

Boy dies after car tumbles into river near Hwy. 50

By Jessica Hice, Sacramento Bee

An 11-year-old Galt boy died in a car crash early Wednesday near Ice House Road on Highway 50, the El Dorado County coroner's office reported.

A driver lost control of a vehicle just after midnight, ejecting a 13-year-old girl and killing Tonino Trujillo, the California Highway Patrol reported.

The BMW was westbound and went out of control at a curve on Highway 50, the CHP reported.

Read the whole story

Quakes near Tahoe could have been a disaster

By Patrick Perron, Bay Area News Group

A trio of significant earthquakes that struck a remote part of western Nevada early Wednesday were big enough to cause as much as \$1 billion in damage if they had been centered beneath a big city, a leading expert said.

The first of two magnitude-5.7 quakes that began shortly after midnight and a third that registered 5.5 resulted in no injuries or reports of significant damage. The epicenter was

east of the Sierra range and the Nevada-California line near rural Hawthorne about 100 miles southeast of Lake Tahoe and 90 miles south of Reno.

“Thankfully, it’s not underneath a big city because a sequence of 5.7s could certainly do a lot of damage,” said Graham Kent, director of the University of Nevada’s Seismological Laboratory.

“If you put this underneath Reno, we are probably looking at a \$1 billion event, probably with some fatalities and many casualties,” he told the *Associated Press*. “It’s much better to be beneath a ranch 20 miles outside of Hawthorne.”

Bodie State Historic Park sustained damage and is closed while officials assess the buildings.

Read the whole story

Douglas County issues warnings for NYE

Due to the high volume of celebrants within the Stateline casino core on New Year’s Eve, Highway 50 may be closed to vehicle traffic.

If that should occur, vehicle traffic will be diverted around the Stateline casino core area using upper and lower Lake Parkway Drive.

Drivers anticipating traveling through the Stateline casino core area on New Year’s Eve should allow themselves additional time to make it to their destination on time.

Incidents that will most likely result in an arrest include acts that place celebrants or law enforcement officers in jeopardy, including acts of rowdy behavior, fighting, throwing projectiles, vandalism, theft, narcotic violations, severe public drunkenness, possession of or discharge of fireworks, minors consuming or possessing alcohol, or any other act that disrupts the goal of achieving a peaceful and safe environment for all in attendance.

Glass or metal containers, regardless of contents, are prohibited in the casino core area on New Year's Eve.

The curfew in Douglas County is midnight on Dec. 31. Those younger than 18 are subject to citation for being in violation of this ordinance. Those under the age of 21 who are in possession of alcohol or who have consumed or are under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be subject to arrest.

Nevada is one of 20 states that decriminalized marijuana possession effective Jan. 1, 2017, but residents will still have to be 21 years older to purchase and consume. It will still be illegal to smoke marijuana in a public place.

Deputies of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office will be present in the Stateline casino-core area throughout the evening, supplemented by officers and representatives of numerous other law enforcement agencies, including Nevada Highway Patrol, Nevada Department of Corrections, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, and the FBI. Supporting agencies include the Douglas County Sheriff's Search and Rescue, Douglas County Communications Center, Tahoe-Douglas Fire Department, Cal-Trans and Nevada Department of Transportation.

Crash closes Hwy. 88 near Gardnerville

By Sarah Litz, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada Highway 88 was closed in both directions near Gardnerville on Thursday morning after a two vehicle crash, officials with the Nevada Highway Patrol said.

Trooper Dan Gordon with the Nevada Highway Patrol said one lane of traffic was reopened at 8:20am.

At around 6:53am, three vehicles were involved in a T-bone type crash, Gordon said. One person was extricated, he said.

Read the whole story

150 lbs of pot confiscated, 1 arrest in Truckee

A Missouri man was arrested Tuesday in Truckee on charges of transporting nearly 150 pounds of marijuana.

A California Highway Patrol officer stopped Randall Scott Akers, 38, on Dec. 27 on Interstate 80 near Highway 267 in Truckee for reportedly having a GPS device affixed improperly on his windshield.

The officer then noticed the auxiliary diesel tank was fake

and that there numerous false compartments. A search of the vehicle revealed the marijuana.

Akers faces charges of possession of marijuana for sale, transport for sale, possession of more than an ounce of marijuana and using a room/space to sell a controlled substance.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Stateline gaming revenue up despite statewide drop

By Associated Press

State officials say Nevada gambling revenue dropped about 1.5 percent in November mainly due to decreases in the Las Vegas area.

However, Stateline revenue jumped 12.5 percent to \$16 million.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board said Thursday that the state's casinos won more than \$930 million in November.

Revenue on the Las Vegas Strip was down 3.5 percent year-over-year, to \$517 million. Downtown Las Vegas winnings fell 5.5 percent to \$51 million.

Reno casino revenue was up almost 3 percent to \$46 million.

South Shore braces for 3 days of partying



The view from the main SnowGlobe stage shows the VIP (cargo container) area to the right and a bar to the left that has thick plastic as windows to allow concert-goers to see what is going on outside. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

SnowGlobe might be the safest place to be for the next three nights – assuming you aren't a criminal.

Controlled environments where there is fencing to contain people are safer than free-for-all venues like what is found in the Stateline casino corridor on New Year's Eve. Still, law enforcement has strategies in place to make both areas safe.

"My biggest concern is terrorism," South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*. He pointed to recent events in Europe as concerns and reasons to be on high alert.

It takes a concerted effort of all the local public safety agencies as well as hired security personnel to ensure locals and visitors are safe during these three days of festivities.

“I think the unified command between California and Nevada is very unusual,” South Lake Tahoe Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*. He said this degree of cooperation is unheard of anywhere else in the United State.



Crews on Dec. 28 set up the main stage of SnowGlobe.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

It's necessary for the two states to work together because the proximity of a potential threat from revelry at Stateline on Jan. 31 and during the next three nights at SnowGlobe would have reverberations into the other state if there were a large-scale incident. And while each state does things a little differently when it comes to prevention and response, the jurisdictions have an understanding of how things would

work in the event of an emergency.

For decades the South Shore has come together to ensure Stateline is safe. That used to be where the big party was until SnowGlobe came into being five years ago. Still, this is expected to a unique year for the casino corridor.

“This year will be final test for us; it will be a watershed for us,” Douglas County Undersheriff Paul Howell told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Are we truly seeing a decline in that uncontrollable street party? It is a Saturday night, we have snow and it’s a three-day weekend.”

The past few years have been uneventful on New Years’ Eve at Stateline; to the point last year people barely came into the street.

“Even if a large crowd shows up, we can control everything,” Howell said.

Emergency personnel are positioned at various locations that night – beyond their normal headquarters. This will ensure a faster response if need be. The agencies have representatives at a command post so everyone knows what is going on and no one is acting in a silo.



Officers stand guard before Highway 50 is reopened shortly after New Year's 2016. Photo/LTN file

The cooperation includes Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District scouring the SnowGlobe venue every night for explosive devises.

Tonight begins the first of three nights for the outdoor music festival on the new play fields owned by South Lake Tahoe off Al Tahoe Boulevard. The venue is new. No longer is the festival on the field used by the Lake Tahoe Community College soccer team.

On Wednesday crews were still busy putting all the pieces together. The setup is different. The promoter actually worked with the city this year to get the necessary permits to turn cargo containers into the VIP area. **Last year it was a bust** because the fire and building departments put the hammer down and didn't allow the structure to be built.

"After the big fire in Oakland, this showed why building codes

matter, especially in temporary spaces,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. “They didn’t have a certified engineer (last year) who signed off on those plans.”

Chad Donnelly, who has been the promoter of the festival these six years, no longer speaks to *Lake Tahoe News*.

Meyers teen alive after falling through ice



A South Shore teen is rushed to the hospital Dec. 28 after falling through ice. Photo/Provided

A 13-year-old boy from Meyers is lucky to be alive after falling through the ice at Lake Baron today.

The youth, whose name has not been released, was riding his bike at Tahoe Paradise Park in Meyers when the front tire broke through the ice. The ice cracked, then the boy and his bike went under water.

Ian Whitmarsh from Oakland crawled onto the ice to try to rescue the boy while others called 911.

The teen was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital with severe hypothermia.

Public safety officials are warning people to stay off ice in the basin because it is probably not thick enough to carry the weight of any size person.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

2017 brings new laws, changes for Nevada

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

Changes to laws involving guns, marijuana and mopeds will greet Nevadans in 2017.

Here's a rundown of some of the most talked-about issues affecting our community beginning Jan. 1.

Voters in November narrowly approved a ballot question to expand background checks for firearm purchases.

This new law is aimed at those who sell weapons online or at trade shows, making their private transactions subject to the same legal requirement as purchases involving licensed dealers, for which federal background checks are necessary.

[Read the whole story](#)

Officials: Mountain snowpack low, but it's early

By Associated Press

Officials say it's too soon to declare an end to California's drought despite heavy rain falling early in the wet season.

The state's Department of Water Resources said Tuesday that the Sierra Nevada snowpack is at 72 percent of normal for this time of year.

The mountain snow contributes about a third of the state's water when it melts in the warm months and fills reservoirs. California has endured five years of historic drought.

State climatologist Michael Anderson says California needs the rain and snow to continue falling to make up for the past several dry years.

Northern California had the wettest October in 30 years with heavy rains.

Forecasters say, however, that they'll know better by April 1, when the snowpack is typically its deepest and wettest.