

Deal prevents Nevada horse race betting from shutting down

By Steve Green, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada's \$59.5 million horse race-betting sector will continue operating after the Nevada Gaming Commission pressed Thursday for the industry to avert a shutdown that threatened to take effect as early as today.

The shutdown was threatened after the state's 83 race books were unable to agree on a new contract with Las Vegas Dissemination Co., the lone facilitator of pari-mutuel wagering in Nevada.

For a fee, the company disseminates information on races throughout the country and arranges for funds wagered in Nevada to be included in the pari-mutuel pools for each race at each track. In pari-mutuel wagering, bettors bet against one another on the outcome of races with the tracks and sports books taking a cut of the dollars wagered.

Read the whole story

Changing forests evident in how fire has been handled

By Andrew Prince, NPR

Intense forest fires have been raging across the western

United States this summer. So far this year, nearly 43,000 wildfires have torched almost 7 million acres of land.

As NPR Science correspondent Christopher Joyce and photographer David Gilkey report from Arizona and New Mexico this week, the forests of the American Southwest have become so overgrown that they're essentially tinderboxes just waiting for a spark.

This "tree epidemic" stems from Forest Service policy dating back to the early 1900s of aggressively fighting all forest fires. But regular, small fires clean out dead wood, grasses and low brush – and if fires are quashed, the forest just grows into fuel. And that's why we see more of these mega-conflagrations today.

In trying to tell the story of our changing forests, we turned to the U.S. Forest Service for some historical context. Buried in the back of General Technical Report No. 23 was the pay dirt: a stack of 13 series of photos, more than 88-years in the making.

[Read the whole story](#)

Car strikes motorcycle; 2 people hospitalized

By Kathryn Reed

Two people were hospitalized Friday after the motorcycle they were on was hit by a car in the middle of South Lake Tahoe.

Shirley Kravan was in the vehicle behind the motorcycle on Highway 50 heading west and saw the whole thing unfold. She

told *Lake Tahoe News* a car came from the right on Lodi Avenue and hit the motorcycle.



The man driving the motorcycle is taken to the ambulance Aug. 24.
Photos/Kathryn Reed

"I saw her fly in the air and he was by the bike," Kravan said of the riders.

She estimated the woman, who was riding in the back, flew 40 to 50 feet. She literally came out of her tennis shoes.

Names of the victims and driver of the car, who was not injured, have not been released.

The motorcycle driver was being taken to Barton Memorial Hospital. He never lost consciousness and was clearly moving his hands when he was loaded into the ambulance about 12:30pm Aug. 24.

CalStar airlifted the woman, according to police Sgt. Josh Adler, to a Reno hospital.



Packs on the downed motorcycle could indicate they were visitors to Tahoe.

Kravan, who is an emergency room technician, said the female was unconscious at first. She, along with an EMT and first responder, was the first on the scene. She said when paramedics began administering care the female victim became responsive.

Highway 50 was being rerouted headed west at River Drive and was backed up to the Y. Headed east, it was slow at Lodi.

Officers were still on scene collecting information, with the motorcycle on its side and one helmet lying in the middle of the street.

West Nile outbreak may be worst in U.S. history

By Donald G. McNeil Jr., New York Times

The nation is heading toward the worst outbreak of West Nile disease in the 13 years that the virus has been on this continent, federal health authorities said Wednesday. But it is still unclear where and how far cases will spread. Dallas

declared an emergency last week, and West Nile deaths have been concentrated in Texas and a few nearby states, including Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

So far this year, there have been 1,118 cases and 41 deaths reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Lyle R. Petersen, who heads the agency's division of vector-borne diseases, said in a telephone news conference Wednesday.

"That's the highest number of cases ever reported to the CDC by the third week of August," he added. "And cases are trending upward."

Because it takes some time for symptoms to develop and cases to be reported, those people were probably bitten by the mosquitoes that infected them two to three weeks ago, he said, but the agency expects cases to keep increasing through the end of September.

It takes three days to two weeks after a bite for symptoms to come on, but they may then be rapid and overwhelming.

Read the whole story

EPA's interstate air pollution rules thrown out by court

By Jim Fuquay, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

A controversial Environmental Protection Agency rule on interstate air pollution, which had been challenged by Dallas-

based Energy Future Holdings, the state of Texas and other energy interests, was set aside Tuesday in a 2-1 decision by a federal appeals court in Washington.

The three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington sided with more than three dozen challengers to the EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which was issued in July 2011 and reduced caps on emissions from power plants in Texas and 27 other states. The rule had been put on hold in December by the court while it considered the legality of the regulation.

It's the second time in little more than a week that a federal appeals court found that the EPA overstepped its authority enforcing federal standards on states. On Aug. 13, a U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals panel ruled 2-1 that the agency intruded into state matters when it disapproved Texas' flexible permit program regulating emissions.

Like last week's ruling, Tuesday's decision drew applause from industry groups and Texas officials, while being criticized by environmental groups. Alisha Johnson, a spokeswoman for the EPA, didn't have an immediate comment on the ruling.

Read the whole story

Placer County restructures employee pension plan

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Most Placer County employees will be asked to pay the full share of pension costs under a new two-year contract approved

by Placer County supervisors on Tuesday.

For most Placer Public Employees Organization members, the contribution will amount to about 6 percent of pay. In exchange, the county will contribute 6 percent to a fund employees can elect to take as cash, contribute to a 401(k) plan or save for dependent care.

The contract also allows for a 2 percent raise as the contract expires in December 2013 – the first raise for employees since 2009.

PPEO covers 1,700 employees, about 75 percent of the county workforce.

Feds go after pot grows throughout Western states

By Richard Marosi, Los Angeles Times

More than 550,000 marijuana plants with an estimated street value of \$1 billion have been seized during an eight-week crackdown targeting illegal marijuana growing operations on public lands across seven Western states, federal authorities announced on Tuesday.

Operation Mountain Sweep, which started July 1, netted 96 illegal marijuana grows in California and resulted in the indictments of 28 suspects. Pot farms were discovered in several national parks, including Death Valley, and in Sequoia and Mendocino National Forests, authorities said.

Rugged terrain on federal lands have become favored areas for pot growers who often live for weeks in the remote areas. Authorities discovered huge amounts of trash, miles of irrigation line, fertilizer and pesticides at the various grow sites.

“Marijuana trafficking organizations seek to turn our nation’s parks and public lands into their own drug havens,” said DEA Administrator Michele M. Leonhart. “Operation Mountain Sweep is a concerted effort to reclaim these wild and beautiful areas and protect them from further destruction and exploitation.”

The operation in California also resulted in the seizure of eight firearms. About 100,000 marijuana plants were eradicated in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

Read the whole story

Edgewood Lodge permits approved; could open fall '15

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – The Edgewood Lodge project kept its “no negative comments” streak alive Thursday with 11 positive remarks.

In a series of votes by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board, the hotel project on Edgewood Tahoe golf course received not a single no vote or abstention from any board member at the Aug. 23 meeting.

Edgewood Companies, which owns the course and hundreds of adjacent acres in Stateline, has talked about making this area

near the shoreline of Lake Tahoe more than a place for golfers.



A 154-room hotel will be built where hole 9 is now. Reconfiguring the golf course will be the first order of business; and that could be next summer.

There is expected to be no interruption to the annual American Century Championship golf tournament in July. What may pose a problem is parking.

In addition to the lodge will be 10 fourplexes. Those will range from 1,200- to 1,800-square-feet, while the lodge units will be about 500-square feet.

Still to be determined is whether the hotel will come with a brand name that would be recognizable to the consumer. First the need for that would have to be determined. An Edgewood representative told *Lake Tahoe News* it looks like the need is not there.

In 2014-15, the lodge would likely be built. Financing, though, is an issue and will be the determining factor for when ground is broken.

The structures will be built to silver LEED specifications, with a goal of reaching gold. The other South Shore building meeting the U.S. Green Building Council's criteria is the Tamarack Lodge at Heavenly Mountain Resort, which is silver.

Many of the people who spoke Thursday talked of the combined economic and environmental benefits the lodge will bring.

“This will be the first true golf resort in Northern Nevada,” Bill Hoffman, executive director with the Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau said.

While he acknowledged the two ends of the lake compete for the drive-up guest, the destination traveler likes to explore the whole lake. And golf, to Hoffman, is a component that brings people to the region and with the Edgewood Lodge would likely bring more visitors.

Even though the four-star hotel will bring a guest who can spend a bit more money than other lodging properties are charging on the South Shore, it has something for the average Tahoe resident. The now-private beach will be open to the public. And there is no intention of charging a fee, like some beaches do on the South Shore.

Plus, the bike trail will go through this property and hook up with the Stateline-to-Stateline trail that eventually will end in Crystal Bay, but will initially go through Rabe Meadow to Round Hill Pines Beach.

High school students not prepared for college

By Kelsey Sheehy, U.S. News and World Report

Nearly 1.7 million high school graduates took the ACT college entrance exam in 2012, testing their knowledge of four core

subjects—English, math, science, and reading. But most of those students are not prepped for success in college or the workforce, according to a report released this week by ACT, Inc.

More than a quarter of 2012 graduates fell short of college readiness benchmarks that ACT sets for all four subjects, and 60 percent of students tested missed the mark in at least two of the four subjects, the report states.

Students deemed college-ready in a subject have a 75 percent chance of passing a first-year college course in that area. The nonprofit research and testing organization uses historical testing data to determine the level of expertise students need to succeed in those courses at a college, trade school, or technical school.

Read the whole story

Officials controlling South Lake Tahoe ball fields represent multiple interests

By Kathryn Reed

A clear case of conflict of interest reared its head Tuesday night at the Lake Tahoe Unified School District meeting, but no one put an end to it.

Steve Morales, facilities director for the district, is also a founding member of the Community Athletic Coordinating Council. This group has been overseeing aspects of ball field management in South Lake Tahoe since it incorporated as a

nonprofit in 1989. It was also central to an agenda item about fields.

A school district official the night of Aug. 21 told *Lake Tahoe News* that Morales is merely the district's liaison to the CACC board.



Adults are making the ball field situation in South Lake Tahoe anything but child's play. Photo/LTN file

However, the 2007, 2008 and 2009 990 forms the nonprofit must file with the IRS list Morales as the president of CACC. No 2010 or 2011 forms were available online. Even if Morales is not a current board member, his history makes his allegiance suspect.

Donice Lenhardt, a former employee with South Lake Tahoe's Parks and Recreation Department, is listed as the vice president-treasurer in 2009; William Goss had those titles in 2008 and 2007 on the forms. (He listed the city rec center as his address.)

In fact, CACC uses the rec center as its address. At a minimum, this is unethical for city employees to be using taxpayer facilities for personal use even for mailing purposes.

It is not known if CACC work was done on city or school

district time by CACC members.

While CACC was formed by district and city staff, it was supposed to be an entirely separate entity.

CFO Deb Yates said at the meeting this week that the district doesn't need CACC and that it will be up to the city how it deals with this group.

Morales, Lenhardt and Goss report no income from CACC on the forms. However, Morales' true connection to this group was not disclosed at the meeting. He did, however, act like he was representing CACC and not the district – which does pay him a six-figure annual salary. To avoid conflict, he should have recused himself from the discussion.

The certified public accountant signing off on the forms for those three years was Dave Olivo. Olivo is the elected treasurer for the city of South Lake Tahoe.

At the district meeting this week, board member Sue Novasel questioned the legality of fees collected in California benefiting Nevada. Morales said Douglas County was only involved at the get-go and a few years ago may have had some money given for improvements.

However, current CACC President Chuck Leonard told *Lake Tahoe News* last November, "(The CACC) maintains a central calendar in conjunction with the South Tahoe Parks and Recreation and the Douglas County Parks and Recreation departments and the Lake Tahoe Unified School District." That statement proves Nevada is still part of CACC.

It was also revealed this week that the district and CACC have each charged entities for the use of the same field at the same time. Yates said that won't happen again going forward.

Here is the 2007-CACC 990 form, 2008-CACC 990 form and 2009-CACC 990 form.

