

3 Placer sheriff's employees arrested in jail abuse case

By Sam Stanton and Nashelly Chavez, Sacramento Bee

Three Placer County sheriff's officials were arrested Wednesday on charges involving allegations of excessive force against jail inmates and falsifying evidence, the result of what Sheriff Devon Bell is calling "an extensive investigation" that included video recordings and other evidence.

The arrests of corrections Sgt. Megan Yaws, Deputy Robert Madden and corrections Officer Jeffrey Villanueva came after a probe that began with a supervisor reviewing routine video footage, the sheriff's department said in an announcement.

Yaws used to work for the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office and Madden came from the Truckee Police Department.

Read the whole story

Why are coyotes so polarizing?

By Lawrence Lenhart, High Country News

First things first: Coyote. When you read the word, how many syllables do you hear? Your answer, according to Dan Flores, author of "Coyote America," may be "immediately diagnostic of a whole range of belief systems and values."

The *ki-YOH-tee* versus *ki-yote* divide is one of the best indicators of a person's coyote politics, a nearly hard-and-fast way that we subconsciously identify ourselves: as defenders of the species, in the case of the former, or as a manager, shooter and/or trapper, in the latter.

In "Coyote America," Flores occasionally assumes the mantle of coyote's head of public relations, demonstrating how the species, once "dead last in public appeal – behind rattlesnakes, skunks, vultures, rats, and cockroaches," overcame its stigma as "varmint" to become a darling among the very people who most infrequently encounter it – modern-day urbanites. More often, though, Flores is content to serve as a guide to the species, relaying the coyote's complicated natural, cultural, political and mythological histories. It is why Flores describes his book as, "in most respects, a coyote biography."

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Liberty Utilities is now on Twitter at @CALibUtil.
- Primus with special guests Clutch on will be at Lake Tahoe Hard Rock – outdoors – on Aug. 17 at 6:30pm.
- The sixth annual Tahoe Show boasts hundreds of the best sculpted bodies, as contestants vie for cash prizes at MontBleu in Stateline on Aug. 26. For more info, go **online**.
- Franciscan Estates will be having a winemaker dinner at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe on June 7.
- Soroptimist International of Truckee Donner's Wine &

Restaurant Faire is June 3, 5-7:30pm at Coyote Moon Golf Course in Tahoe Donner. Go **online** for more info.

Tahoe artists blend activism into their work

Tahoe Activist Artists have released “Art & Science in an Age of Unreason,” a video collaboration between award-winning oil painter Shelley Zentner and Anthony Capaiuolo of First Tracks Productions. The video is available online at Facebook, Vimeo and YouTube.

“Art & Science in an Age of Unreason” began as a simple time-lapse of a large oil painting of Marie Curie by Zentner and ended as a call to action. The subject of the short film, two-time Nobel Prize winning scientist and educator Curie, was chosen to celebrate science, education and the achievements of women.

“The trend toward anti-intellectualism, anti-science, a lack of respect for women and the growing hostility toward refugees and immigrants fleeing the horrors of war fuel my work,” says Zentner.

The Tahoe Activist Artists is a community of multidisciplinary artists who formed in response to the current social and political climate in the U.S. to work toward a more compassionate world. This film is the first major output of the group.

“Art & Science in an Age of Unreason” will be featured at the Tahoe Activist Artists show “We the People: Tahoe Artists

Visualize a World of Conversation and Connection” on Sept. 9, 2-8pm at Tahoe Mountain Lab in South Lake Tahoe.

Massive tree removal project to resume on South Shore

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will resume work this week on the South Shore Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration project.

Mechanical whole tree removal will take place near Fallen Leaf Campground along Fallen Leaf Road off Highway 89. This involves cutting the entire tree and moving it to the landing area to remove the limbs and cut it into sections. The Forest Service recommends the public avoid this area due to the hazards posed by heavy equipment and falling trees. Hazards may be present even when operations have ceased for the day.

The South Shore Fuels Reduction project authorizes thinning of trees and brush on National Forest lands on the south end of the Lake Tahoe Basin to reduce the risk of severe wildfire and create healthier forests.

Work in this area will stop about July 1. Any unfinished work will resume after Labor Day.

In addition to temporary closures of recreational areas, other short-term impacts from fuels reduction projects include changes to the appearance of basin forests.

Educators grapple with youths' suicidal tendencies

By Kathryn Reed

"I hope you are ready, because I'm about to tell you the story of my life. More specifically, why my life ended. And if you are listening to these tapes, you're one of the reasons why."

And so begins the provocative Netflix series "13 Reasons Why." It is based on the book with the same name by Jay Asher (2007 Penguin Group).

It has been generating a ton of press, and has brought an otherwise taboo subject – suicide – out into the open.

Tuesday night was an opportunity for parents to speak with educators and agency reps about the TV show, suicide in general, bullying and what is going on locally. While the nearly two dozen people who gathered at South Tahoe Middle School were there to dispense info rather than gather it, for two hours people had an opportunity to learn and share. (Not a single school board member was part of this circle of concerned community members.)

Even the experts in the room differed on the merits and criticism of the television show. Consensus was for parents to watch it first, then decide if their child is up for the subject matter. It was acknowledged even if parents don't want their kids to watch "13 Reasons Why," access to it is readily available.



May 30 gathering at South Tahoe Middle School. Photo/LTN • **Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10-24. • Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college-age youth and ages 12-18. • More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, combined. • Each day in the United States, there are an average of more than 5,240 attempts by young people grades 7-12. • Four out of five teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs. Source: Jason Foundation • U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline –800.273.8255**

A suggestion was made to start with what is essentially episode 14, the behind the scenes look at what the directors went through, the experts they consulted, and the intent behind the show.

Watching the show with one's child will allow for discussion: it could be why consent to have sex is vital, it could be about what is being shared on social media, it could be about hiding behind an electronic transmission of meanness, it could be about their fears. The bully and the bullied need to be heard because both are hurting. Happy people aren't bullies, and those who are bullied can be traumatized to the point they see no way out but to end it all.

Suicide, rape, bullying – the series depicts them all in a raw manner. Topics are neither sensationalized nor glorified. It's life. And that's the hard part for many to comprehend; just how horrible being a teenager can be in this digital age.

In the 12 years Jim Tarwater has been superintendent of Lake Tahoe Unified School District he has seen the stress go up for kids.

"The bullying bothers me the most – the social – it's gotten out of hand," he said. "It's in the middle school."

Tarwater told *Lake Tahoe News* it's not unusual for 20 kids to attempt suicide every year. Middle school students are not immune from wanting to end their life. It's gotten so bad that the older kids in elementary schools are showing signs of depression and negative behavior more characteristic of older kids.

Kris Robison, a counselor at Douglas High School, had two students on Tuesday with suicidal issues. One was transported for care, the other not. Douglas County School District has a strict script to use to gauge the level of care a youth may need.

Safety is the No. 1 concern for educators and others when dealing with people who are contemplating suicide. They look at whether the person is likely to harm themselves, harm someone else or is in imminent danger.

But the schools can't do everything. A suspension for the bully could mean retaliation for the victim. It can be a nasty cycle.

Even though phones might not be allowed during the school day, they are weapons at other times. Pictures and words are shared – mean, hateful things. People film fights and send them to others. This is real – not something just reserved for a TV show.

Suicide, depression, mental illness – these are societal issues. Tarwater and others would like the community to be more engaged, and for students to have a passion for life. The social and emotional pieces need to be part of the curriculum. Starting next school year in California there must be a policy in place for grades 7-12 regarding suicidal issues.

It was noted that 20 percent of the population is living with a mental health condition, and 80 percent of that 20 is genetic. That is why knowing one's family tree could sound a warning alarm.

Mental health was not addressed in "13 Reasons Why," which was criticized at the Tahoe gathering.

THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, can be a trigger for a mental illness episode. A South Tahoe High School administrator said THC levels at the school are "off the charts."

"There is only so much we can do," Tarwater said. That's why parents, other family, friends and the community at large must be part of the solution.

Opinion: Borrowing scheme for CalPERS deserves scrutiny

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee



Dan Walters

Over the last few decades, the once-straightforward process of fashioning a state budget devolved into duplicitous gimmickry.

Governors and legislators would paper over gaps with off-the-books loans, creative bookkeeping and deliberate falsehoods.

When Jerry Brown resumed the governorship in 2011, he pledged to end fiscal hijinks and align the budget with reality, as harsh as it may be.

Read the whole story

SLT Whole Foods project faces appeal

A South Lake Tahoe resident is challenging the Planning Commission's May 11 decision to approve what is locally known as the Whole Foods project.

The City Council on June 6 will hear the appeal.

Donna Gilpin cites five reasons she disagrees with the decision; most having to do with the mitigated negative declaration. She believes more environmental review is needed before demolition and construction begin.

The project is formally known as the Bijou Creek Watershed Project. It involves tearing down the Knights Inn on Highway 50. Halferty, the developer, plans to build a Whole Foods 365. A lease is already secured. Halferty also has control of the corner at the highway and Ski Run Boulevard. Both parcels will have commercial development and be linked.

Also part of the plans is to improve the stream environment zone in the area and to put in filtration so less sediment reaches Lake Tahoe.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Get ready for busy travel season

By David Koenig, Associated Press

If you're planning a big vacation trip this summer, move over. You're going to have lots of company.

By air or car, traveler numbers are expected to rise over last year thanks to a decent economy and stable gasoline prices.

U.S. airlines expect to carry 234 million passengers from June 1 through Aug. 31, up from the summer record of 225 million a year ago, according to the trade group Airlines for America.

While fares are edging up overall, they are still relatively affordable by historical standards. And travelers can find deals, especially on routes flown by discount airlines such as Spirit.

[Read the whole story](#)

Late amendment could crush Uber in Nevada

By Seth A. Richardson, Reno Gazette-Journal

Ride-hailing companies say they are under assault again from Democrats in the Legislature after an amendment was added to a bill that the companies say would effectively end the services in Nevada.

Uber and Lyft, the largest ride-hailing companies in the state, already faced controversial legislation earlier in session they, including one bill that would have required a 15-minute wait time when a person requests a car.

Assemblyman Richard Carrillo, D-Las Vegas, proposed to amend SB 226 late Friday night. The amendment that the companies have called a “death blow” requires drivers to hold five times the amount of insurance coverage as a taxi cab driver.

Read the whole story