Tahoe’s Miracle March falls short of 1991 original

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Tahoe’s drastic, late-season snowpack recovery was the weather equivalent to the TV show “Fuller House,” a sequel that fueled nostalgia for the early 1990s but didn’t quite measure up to the original.

From March 1 through Sunday snowpack in the Lake Tahoe area grew from 25 to 73 percent of the median peak for the basin, an increase of 48 percentage points.

The recovery was enough to push the season’s snow totals from dismal to respectable and conjure memories of the “Miracle March,” of 1991.

But by the numbers it fell slightly short of matching that legendary period.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe man arrested in Sonoma County



Michael Lindauer

By Index-Tribune

A South Lake Tahoe man was sitting in county jail on $15,000 bail after being discovered with stolen property including keys to 16 different vehicles.

On March 17, Sonoma police received a call about a subject who stole a key from a vehicle on First Street East near the Little League fields.

Read the whole story

Stateline casinos bring in big bucks in February

Nevada casinos collectively topped the billion-dollar mark for the second consecutive month. Back-to-back billion-dollar wins had not been recorded since March-April 2008.

On the South Shore the gaming win for February was up 32 percent to $19.86 million from 2017.

Statewide the numbers were $1.018 billion, a 7.7 percent increase from February 2017.

North Lake Tahoe was one of the six markets to post a decline. The numbers were off by just more than 6 percent.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SLT council agrees to help pot shop get permit

By Kathryn Reed

Tahoe Wellness Cooperative could have medicine on its shelves this weekend.

Cody Bass, owner of the lone medicinal marijuana shop in South Lake Tahoe, told *Lake Tahoe News* he intends to be calling people first thing this morning to have supplies replenished in a matter of days.

All of this is allowable because the City Council on March 27 unanimously agreed to have the city attorney write a letter to the state saying Bass is in compliance with city laws per court order and therefore should be granted a state license.

After the vote – which came at about 9:30pm Tuesday – there was applause, disbelief and relief.

TWC has been unable to stock everything people need because Police Chief Brian Uhler at the beginning of the year wrote a letter to the state Bureau of Cannabis Control that essentially put the kibosh on the business.

"In order for a state license to be issued, the local government must also agree to permit the business, and the local government was not willing to permit the activity. So we

couldn’t license Tahoe Wellness,” Alex Traverso with the state Bureau of Cannabis Control told *Lake Tahoe News* earlier this year.

Sergio Rudin, who on March 27 was the attorney from the law firm of Burke, Williams and Sorensen representing the city, said crafting the letter isn’t a problem. The state still would need to give its OK for the 120-day permit.

Some of Tuesday night’s discussion pertained to the **June 2015 raid** on TWC. This then led to a criminal complaint being filed against Bass last fall regarding **income tax evasion**.

A judge on Monday could rule on whether the search warrant affidavits could be unsealed. The thinking is this would give the city an indication of the evidence against Bass. Bass has not seen the information and could choose not to make the documents public.

It was pointed out, though, that in this country a person is innocent until proven guilty – no matter the evidence.

The whole goal of the council’s was to be able to provide this type of medicine for people in town.

The issues between the city and Bass remain to be worked out. For now, though, there should be ample medical marijuana in South Lake Tahoe in a matter of days.

SLT recreational pot ordinance takes shape

By Kathryn Reed

Recreational marijuana is going to be for sale in South Lake Tahoe. When still remains to be seen, but most likely by summer.

The City Council made substantive progress March 27 in regards to this controversial topic that has languished for months.

Some of the major decisions the council agreed to include in the proposed ordinance:

· Up to three recreational marijuana shops.

· Development agreements would be allowed.

· The applicants will go through a merit based process, with preferential treatment to locals.

· Special use permits would be required.

· Background checks would be a necessity.

· Staff will look at the public safety and application procedures.

· No micro businesses will be allowed in the first year.

· There will be no limits on the various license types with exception to retail.

· Delivery services will be allowed.

What will come back is a draft ordinance, which should be at the April 17 regular City Council meeting. The public will still have time to sway the council at at least two public hearings on that document.

The council members can also add, delete or amend what the city attorney brings forward. Sergio Rudin with Burke, Williams and Sorensen law firm handled the city attorney duties for the night.

Application procedures and minimum requirements for development agreements will be created by staff. These will likely be handled by a separate resolution and may not be ready in April.

Onsite consumption is one of the sticking points. The city attorney will bring the council more information. Tahoe Wellness Cooperative, the medicinal pot shop in town, has allowed onsite consumption since Day 1, so there is a precedent for this activity.

The special meeting started with a presentation from the planning department and then one from law enforcement. Acting City Manager Jeff Meston then wanted to go over seven pages of questions.

At that time Councilwoman Brooke Laine said it was more important to be answering questions the community cannabis working group came up with and flushing out concerns the council had. Meston's questions never got addressed, at least not how he intended.

Rudin confirmed the draft ordinance for adult use marijuana was 90 percent complete. This is because the council had previously agreed to adopt most of what the community working group had come up with.

Rudin then took over the meeting, getting the council to focus on the handful of issues he needed consensus on.

LA Times lawsuit alleges

county violated opening records law

By Jack Dolan, Los Angeles Times

The *Los Angeles Times* has sued L.A. County, accusing it of repeatedly and routinely flouting laws designed to ensure government transparency.

Over the last year alone, county officials have refused to release information about the status of homicide investigations, allegations of sexual misconduct against prosecutors and even mundane information such as email addresses for Sheriff's Department employees, the lawsuit says.

County officials also ignored a request for copies of two instruction manuals coaching employees on how to respond to such requests, according to the lawsuit. One of the manuals is titled "California Public Records Act 'Emergency Kit' for County Counsel."

Read the whole story

Nev. pot sales dip in January, still beat projections

By Colton Lochhead, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada's recreational marijuana market can't seem to figure

out which way to go.

Sales numbers for the Silver State's new green market have fluctuated each month since it opened in July, going from an up month to a down month.

That trend continued in January, when roughly $32.8 million in marijuana was sold. That was down from December's $35.8 million total, according to statistics published by the state this week.

Read the whole story

Ski resorts fight climate change with snow blowers and buses

By Eric Niiler, Wired

After a wimpy winter, spring break has arrived, and skiers and snowboarders from Maine to Mammoth Lakes are stoked. More than 18 feet of snow has dropped at Squaw Valley in March; Utah's famed powder resorts have finally broken the 100-inch mark; and New England has been pummeled by four big storms pushing closing dates to late April.

At the same time, there are warning signs about the future of the sport. Climate change has already made winters warmer and shorter, while a March study by researchers at Oregon State University found North America's snowpack has declined up to 30 percent in the past century. By 2050, climate change will cut ski resort winter seasons by 50 percent, with the hardest-hit in the Pacific Northwest, Southwest, and Upper Midwest,

according to a 2016 study by the University of Colorado, the Environmental Protection Agency, and consulting firm Abt Associates.

Mountain snow isn't just important for shredding; it also provides drinking water for urban dwellers and irrigates farmers' fields.

Read the whole story

Douglas County on path to revamp VHR rules

Douglas County officials are considering tightening vacation home rental rules at Lake Tahoe before they contemplate allowing them in the valley.

The county doesn't want to be as restrictive as South Lake Tahoe, but realizes more oversight is needed.

Changes started earlier this year with what the county calls "safety inspections" on some of the 480 permitted short-term rentals. This will be done at at the time permits are renewed. Prior to this change VHRs were only inspected if there were complaints.

The county will be looking at it fees structure, penalties, what constitutes a violation and other aspects of the ordinance.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Global tourism predicted to slow after best year ever

By Associated Press

LONDON — The travel and tourism sector is set for a modest slowdown in 2018 as a result of higher oil prices and airfares, a year after it experienced its best year on record, according to a leading global industry body.

In its annual Economic Impact Report, the World Travel and Tourism Council said Thursday that the sector was responsible for the creation of 7 million new jobs worldwide in 2017, or one in five new jobs.

Read the whole story