Sports betting’s big wager – younger bettors

By Davide Porter, AP

NEWARK, N.J. – As the push to legalize sports gambling in the U.S. nears a crucial Supreme Court decision, states hoping to reap a financial windfall could face another hurdle: Attracting younger players used to online fantasy sports.

The explosion in popularity of daily fantasy sports over the last decade has created a generation of sports fans more attuned to gauging individual player statistics than how two teams may fare against each other, the challenge at the heart of traditional sports wagering.

Even more important, experts say, is whether states will be able to offer online sports wagering to a demographic raised on smartphones and laptops. That will depend heavily on how the Supreme Court decides New Jersey’s case, expected this spring.

Read the whole story

Calif. spent nearly $1.8B fighting major 2017 wildfires

By Jonathan J. Cooper, AP

California state agencies spent nearly $1.8 billion fighting fierce wildfires that killed dozens of people and destroyed thousands of homes and businesses last year, legislative

budget experts reported.

The federal government will reimburse most of the costs, but the state will still need to come up with about $371 million on top of the state's existing wildfire budget, the Legislative Analyst's Office told the Senate Budget committee. That shouldn't be a problem because state revenue has far exceeded expectations so far this fiscal year and the general fund is flush with cash.

Read the whole story

Ask the Secret Service how to stop school shootings

By Jeff Daniels, The Conversation

While President Trump has not shied away from offering suggestions on how to prevent school shootings – including one controversial idea to arm teachers – what often gets overlooked in the conversation is research on the subject that has already been done.

This research includes one major study of school shootings conducted in part by the very agency charged with protecting the president of the United States himself – the U.S. Secret Service.

Has this research been ignored or just forgotten? I raise the question as one who has studied averted school shootings and the news coverage that followed.

Two months after the Columbine tragedy in 1999, experts from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Secret Service

collaborated to study the “school shooter” phenomenon. They published the study on their findings in 2002. The study focused on examining the thinking, planning and other behaviors of students who carried out school attacks. Particular attention was given to identifying pre-attack behaviors and communications that might be detectable – or “knowable” – and could help prevent future attacks.

The team studied 37 school shootings involving 41 attackers that took place from December 1974 through May 2000. Data included investigative, school, court and mental health records. In addition, 10 school shooters were interviewed to gain their perspectives from “conceptualization to execution” of the attacks. A series of findings emerged. In light of the Florida school shooting massacre and the fact that the alleged shooter drew a lot of attention prior to carrying out the shooting, those findings bear repeating here.

- “Incidents of targeted violence at school rarely were sudden, impulsive acts.” Most attackers progressed through a process that started with an idea, to a plan, to accessing weapons and ending with the attack. If noticed, this process may be interrupted at any time before the attack.
- “Prior to most incidents, other people knew about the attacker’s idea and/or plan to attack.” The implication is that schools must develop a culture that promotes student sharing of concerns about others. In studying schools that averted a shooting, I and other researchers found that a key factor was establishing trusting relationships with students. We also found that the notion of “snitching” needed to be reframed to being helpful. Unfortunately, it seems that in the case of the Parkland shooting, multiple people did come forward with concerns. The alleged shooter was on several different radars, but unless he was posing an imminent danger to himself or others, he couldn’t be jailed or forced to

receive psychological services. It therefore becomes an issue of individual versus collective rights. Unless we are ready as a society to lock people up for disturbing communications, there will be some individuals who will fall through the proverbial cracks.

- Along similar lines, most attackers "engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that caused others concern or indicated a need for help." Some of these behaviors included talking about bringing a gun to school, or warning friends to avoid a certain area of the school on a given day. The Parkland shooter had a history of violent and aggressive behavior, including Instagram posts about becoming a "professional school shooter."
- While most attackers – 96 percent – were male, the report found that there "is no accurate or useful 'profile' of students who engaged in targeted school violence." Three-quarters of the attackers were white; one-quarter of the attackers came from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, including African-American (12 percent), Hispanic (5 percent), Native Alaskan (2 percent), Native American (2 percent) and Asian (2 percent). Most came from intact families, were doing well in school and were not loners, according to the report.
- "Most attackers had difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures. Moreover, many had considered or attempted suicide." Knowing the students and what they are dealing with in their lives, such as parental divorce, ending of a relationship or other failures is important for getting help in a timely manner. The Parkland shooter's adoptive mother died of pneumonia just three months prior to his deadly attack. And at age 5, he also witnessed his father die of a heart attack.
- "Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted or injured by others prior to the attack." Almost two-thirds reported

being targeted by others prior to the attack, with some claiming to have withstood severe bullying for a long time. There is evidence that Nikolas Cruz was often mocked for his odd behavior.

Following the publication of the Secret Service study on school shootings, my research on averted school shootings found that schools that prevented a shooting had done some of the things recommended by the Secret Service.

The case in Florida shows that many of these recommendations were followed and people spoke up when they saw something wrong. The issue is whether authorities need more power to intervene once they have been made aware of a potential threat, or whether they just need to do a better job with the power they already have.

Jeff Daniels is a professor of counseling at West Virginia University.

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2 Heavenly skiers rescued after skiing out of bounds

Two skiers had to be rescued March 4 after they skied out of bounds at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

“They soon found themselves in waist deep snow due to the recent storm. Both subjects were fatigued and it was quickly growing dark when they called for help,” EDSO said.

El Dorado County sheriff’s deputies along with Tahoe Search and Rescue began the search after getting the call about 5:30pm Sunday. The two were located a couple hours later, and were able to ski out with the assistance of the rescue crew.

Heavenly had received more than 4 feet of snow in the last week.

The names, hometown and ages of the men have not been released.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Mom, son die skiing to condo in Kirkwood

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A mother and son from San Francisco died Sunday while skiing to a slope-side condominium at Kirkwood Mountain Resort.

According to the Alpine County Sheriff's Office, Olga Perkovic, 50, and her son, Aaron Goodstein, 7, died after snow falling from a rooftop buried them.

"It was horrible timing, they were right beneath that one piece of roof and it just unloaded," said Undersheriff Spencer Case. "A few feet one way or another it could have come out differently."

Read the whole story

Storms improve water content by 32 percentage points



Maddie Bowman is just as comfortable in powder at Sierra-at-Tahoe as she is in a halfpipe. Photo/Brian Walker

By Kathryn Reed

What a difference a week can make.

On Feb. 28 the snow water equivalent near Echo Summit was 1.7 inches, or 7 percent of average, while on March 5 it was 9.4 inches, for 39 percent of normal.

Frank Gehrke took the manual readings at Phillips Station for the Department of Water Resources. It’s unusual to do back-to-back surveys, but officials wanted to record the impact of the storm and note what it would have been like without it.

While the storms in the last week that dropped several feet of snow at lake level and as much as 7 feet higher up were good news for a lot of reasons, the reality is the snowpack is still pretty dismal.

These surveys are taken throughout the Sierra from December-April, when the bulk of the snow falls. They give water regulators an idea of what the runoff will be like in the spring/summer so they can then predict what reservoir storage will be like. That water is then used by various municipalities and farmers in the state.

While skiers prefer the light, powdery snow, it’s the wet, heavy snow that is best for water content.

Skiers flocked to Tahoe resorts last weekend for the deepest snow all winter. With temps staying relatively cool, the fresh snow should provide the needed boost to get through the season. That is assuming future storms are dumping snow on the slopes and not rain.

More snow is on its way to the Tahoe area. A storm is expected to arrive Wednesday night and provide moisture intermittently throughout the weekend.

Backcountry skier rescued from Incline area

A backcountry skier had to be airlifted from the Incline Lake area on March 4.

The man was located at about 9,000 feet. His injuries have not been released.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office used its Raven helicopter to take him from the wilderness to Mount Rose Highway where he was then transported by ambulance to the hospital.

Washoe's search and rescue team along with North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District crews assisted with the rescue.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Unraveling the S. Lake Tahoe city manager debacle

By Kathryn Reed

Rumors are rampant, while facts are few when it comes to why South Lake Tahoe's city manager is not at work.

On the March 6 agenda is a closed session item stating: Public employee discipline/dismissal/release. This is the third meeting with this same agenda item.

An attorney other than Nira Doherty with Burke, Williams & Sorensen, the law firm that does most of the city's legal work, has been negotiating with City Manager Nancy Kerry's attorney for a resolution.

However, what isn't known is how the council has been able to give direction when a meeting has not taken place in the last two weeks.

If an email is sent out by the attorney to the council, it can be classified as confidential under client-attorney privilege.

However, if the mayor or another council member were to issue an update to the rest of the council, that would be a serial meeting. That is illegal and violates state open meeting laws.

It would just add to the list of illegal maneuvers this council has been engaged in behind closed doors and out of public view since at least last fall. It would be up the district attorney to go after the council for Brown Act violations.

Lake Tahoe News asked Mayor Wendy David and acting City Manager Jeff Meston:

- *Who on the council is/are the point person/people in discussing a resolution with Nancy Kerry?*
- *Who is the attorney at the law firm representing the city?*
- *What is the time line to get this resolved?*
- *Apparently she didn't do anything so egregious since she's still getting paid and has the title, so how can the city justify this expense? It seems like a waste of taxpayer dollars – can you defend how it isn't?*
- *Does the new pending litigation on the next agenda have to do with Nancy Kerry? If not, what is it about?*

Neither David nor Meston responded to the email.

"Separation between a city manager and city council is a normal part of the municipal government world. The city and Ms. Kerry have been diligently working toward an amicable resolution to the current situation, and we are hopeful for a resolution soon," Jacqueline Mittelstadt, Kerry's attorney, told *Lake Tahoe News*. Mittelstadt was once city attorney for South Lake Tahoe and is well versed in dealing with the machinations of this city.

No one is officially saying why Kerry is leaving or whose idea it was, though her relationship with Councilman Austin Sass has been precarious at best. Per her contract, she is owed nine month's severance if she were to be let go without cause. Normally when a city manager leaves on her own volition at least one month's notice is given.

The settlement is likely to be a compromise based on clearly nothing criminal having occurred because that would have been handled differently, the fact that Kerry didn't initiate the departure, and that what *Lake Tahoe News* has been told by sources inside the city is that Kerry's biggest no-no's were being emotional (which appears to be more gender bashing than anything else), yelling (which every city manager has been known to do) and talking about someone being in rehab (even this reporter knew about this person and her drinking issue was well known in the community for years).

Still, not a single employee ever filed a complaint against Kerry, so some speculate the negativity now being voiced is political in nature. This is an election year with the council seats of David, Sass and Tom Davis being up.

People inside and outside the city are saying they don't understand what is so egregious to have seemed to wipe out the good that Kerry has done for the city in her more than five years as city manager. That includes among other things saving the city more than $40 million, bringing development to town and helping the city look better.

Internally, Kerry changed the culture in a way many say was a positive. People were given flexible schedules and she started an awards program for employees.

That good vibe has since been eroded with the back stabbing and distrust that now permeates the walls of city hall since the City Council chose to go down this path. Even department heads are jockeying for position. Not one of the five electeds

has come forward to say what changed.

There has been zero leadership from the council – just silence. After all, Kerry was given a glowing review in June 2017 and a 5 percent raise. Now these electeds are ready to show her the door.

Once Kerry is officially relieved of her duties, the city is likely to hire a firm to find the next city manager. A request for proposal for a consultant to do that work would be the first step. That can cost upward of $30,000. If the city opts to find a city attorney as well, it's possible for some expenses to be lessened if the consultant were to handle both positions.

The future of the city attorney could be decided March 20 based on interim City Attorney Doherty asking to have a discussion in open session.

It could be the end of the year before a permanent city manager is on board, same with city attorney.

It's possible the city would bring in an interim city manager to be a bridge. Retired city managers do this on a regular basis.

For now, Fire Chief Meston is the acting city manager. He was given the title after the closed session on the **Feb. 6 meeting**.

Calif. may tweak program

that’s pushing up gas prices

By David R. Baker, San Francisco Chronicle

Even as drivers debate repealing California’s recent gasoline tax hike, an often-overlooked state program has quietly helped push fuel prices higher.

Dubbed the low carbon fuel standard, the program is designed to fight climate change by forcing oil companies to lower the “carbon intensity” of the fuels they sell in California.

For years, it had little effect on gasoline prices, tacking on an estimated 3 or 4 cents per gallon.

Read the whole story

Nevada women will be key in 2018 elections

By Ramona Giwargis, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Growing up in a religious Southern California household, Jazzmyne Lizarraga-Valle couldn’t even talk about sex.

But three months ago, the aspiring teacher proudly held a sign that read “Reproductive Freedom For All” as she marched among thousands of people in Nevada’s Women’s March. The event marked the height of a movement that put women in the spotlight and reinforced their role as a force to be reckoned with – particularly at the polls.

The 2018 midterm elections will be a defining moment for women

in Nevada. State voters could elect their first female governor. They could choose a second female senator to represent them in Washington. And they might choose a woman to be the next lieutenant governor.

Read the whole story