

Photography group focusing on inspiring each other

PhotoFocus is a group of South Shore photography enthusiasts. Beginners, advanced and professional photographers gather each month to show, share, and inspire each others photography.



Toasting
Emerald Bay.
Photo/Justin
Baer

A monthly theme motivates the group to go out and shoot. Theme images are shown at the following meeting, with attendees voting on their top picks. Image critique is offered during the presentation, but not required. The winner gets to pick the next month's theme.

Guest speakers are invited to share their knowledge of photography and related subjects including the latest image processing software, equipment, and techniques.

PhotoFocus' main objective is to be inspired to get out and have fun making photos. Field trips are organized during the year and workshops are offered by the more advanced members.

PhotoFocus is open to everyone who has an interest in photography. For time and meeting location, contact Theresa Souers at souers@homeintahoe.com or Jim Stamates at jim@stamates.com or (530) 577.4101.

Drug use – students learn consequences of their choices

By Kathryn Reed

Ten middle school students died at Lake Tahoe Community College on Tuesday as their classmates watched. Then they went to the funeral and staring back them in the coffin was a reflection of themselves.

Gritty. Gripping. Impactful.

That's what the Drug Store Project is all about. Now in its ninth year, the program is designed to teach sixth-graders about the consequences of doing drugs. One of them being death.



It's not real
here -- but
the
consequences
of drug use
and abuse
could result
in death.

Photos/Kathryn
Reed

While no one actually died March 27, the 10 groups do go through a series of vignettes that show what can happen if they become involved with drugs. Death is one of those consequences.

Lisa Huard, who was the safe schools coordinator for Lake Tahoe Unified School District when she began the program, started with seventh-graders. A few years ago it was switched to sixth-graders. With how young children are exposed to drugs, she envisions fifth-graders being part of Drug Store Project.

(Now Tahoe Youth & Family Services is the lead agency, with Huard still at the helm.)

Students in Douglas and Alpine counties also participate in the nearly all-day event.

The premise is a student, who is handpicked to do so, swipes a baggie of drugs from a table where narcotics officers are giving a lesson.

In one group it was Harmony, a sixth-grader at South Tahoe Middle School, who was cuffed and hauled off to juvi hall.

While “the hall” is clearly not the real deal, the probation officers working it are. They talk about the used underwear kids must put on. They’ve been washed. But they sure aren’t white anymore.

That isn’t just some woman in a black robe at the front of the room or some other woman acting like an attorney. That’s El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury and El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Lisa Serafini.

That’s one of the powerful things about Drug Store Project –

adults are doing their job, even if it's in scripted form. Those are real handcuffs, real guns, people with real authority to put someone behind bars as well as to counsel them.

Harmony is told to go to counseling at Tahoe Youth & Family Services.

But then she leaves, goes to a pharm party – where prescription drugs are handed out like candy. She doesn't leave on her own.

Paramedics wheel her out on a gurney. A California Highway Patrol officer arrests the 18-year-old who is hosting this party.

Harmony's group is now assembled in the dark college theater. She comes in on a gurney with an IV in her and breathing apparatus. CPR is not working.

The spotlight is on her.

She dies.

Not a sound comes from her classmates.

She is left there with a white sheet covering her body.

Her classmates leave to attend her funeral.

While a real minister gives the eulogy, when the students go to view Harmony's body what they see instead is themselves. A mirror is there instead of Harmony.

The point: do what Harmony did and they could wind up in a coffin.

True story

While this was make believe, the next venue wasn't.

Molly Cocking is standing behind a table full of medical devices. Those tools helped save her life.

The summer before her sophomore year at South Tahoe High School she drank to the point of having a blood alcohol content of 0.25. In the morning, when she woke up at Barton Memorial Hospital, her BAC was 0.16 – still twice the legal limit for an adult.

Now age 26 and an emergency room nurse at Carson Tahoe Hospital, Cocking retells her night of horror – at least what she remembers of it. Her parents were told she might not make it through the night.

She credits friends with saving her life – for not letting her sleep it off, for calling for help.

Cocking was told if they had not done that, it's likely she would have died.

She didn't preach about not ingesting drugs or alcohol, but she did encourage them to not do what she did. What Cocking imparted was some of the most practical advice for the day – don't pick up a drink (even it was yours to start with) if there is any chance someone could have slipped something into it, and if you are going to drink or do drugs, be sure it's around people you trust so if something happens, there is someone there to help.

Cocking's story could be a standalone event.

All the pieces

Drug Store Project is a collaborative effort. While Huard is the organizer, more than 150 volunteers help. Harrah's donates about \$8,000 worth of food. Embassy Suites offers a night of lodging to the California National Guard.

The college donates the space.

Agencies donate personnel and equipment – like the Tahoe Douglas bomb squad, Calstar, law enforcement and others.

But the \$13,000 it costs in cash to put the event on seems each year to get more difficult to find. The school district stopped doing the program several years ago. TY&FS relies on a grant.

And it's not just this one day. TY&FS will be in classrooms Thursday to debrief the kids. This age group needs time to process things like this, thus the reason for waiting a day to go to their schools. About 350 students go through the program each year.

Surveys will be sent to parents. The hope is this triggers conversations in homes.

For more information, go online.

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Feast to benefit Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe

Not only does Tanya Rose Bordner position local yoga aficionados into 26 postures to help heal the mind, body and soul, she also has a knack for whipping up tasty whole-food dishes.

The (partially) raw-inspired meal she will March 30 at

Dragonfly Restaurant in Truckee is a fundraiser for the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe.

The event starts at 5:30pm.

The full prix-fixed menu is \$50, which includes appetizer, salad, entrée and dessert. All of the guest chef menu items will be offered a la carte and the full Dragonfly menu will also be available.

Reservations are strongly recommended by calling (530) 587.0557.

Dragonfly is located upstairs at 10118 Donner Pass Road, in the heart of downtown Truckee.

Lake Tahoe to receive measurable snow

Crocuses are blooming in the basin. Robins are confused. Spring is the season according to the calendar. And snow is about to pile up. It must be Lake Tahoe in March.

A winter weather advisory is in effect until 11am March 28. Wednesday's commute is expected to be difficult – slick roads, blowing snow and nasty roads.



The fountain
at Heavenly
Village should
be covered in
snow soon.

Photo/LTN

Click the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* to know what the road conditions are like.

The National Weather Service is calling for 8-16 inches of snow above 7,000 feet and 4-8 inches at lake level.

The wind will continue to howl through much of Wednesday, which could bring waves as high as 4 feet.

Thursday and Friday are expected to be mostly sunny, with rain arriving Friday night and turning to snow on Saturday.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

South Tahoe basketball star to coach Alabama-Birmingham

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Jerod Haase, who led South Tahoe High to a state basketball championship in 1992, was named the head coach at Alabama-Birmingham on Monday night.

Haase, who was officially announced as UAB's coach Tuesday afternoon, has worked under Roy Williams for the past 13 seasons at North Carolina and Kansas.



Jerod Haase

"I want to thank (UAB President) Dr. (Carol) Garrison and (athletic director) Mr. (Brian) Mackin for this opportunity," Haase said in a release. "It's a tremendous leap of faith, and I will do everything in my power to prove that this is the right hire at the right time. I will work tirelessly to ensure that this decision on your behalf is a great one."

"I also want to thank Coach Williams. Without getting into too much detail, when I left his office yesterday I told him I have to leave and not talk because I can't do it (emotionally). He's been great to me."

Haase replaces Mike Davis, who was fired after six seasons. He agreed to a five-year contract worth \$475,000 annually plus incentives. The contract must still be approved by the Alabama

university system.

Read the whole story

Company abruptly stops marketing controversial crop fumigant

By Steve Chawkins and Diana Marcum, Los Angeles Times

A years-long environmental battle ended abruptly when the company producing a fumigant for strawberries and other crops yanked it from U.S. distribution, bringing relief to activists and raising concern among growers.

Methyl iodide, meant to replace an ozone-depleting fumigant being phased out by an international treaty, was believed to have little effect on air quality. But some scientists say it can cause cancer, brain damage and miscarriages among workers who handle it and can be a threat to ground water.

In California, which produces 90% of the nation's strawberries, environmental advocates reacted enthusiastically Wednesday to the announcement by Tokyo-based Arysta LifeScience Inc.

"This way is more powerful than a court victory. It's a concession. It's them walking," said Greg Loarie, lead attorney in a lawsuit attacking the process California used to approve the chemical in 2010.

"Today I'm really happy," said 19-year-old Gabriela Rincon, who joined marches against the chemical and told her parents,

both pickers in the Salinas area, about the risk. "It feels like someone finally listened to us about something really important."

An Arysta spokeswoman said the decision late Tuesday to abandon U.S. production and marketing of the company's trademarked Midas fumigant was financial. Arysta will continue to market the chemical outside the U.S.

In 2011, the first full year it was available as a replacement for methyl bromide, only one strawberry grower used it, on a small plot outside Santa Maria, according to the California Strawberry Commission.

Several pepper farmers in the Central Valley also reportedly applied the chemical. Its chilly reception among growers contrasted sharply with the urgency expressed by state officials in 2010, when then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger deemed its approval an "emergency."

For some growers, the legal risk of using a compound that had generated intense notoriety proved too great.

Read the whole story

Aspects of Reno incorporated into debut novel

By Forrest Hartman, Reno Gazette-Journal

When Ben Rogers received his first published novel last month, he couldn't help but sleep with a copy by his bed.



“Other than my kids and my family, it’s the thing I’m most proud of,” the 34-year-old writer said. “It’s just this little book, but so much of my heart and soul and tears went into it, and so much of what I believe is in the book.”

That book is “The Flamer,” a coming-of-age story centered on a Reno youth named Oby Brooks. But Oby isn’t your everyday kid. He likes fire and explosives – a lot. What’s more, his sexuality is in question through much of the novel, thus the double entendre of a title.

Renoites should take joy in the book’s expertly rendered local setting, and they can rest assured that it was crafted by a native. Rogers is a product of the region, where he still lives with his wife, Jill, and their two young daughters.

“The Flamer” is fiction, but Rogers said readers can find pieces of him on every page, and the Reno setting is part of that.

Read the whole story

TSA revises rules for older travelers

By Bart Jansen, USA Today

Airline passengers who are at least 75 years old will be able to keep their shoes and light jackets on at security checkpoints at four airports, the Transportation Security Administration recently said.

The changes are similar to those adopted in September for children up to 12 and will reduce – but not eliminate – pat-downs for the elderly. The test will begin at Chicago's O'Hare, Denver, Orlando and Portland, airports. If an alarm sounds, elderly passengers may be asked to remove their shoes. A full-body scan is an option for all passengers who can stand still for five seconds. Elderly passengers will be allowed a second chance if a full-body scanner spots anything suspicious.

The changes are part of TSA Administrator John Pistole's strategy for focusing more attention on potentially riskier passengers. The agency eased screening for children, for frequent fliers at specific airports who voluntarily give background information under the Pre-check program and for pilots in uniform at certain airports.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tahoe Pipe Club filming untreated water flowing into Lake Tahoe

The scientists at Tahoe Pipe Club have just completed the what they call most comprehensive field assessment of wet weather hydrologic connectivity of urban storm pipes in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

This film is the result of this effort.

“For the urban component of clarity loss, the most important issue is defining directly connected impervious areas,” the

Pipe Club says. "But unfortunately this concept has been ignored in the TMDL [total maximum daily load] and in the RPU [Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Regional Plan update]."

For more information, go online.

Study: Water supply will add to world's instability

By Renee Schoof, McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Floods and water shortages in the next 30 years will make it hard for many countries to keep up with growing demand for fresh water, particularly in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, the U.S. intelligence community reported Thursday.

Water problems in the next decade will add to instability in countries that are important to U.S. national security, the report said. Floods and shortages also will make it hard for some countries to grow enough food or produce enough energy, creating risk for global food markets and slowing economic growth.

"I think it's fair to say the intelligence community's findings are sobering," said Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who requested the report last year. "These threats are real and they do raise serious security concerns."

Clinton, speaking at an event to mark World Water Day, announced a new U.S. Water Partnership, made up of private companies, philanthropy and advocacy groups, academics and

government. The group will coordinate efforts to solve water problems and make U.S. expertise more accessible.

Read the whole story