast Guard Auxiliary’s role to be proactive in water and boating safety education it’s all about water adventure seekers wearing their life jackets.

Many paddleboarders have not been wearing them.

In its duties as the civilian volunteer arm for the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary will put on events aimed at teaching safety, as well as conduct vessel examinations, patrols, drills and even monitoring the buoys to ensure they don’t get

blown off.

One drill involved the Coast Guard chief being dropped off in the middle of the lake in a dry suit, with auxiliary patrollers plotting where to find him. The chief was out there for an hour.

"I was impressed," Martin said of the commitment.

Auxiliary volunteers must be certified, and it takes all summer to complete crew training, but the South Shore district welcomes more. One may be asked as a "first aider" to rescue dummies and navigate lake waters.

Volunteers are responsible for a number of duties – even if they just want to cook for others at events.

"We need all hands on deck," Martin said of the demands of boating safety on Lake Tahoe.

Auxiliary members may see the gamut of disasters or near misses.

"In the times I've been out on patrol, I've seen people going too close to shore and hitting a rock. We inform Vessel Assist," said Mort Meiers, a longtime South Shore resident, boating enthusiast and 27-year Auxiliary member.

Meiers recalled how a man operating a Jet Ski near the Tahoe Keys found it hard to reach his watercraft with no leash while it continually made circles.

As it turns out, fires on board prove to be life threatening.

Then there's the drinking that's often associated with boating, a misfortune Coast Guard auxiliary members can only attribute to the planet's "pirate history."

The hazards are such that in 2018 California law will require a boating license. The Golden State is one of the last to

mandate the license. Alaska is another.

To the Coasties, the Auxiliary team is “indispensable.”

Tahoe City Executive Petty Officer Josh Fennell called the team “a force multiplier for us,” meaning an “extra set of hands and an extra set of eyes.”

“We only have two boats and can only be in so many places. It’s nice to have reinforcements in South Lake Tahoe,” Fennell told *Lake Tahoe News*, adding that having Auxiliary members conduct the vessel inspections helps substantially.

Other law enforcement agencies such as El Dorado County, Douglas County, South Lake Tahoe and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency also have boats patrolling the South Shore waters alongside the Coast Guard.

“The Coast Guard Auxiliary is one of the Coast Guard’s greatest hidden gems. Without their countless volunteer efforts, Coast Guard Station Lake Tahoe wouldn’t be able to operate safely and efficiently,” said local Cmdr. Dustin Finkelson, who just reported to duty last month from the station in Galveston, Texas.

It’s a welcome sign to longtime residents who have gone boating on Lake Tahoe – especially those who are familiar with the lake’s treacherous history.

“I’ve been here almost 60 years, and I had a boat for many years. Of course, if we’re going to provide amusement for people on the lake, at least we should be responsible to advise of what’s available to help them,” said Betty Mitchell, longtime Lake Tahoe Historical Society volunteer. She and her late husband owned a sailboat together. Sailing on the lake can be tricky enough with its bowl-like geography and wind spurts.

So to Mitchell, a life jacket should just be considered an

appendage to a swimmer or boating enthusiast.

“I respect the water. Anyone who doesn’t use a life jacket when the conditions call for it is a little bit crazy,” she said.

Crowds seek out celebs at Tahoe golf tourney



Crowds at Edgewood Tahoe on July 13 are in search of autographs. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – It was hard to walk 10 feet Thursday at the American Century Championship and not see a Steph Curry article of clothing on someone or some Warriors emblem.

He is back at the celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe. Also returning is his dad, Dell, who beat him last year.

“I see the lake is at a very, very healthy level. And so whoever loses between me and him has to take a polar plunge into the lake before we head back to the Bay (Area) after Sunday’s round. So I hope that’s not me,” Curry said a press conference on July 13.

The actual tournament is Friday-Sunday. Players will tee off starting at 7:50am; most in trios.



Quarterback Alex Smith with his daughter. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Alex Smith, the Kansas City Chiefs quarterback, was carrying his daughter around after he was done playing. One fan yelled, “San Francisco is regretting it.” To which Smith smiled and said, “Thanks.”

“Kaepernick is a joke,” the fan followed up.

The Forty-Niners promoted Colin Kaepernick over Smith when

Smith got injured in 2012. Kaepernick no longer has a team to play for and Smith is still tossing touchdowns for Kansas City.



Arizona Cardinals cornerback Patrick Peterson stops to sign a fan's program. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Waiting to board the bus back to the hotel, former 49er wide receiver Jerry Rice gave a high five to the little Smith.

At the putting green was former running back Marshall Faulk. He didn't want anything to do with the fans. "He only signs when he wants to," one spectator said.

Autograph signing really does vary from celebrity to celebrity, with most signing at least a few articles of clothing or programs.

Humans have the ability to easily deal with bears

By Wes Siler, Outside

It's summer. Like every other summer, we humans enter the woods and are shocked to find that bears live there. Forewarned should be forearmed. Simply by carrying a can of bear spray with you when you go into the woods and following other commonsense advice, you will never need to fear bears again.

In the past 10 years, there have been 28 fatal bear attacks in the United States. This year there have already been two.

There are a few points I'm trying to make: 1) Bear attacks are exceptionally rare—more people in the United States are killed annually by bees than by bears. 2) Guns aren't a great defense against the animals. 3) In the highly unlikely event that you are attacked by a bear, bear spray is so effective that your overall odds of being injured, let alone killed, are less likely than winning the lottery.

[Read the whole story](#)

Judge Bailey resigning from

EDC Superior Court

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County Superior Court is about to be down three judges.

Steve Bailey this week made it known he would be resigning effective Aug. 31. Jim Wagoner is retiring effective Sept. 1. Nelson Brooks left earlier this year.



Steve Bailey

The biggest surprise is the departure of Bailey, whose six-year term doesn't expire until 2020.

He has made it well known that he plans to run for attorney general in 2018, and has even filed the requisite paperwork. He had also filed paperwork with the state to retain his current job just in case he were to lose the AG post.

Conventional wisdom is that it is easier to win an elected position while holding one – not being out of office for a year and having resigned midterm.

Bailey has had his share of controversies since first being elected to the bench in 2008. In this time he has been working out of the South Lake Tahoe courthouse.

His in-laws are well entrenched in the state's Republican Party, and he brought some of that political fervor to the job – a job that is not supposed to be partisan. His wife,

Kathleen, is executive director of the El Dorado County Bar Association. Bailey's brother-in-law is Ron Briggs, the former county supervisor who sued the county for back pay after being termed out and who is running for recorder-clerk in 2018. His father in-law is John Briggs, the former state senator who is famous for the 1978 proposition called the Briggs Initiative that had it passed, would have meant all employees in California's education system who are gay or lesbian and their supporters would have been fired.

The family has been embroiled in the **Placerville courthouse saga**.

Bailey was the supervising judge for the **2012-13 civil grand jury**. That body had to be disbanded before a report was written; a first in county history. While he claimed it was because of lack of volunteers, the truth is jurors wanted to investigate people who Bailey and his family had ties to.

If Bailey were under investigation now for conduct involving his job, it may not be a public record. A deal could be worked out for him to step down from the bench and the matter could go away. This would allow him to campaign without another public ding on his record, but might also keep him out of the lucrative visiting judges' pool.

Don't expect to see Bailey much in the next six weeks. He has vacation time he can use.

Bailey chose not to talk to *Lake Tahoe News*.

Bailey faces stiff competition next year from current Attorney General Xavier Becerra, who was appointed to the position in December by Gov. Jerry Brown to fill the seat vacated by Kamala Harris when she was elected to the Senate.

As for the other judges:

- Brooks was first appointed to the bench by Gov. Arnold

Schwarzenegger in 2009, and was elected a year later to a six-year term. He was re-elected in a bitter battle in June 2016. However, he never worked after suffering a cardiovascular event in August 2016. He was officially off the bench in March. The term expires in 2022.

- Wagoner was first elected in 2002. His term expires in 2020.

- The remaining judges are Suzanne Kingsbury, Kenneth Melikian, Vicki Ashworth, Dylan Sullivan and Curt Stracener.

It will be up to Gov. Jerry Brown to fill the vacancies. If that doesn't happen, then when the term expires it will be anyone's race. Brown's office did not respond to an inquiry from *LTN*.

For now, the court will continue to use the Assigned Judges Program through the Judicial Council. These are visiting retired judges.

Celebs warming up for ACC golf tournament



Former Green Bay Packers wide receiver Sterling Sharpe practices putting July 12. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Lake Tahoe News

Several of the contestants in the American Century Championship were sharpening their skills Wednesday at Edgewood Tahoe.

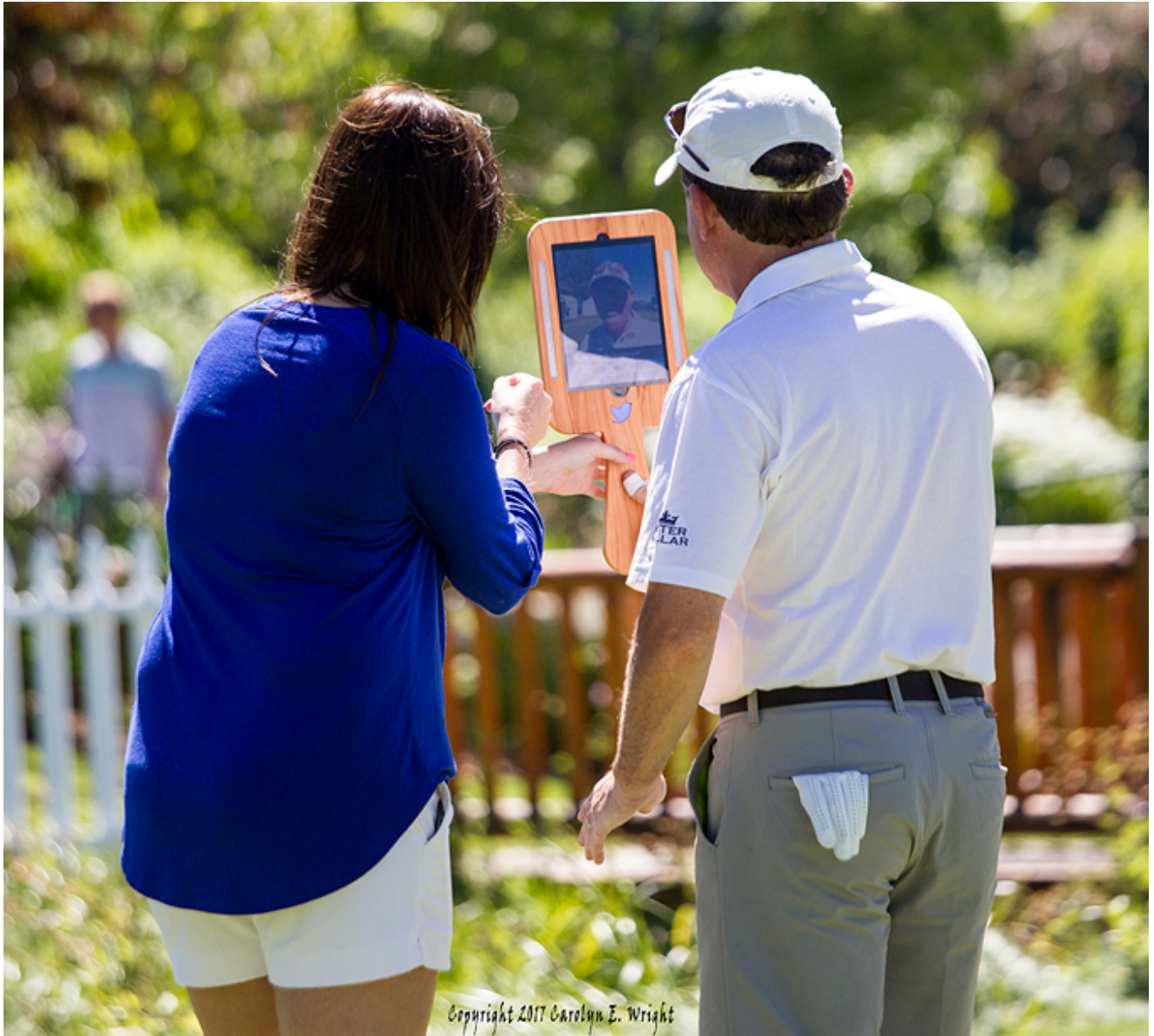
Practice rounds and the pro-ams have a distinct casual feel about them.



Former Cal star Jared Goff, who is coming off his rookie season as the Rams quarterback, has a throng of fans wanting an autograph. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

And while there are plenty of guys like Charles Barkley and Larry the Cable Guy who don't ever take themselves too seriously while at Edgewood Tahoe, there are others who are in it to prove something.

It's not like any of the players really needs the money, but there is a purse of \$600,000 with first place worth \$125,000.



NBC Sports commentator Jimmy Roberts reads the Twitter feed on what looks like a mirror. The network will be broadcasting the tournament. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Mark Mulder is the man to beat. He has won the tournament the last two years.

Even the serious golfers still find time to be playful. When it's 80 degrees out, not a cloud in the sky and a cool breeze blowing off Lake Tahoe, it's not a bad way to spend a day. Then there are all those adoring fans – most who are well behaved.



Washington Redskins two-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Joe Theismann is a regular at the ACC. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The party, well, that's always on hole 17 – right on the beach. Get there early to have a good spot to see the players.

A little more intimacy can be found near the putting green. A quick trip to the driving range makes it easy to tell who will likely be in the bottom half or the top half when Sunday comes to a close.



Actor Jack Wagner, left, who is going for this third ACC title, chats July 12 with former pitcher Josh Beckett and musician Colt Ford. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Here are the **pairings** for July 13.

The actual tournament is Friday-Sunday. For more info, go **online**.

Youth homelessness is on the rise

By Teresa Wiltz, Stateline.org

They are the nation's invisible homeless population, undercounted for years, hiding out in cars and abandoned

buildings, in motels and on couches, often trading sex for a place to sleep. And now, for a complex variety of reasons, the number of youth – teens and young adults – living on the street appears to be growing.

San Diego saw a 39 percent jump in homeless youth over the past year. In Atlanta, the number of homeless youth in 2016 was estimated to be nearly triple that of previous years. After a concerted effort to count homeless young people, Seattle's King County saw its numbers jump more than 700 percent between 2016 and 2017. And the number of homeless, unaccompanied public school students increased one-fifth between 2012 and 2015.

Young homeless people are at risk for a host of troubles with long-lasting impact, including substance abuse, mental health problems and physical abuse, as well as sexual exploitation. Many get caught up in the criminal justice system. Up to 40 percent of homeless youth are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

[Read the whole story](#)

More talk, no action on VHRs in S. Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Because the rules on the books have never been fully enforced, it's impossible to know if they are even effective. So it goes with vacation home rentals in South Lake Tahoe.

Another three-hour discussion about the issue took place at

the July 11 City Council meeting. At the end of the day the electeds decided to talk some more.

The VHR subcommittee of the mayor and mayor pro tem is being resurrected. They will meet with stakeholders and bring back ideas to the full council.

Items to be considered include:

- Limiting the number of VHRs. If this is agreed to, then they must create the parameters for doing so.
- How many citations a rental may be served before it threatens the owner's right to have a permit.
- Whether owners should be cited when renters are the problem.
- Whether an owner occupied rental should come under the same VHR regulations; and whether that is even legal.
- Possibly mandating renters have to get the key from someone in person.
- Having uniform language for regulations that all guests in the city sign.

The workshop came on the heels of the \$77,000 socio-economic study that was released this spring. Hardly anyone brought up that document.

What people care about is what's happening in their neighborhoods, what the city might do to curtail VHRs, and the impacts – good and bad – those decisions would have.

City staff is backing the idea of limiting the number of VHRs. This decision will ultimately be up to the council. There is not consensus for the status quo (unlimited VHRs anywhere) or a limit of some kind.

What wasn't explained is how a cap would solve any of the

problems. Noise, parking and trash remain the top three complaints.

Twenty-six members of the public spoke at Tuesday's meeting. Beliefs and feelings were all over the board – from wanting to ban VHRs from residential areas, to keeping things as they are. One person broached the idea of taking the issue to the voters.

Enforcement was the common theme throughout the afternoon.

It's not like this should be news to anyone who has been following the topic. Enforcement, or lack thereof, has been the overriding issue for years.

Those in the industry believe the rules are OK as they are written today. They, too, want guests to obey the law and for officers to hold people accountable. This, ideally, would show those being bothered by short-term renters that someone cares and is doing something about it. It would perhaps mean less of a black-eye for an industry that seems to have a tarnished image.

Since June 30 the city has been posting citations on its **website**. As of Monday morning there were 74 incidents.

Police Chief Brian Uhler said he wants to do away with warnings and go straight to citations.

About 14 percent of South Lake Tahoe homeowners have a VHR permit.

The economic impact of VHRs is undeniable, and was driven home in the study. This is a big business. The city relies on the transient occupancy tax, homeowners are making bank, the people in the industry (rental companies, maids, handymen and the like) rely on them for paychecks, and then there are all the companies that benefit from these people spending money at their establishments.

Bike share company opening in S. Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Starting Saturday expect to see a couple hundred bright green and yellow bikes throughout South Lake Tahoe.

LimeBike ride share is launching in the city this weekend.

The biggest difference with this company compared to other ride share businesses is that there is no set docking station. On the one hand, that means riders can leave the bike in pretty much any public area – and where private businesses say it's OK. On the other hand, it could be a bit of a scavenger hunt to find a bike.

This business model is more in line with the growing shared economy which comes with as few rules and regulations as possible, as well as a great deal of flexibility.

LimeBike's app shows where the nearest bike is located and gives directions to get to the bike.



A bicycle ride share firm is opening in South Lake Tahoe on July 15. Photo/LTN

“Every bike has a GPS so we would know if it’s in someone’s garage,” Andrew Savage with LimeBike said.

Savage was at the July 11 South Lake Tahoe City Council meeting to explain the program. It is coming to the area with the help of the League to Save Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. This is a trial period that will run through October.

The app that is available on Apple and Android products is how people will find a bike and pay for the rental. People just need to deposit \$5 to get started. The cost is \$1 for every 30 minutes.

LimeBike is based in San Mateo and was launched in April. The start-up raised \$12 million through venture capitalists.

The bikes have a kickstand so they don’t have to be left in a rack. The foam core tires are designed to not deflate. A front basket will allow people to carry items.

Councilman Jason Collin was enthusiastic about the program, sharing how he has used similar programs in Europe. He asked about the ability to reserve a bike or be able to keep it if a person is running into a business just for a quick errand.

The answer is no – at least for now.

Because the company is so new they know tweaks to the system are probably going to need to happen.

Savage also said if more bikes are needed that won't be a problem.

Collecting ZIP code information from users will allow LimeBike to provide the city if it's locals or visitors using the bikes.