

Sheriffs won't enforce Nevada gun law

By Mark Robison, Reno Gazette-Journal

The next steps for proponents of expanded gun background checks in Nevada are unclear after a legal opinion that for all intents blocks a voter-approved initiative set to go into effect Sunday.

What is clear is that the Background Check Act to require a federal database check of private party gun transfers will not be enforced. That's according to Nevada sheriffs.

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office reported receiving numerous inquiries about the ballot question. It put out a statement that it is "advising its citizens that they may proceed with private party firearm sells and transfers as they did prior to the passing of ballot question #1."

Read the whole story

NHP: Zero tolerance for driving high on pot

"Drive high, get a DUI" is the message the Nevada Highway Patrol wants drivers in Nevadans to remember as the use of recreational marijuana becomes legal Jan. 1 in the state.

The use of marijuana prior to or in the act of driving

continues to be illegal and a serious crime.

If the officer, determines that the driver is under the influence of marijuana or other intoxicating substance, the driver will be required to submit to a blood test.

Nevada law specifies that drivers with 2 nanograms of active THC implies DUI. However, no matter the level of THC, law enforcement officers will base arrests on observed impairment.

Currently Nevada law does not differentiate penalties for marijuana impaired driving from alcohol impaired driving. The penalties are the same regardless of the substance, or combination of substances.

Drug abuse, criminal acts why casino workers lose registration

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Anyone who is defined as a gaming employee, according to Nevada Revised Statute 463.0157, must be registered before they can work in the gaming industry.

Becoming a registered employee is different than getting a gaming license. But it still involves a background investigation, and registered employees must not break the law.

The casino jobs that require registration include dealers, change personnel, counting-room personnel, keno runners, keno writers, machine mechanics, oddsmakers and line setters,

security personnel, shift or pit bosses and a host of other gambling-related jobs.

Read the whole story

Incline standoff ends with one arrest

A two-plus-hour standoff in Incline Village today ended peacefully.

Washoe County sheriff's negotiators were able to talk Shane Donovan, 28, of Incline into surrendering just after 1pm Dec. 30.

Officers said Donovan had barricaded himself in a bedroom on Winding Way and was acting erratically. Donovan voiced threats against himself and officers. Officials said Donovan told them he had rigged the entryway to the room with explosives, however, no explosives were found.

The Parole and Probation Division of the Nevada Department of Public Safety had recently issued a warrant for Donovan's arrest for parole violations. He was taken into custody on the parole and probation warrant.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Cops: Drive-by shooting in SLT gang related

No one was injured in a drive-by shooting in South Lake Tahoe on Thursday night.

The shooting occurred in the area of Ski Run Boulevard and Pioneer Trail.

“We do know several rounds were discharged in the area. It appears as if this activity is between two rival gangs,” Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He would not disclose the gangs involved.

Suspects – all locals – have been identified. Some have been questioned by detectives, but no arrests had been made as of 11:30am Dec. 30.

Officers were looking for evidence along Ski Run on Friday morning, including searching motel dumpsters.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

NHP increasing patrols during holiday weekend

With impaired driving and riding a top traffic problem for Nevada, Nevada Highway Patrol is working in conjunction with agencies statewide aligned with Joining Forces to boost enforcement efforts through Jan. 3.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has found

that drivers at a breath alcohol level of 0.08 percent, the legal limit in every state, were about four times more likely to crash than sober drivers. Drivers with an alcohol level of 0.15 percent were 12 times more likely to crash than sober drivers. Marijuana users were about 25 percent more likely to be involved in a crash than drivers with no evidence of marijuana use.

To achieve the zero fatalities goal, drivers and riders are encouraged to know the law for blood alcohol levels and to abide by the following guidelines:

- designate a sober driver before drinking;
- use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member or use public transportation if impaired;
- take advantage of local sober ride programs;
- call 911 if a drunken driver is spotted on the road;
- take the keys or assist in making other arrangements for someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired.

Death of EDC infant ruled a homicide

An El Dorado County man was arrested Dec. 29 on murder charges.



Michael Swope, 29, is accused of killing a 6-week-old child on Dec. 18.

“The infant’s mother has been cooperating with authorities throughout the investigation and is not considered a suspect,” El Dorado County sheriff’s detectives said in a statement. The mother lives in Pollock Pines.

Swope has listed Pollock Pines and Lodi as his hometowns.

Authorities have not released how the child died nor what the relationship between Swope and the youngster’s mother was.

Bail has been set at \$1 million.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Kingsbury Grade sink hole growing daily

By Kathryn Reed

The gradual sinking of part of Kingsbury Grade has Nevada transportation officials concerned.

“Our NDOT roadway maintenance staff have been monitoring it numerous times each day to ensure traffic safety and evaluate any changes to the roadway itself,” Meg Ragonese, Nevada

Department of Transportation spokeswoman, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Safety is our top priority, and if we feel there are any immediate safety concerns to drivers, we will close this section of Kingsbury Grade for safety."

The troublesome area is on the Carson Valley side of the road near mile marker 4.3. It was first noticed last week.

A drainage pipe and culvert cross under the road at this location.



NDOT is keeping an eye on a growing hazard on Kingsbury Grade. Photo/Lisa Huard

"Roadway sinkholes like this can progress at different rates, based on a number of factors," Ragonese said.

A sign to the side of the road says "bump."

"Every time we drive it it is worse," Lisa Huard told *Lake*

Tahoe News. The South Lake Tahoe resident said it started like a ripple, but now is more pronounced.

NDOT plans to repair the road in the next few weeks. Contract documents are in the works. This will mean Kingsbury Grade at times will be closed to motorists. (About 5,600 vehicles travel on Kingsbury Grade every day.)

Even before this trouble arose NDOT was planning a \$5 million erosion control project for this area of Kingsbury Grade in 2019.

SnowGlobe – music to some, noise to others

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe again is a mixed blessing – fun for those attending, a money-maker for businesses and the city of South Lake Tahoe, and an intrusive disturbance for some residents.

The three-day music festival started tonight. Attendees were out and about spending money at stores and restaurants, and could be seen walking to the Al Tahoe Boulevard venue.

It is sold-out all three nights, with 20,000 people expected each night. Last year 14,000 was the capacity. With the event being on the city's new fields and not on Lake Tahoe Community College's soccer field, there was enough room to increase guests by nearly 50 percent.

As of 9:30pm Dec. 29 the city had received 13 complaints on the hot line.

"It's so loud and bass-y this year with the tree removal and expansion of the area. Worst year yet," resident John Spinola told *Lake Tahoe News*.

According to the city's website, acts on the main stage will end at 11:30pm Thursday and Friday nights and at 1am Sunday.

City Manager Nancy Kerry said that even though the music is within the allowable decibel range, the promoter scaled back the sound Thursday night.

"They have a contract; they have to adhere to our sound level," Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. People with decibel readers walk the grounds, the perimeter and the level is measured from the stage. She said the sound readings are within the allowable level.

Some people wonder if the allowable level should be reconsidered.

Another contributing factor to the loudness outside the venue is that there is no snow. Snow absorbs the sound. Without the white stuff, the sound is traveling farther into the neighborhoods.

"In the house it alternates between wailing banshees and wondering if it's time to find the tornado/hurricane shelter. It is remarkably loud out on the street and in my garage. Interesting to hear the difference with/without double pane windows, also sound dynamics of being upstairs or downstairs," resident Diana Hamilton-Smith told *Lake Tahoe News*.

In previous years two stages were enclosed by a tent. This year only one of the three stages is in a tent. The smaller outdoor stage is pointed toward South Tahoe PUD instead of the mountains.

Weather, traffic to challenge drivers in Sierra

Caltrans is alerting motorists traveling in the Sierra foothills, to mountain areas or over the Donner or Echo summits during the New Year's weekend to be prepared for travel delays.

Roads in the basin are already clogged with visitors. Plan on lots of extra time to get to your destination.

Cold temperatures and alternating bands of precipitation are predicted to arrive Friday night and continue through Tuesday morning, resulting in winter driving conditions, even at lower elevations.

The National Weather Service is predicting up to 1 to 2 feet of snow for summit passes with snow levels dropping to foothill elevations on Monday. Chain controls on Interstate 80 over Donner Summit and on Highway 50 over Echo Summit should be anticipated as well as possible chain controls on local roadways as snow levels drop. Very cold temperatures are likely to create icy and slippery conditions, just as holiday travelers are heading out for New Year's activities or heading home after the holiday weekend.

Caltrans' snow removal crews will be working throughout the storm on summit passes and impacted Caltrans roadways. Caltrans permitted and trained chain installers on Interstate 80 can be identified by a reflective sign with their bib number.