

# Poll: Nevadans not thrilled with their state

By Kyle B. Hansen, Las Vegas Sun

A third of Nevadans say their state is the best or one of the best states in which to live, according to a survey.

That puts the Silver State as the 12th-worst state to live in, as judged by its own residents, according to a Gallup poll.

On average, 46 percent of Americans said their state was the best or among the best, and in the top two states – Montana and Alaska – 77 percent of residents said their state was in that category.

**Read the whole story**

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# Calif. drought puts animals at risk

By Edward Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

California's drought is imperiling tricolored blackbirds, large trees and native fish, with some of the affected species already on the state's endangered list and others likely headed there because of rapidly declining numbers, scientists say.

"The problems created by the drought are just a harbinger of things to come," said Peter Moyle, a professor at the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences, which hosted a daylong Capitol

summit Friday on economic and environmental costs of the drought.

“Native fishes and the ecosystems that support them are incredibly vulnerable to drought,” Moyle said. “There are currently 37 species of fish on the endangered species list in California – and there is every sign that that number will increase,” he said.

Eighty percent of those species face extinction by the year 2100 if present trends continue, Moyle said.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Cal-OSHA investigating Tahoe Keys Marina**

**By Kathryn Reed**

Cal-OSHA officials were at Tahoe Keys Marina earlier this month looking to see if the South Lake Tahoe facility is in compliance. It's not.

“We are working on getting all of our forklifts and equipment up to standard,” a marina employee who didn't want to be named told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We are trying to upgrade everything to get everything up to standard so we have a good summer.”

Marina General Manager Robert Spinnato did not return multiple calls.



Per Cal-OSHA, forklifts are not supposed to be used by Tahoe Keys Marina staff.  
Photo/LTN

Despite the state ban on using certain equipment, a source close to the marina told *Lake Tahoe News* that employees are continuing to use the equipment and did so last week to unload a handful of boats.

Boats can still launch and the Fresh Ketch restaurant is open. But the marina is not supposed to be using some of its equipment because employees have not been properly trained and inspections have not regularly been completed per state law.

OSHA is reportedly looking at service manuals to know when and how equipment was maintained.

"We have an open inspection with them. We don't release information until the investigation is complete," William Estakhri with Cal-OSHA told *Lake Tahoe News*. "That is usually six months."

The state Occupational Safety and Health Administration opens an investigation when an employee files a complaint, there has been an injury or a complaint has been filed. Cal-OSHA is designed to protect workers from health and safety hazards in the workplace.

Peter Milton, spokesman for Cal-OSHA, told *Lake Tahoe News* that every business is supposed to have an injury and illness

prevention program. They are also required to have a training and safety program.

It is possible the marina will be fined if any infractions are found at the end of the investigation.

The marina uses a 1979 travel lift to haul boats out. It is rated at a maximum capacity of 69,000 pounds, but has been used to transport vessels weighing more than that, according to a boat owner who didn't want to be named.

The marina is also having to deal with a lake level that will be unseasonably low this year because of the drought. While an employee said the paperwork for a dredging permit has been submitted, the permitting agency said that is not true.

Alan Miller with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board told *Lake Tahoe News* his office has spoken with a consultant for the marina, but no application has been submitted. He added that one is expected this week.

Lahontan has 30 days to review the permit to make sure it is complete. It's possible a permit could be issued within two weeks.

Miller added that he is expecting the application to be multifaceted and to also include chemical treatments.

The Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association is responsible for the main channel that homeowners use. The organization has not filed for a dredging permit, according to Miller.

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# Tahoe assemblyman gets stent after chest pains

By Laura Myers, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Nevada Assemblyman Jim Wheeler had angioplasty on Saturday and doctors placed two stents to open his blocked arteries, his campaign manager said.

The procedure happened after Wheeler, 60, reported chest and arm pains on Friday and early Saturday. But his cardiologist said he did not suffer a heart attack, said Wheeler's campaign manager, Steve Donahue.

"He had blocked arteries," but the problem was caught before he could suffer a heart attack, Donahue said.

"He'll be able to start walking his district in a week, the doctor said," according to Donahue.

Wheeler, R-Gardnerville, is running for re-election to Assembly District 39, which covers Lake Tahoe in Douglas County, Storey County and part of Lyon County.

**Read the whole story**

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# U.S. middle class no longer the wealthiest in the world

By David Leonhardt and Kevin Quealy, New York Times

The American middle class, long the most affluent in the world, has lost that distinction.

While the wealthiest Americans are outpacing many of their global peers, a New York Times analysis shows that across the lower- and middle-income tiers, citizens of other advanced countries have received considerably larger raises over the last three decades.

After-tax middle-class incomes in Canada – substantially behind in 2000 – now appear to be higher than in the United States. The poor in much of Europe earn more than poor Americans.

The numbers, based on surveys conducted over the past 35 years, offer some of the most detailed publicly available comparisons for different income groups in different countries over time. They suggest that most American families are paying a steep price for high and rising income inequality.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Brown issues second drought proclamation**

**By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee**

Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday signed a sweeping new emergency drought proclamation, cutting red tape for a variety of government functions to help water agencies find new supplies, and to press the public to use water carefully.

“I call on every city, every community, every Californian to conserve water in every way possible,” Brown said in a statement.

The governor first proclaimed a drought emergency Jan. 17.

This second proclamation goes further by waiving compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the state water code for a number of actions, including water transfers, wastewater treatment projects, habitat improvements for winter-run Chinook salmon imperiled by the drought and curtailment of water rights.

The order also suspends competitive bidding requirements for drought-related projects undertaken by a number of state agencies, including the departments of Water Resources, Fish and Wildlife, and Public Health.

**Read the whole story**

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# **Calif. courts strike down local sex-offender ordinances**

**By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee**

The California Supreme Court has left intact a lower-court ruling that invalidates local ordinances aimed at restricting the movements of registered sex offenders in dozens of cities statewide.

The court's decision Wednesday not to hear a case involving a Southern California sex offender means city and county ordinances banning such offenders from public parks and other public areas no longer may be enforced, attorneys say. Instead, a state law governing where sex offenders on parole may live now stands as the main restriction.

"If I read the tea leaves correctly, it's probably dead everywhere in California," Susan Kang Schroeder, chief of

staff to Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas said Thursday.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Placerville man accused of sex crimes**

A 26-year-old Placerville man is accused of soliciting sex from a 15-year-old boy.

El Dorado County sheriff's detectives said Glenn O'Rourke, 26, first sent sexually suggestive and descriptive text messages to the youth on April 14. Later O'Rourke sent the boy homemade pornographic videos and sexual photographs of himself.

With the assistance of the teen, detectives contacted O'Rourke using the boy's cell telephone and impersonated the boy. Detectives arrested O'Rourke without incident.

Deputies said they don't believe this youth is O'Rourke's only victim.

O'Rourke was using the name Glenn Coco when he contact the boy.

Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Rich Horn at 530.642.4715.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Placer signs deal to construct biomass facility

Placer County has signed an agreement for Phoenix Energy to build and operate the biomass gasification plant between Tahoe City and Truckee.

The 2-megawatt plant will use forest biomass from the area to make electricity, heat and biochar, which is a solid carbon byproduct that is used as a soil conditioner and filter media.

The Lake Tahoe project is Phoenix Energy's third biomass gasification plant in California. When it is fully operational it will be the company's largest plant.

"I believe there is a great opportunity for small community scale biomass plants to produce clean renewable energy for California and our third plant shows the technology is gaining momentum," Phoenix Energy CEO Gregory Stangl said in a statement.

The plant will be run as a subsidiary of San Francisco-based Phoenix Energy.

Placer County for years has been seeking to develop an alternative to open burning of large piles of slash.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## Placerville fire deaths ruled

# **murder-suicide**

**By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee**

Two women whose bodies were found following a fire in their Placerville-area home in March died as a result of a murder-suicide, according to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff's officials said investigators determined that homeowner Crystal Ward, 58, shot Carolyn Hague, 62, in the head, then set the house on fire using flammable liquids, before turning the weapon on herself.

Sheriff's investigators were called to 1601 Rose Lane for a death investigation March 7. Firefighters had responded about 5:45am to find a home engulfed in flames. As firefighters worked to extinguish the blaze, others rushed inside to search for occupants believed to be trapped in the house.

**Read the whole story**