2 Truckee residents plead not guilty to drug charges

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

TRUCKEE – Two Truckee men charged with cocaine sales entered not guilty pleas Feb. 14 during arraignment at Nevada County Superior Court in Truckee.

Salvador Ruvalcaba-Munoz, 36, and Conrado Rodriguez-Quintero, 45, remain in custody at the Wayne Brown Correctional Facility in Nevada City in lieu of $35,000 bail, pending a Feb. 21 felony conference in Truckee.

The two men were arrested at a downtown Truckee residence Feb. 7 by Truckee detectives following a four-month investigation.

During a warrant search, police found a half-pound of cocaine, packaged for distribution, and $10,000 in cash in the residence, where it was accessible to children, according to a press release.

Nevada County Deputy District Attorney William Cornell charged Ruvalcaba-Munoz with three felony counts – one for transportation and sales of cocaine and two for conspiracy to commit crimes.

Cornell charged Rodriguez-Quintero with two felony counts – one each for possession of cocaine for sale and conspiracy to commit a crime.

U.S. women dominate World Cup downhill

By USSA

SOCHI, Russia – U.S. women rewrote the record books Saturday as Lindsey Vonn of Vail finished third, Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley sixth, Stacey Cook of Mammoth Mountain ninth and Alice McKennis of Glenwood Springs, Colo., 10th to place four American women in the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup downhill top 10 for the first time in history.

The record setting team performance, which included all Americans finishing in the top 30, happened at Rosa Khutor Resort – alpine host of the 2014 Olympic Winter Games. The last time U.S. women place four in a World Cup top 10 was March 17, 1985, during a giant slalom in Waterville Valley, N.H.

“Any one of the girls on our team could have won this race. Our speed group is incredibly strong and we have been the past few years,” Vonn said. “It says a lot about how hard we work and how much we love ski racing.”

Mancuso said, “I like to dream big, ski fast and dream about all of those powder days at Squaw Valley that helped me to get to this place that I am now. Being a professtonal skier and being able to ski in the Olympics is a pretty big honor, so I’m hoping to be back here in 2014.”

Bahrke wins his first World Cup in freestyle aerials

By USSA

Scotty Bahrke of Squaw Valley won his first FIS Freestyle Aerials World Cup on Friday in Kreischberg, Austria.

This was Bahrke's first podium of the season and the second of his World Cup career.

Dylan Ferguson of Amesbury, Mass., finished third, earning his second podium of the season. Laura Peel of Australia was the women's winner.

Bahrke's winning jump was a back full double full full (quad twisting triple flip).

Bahrke is the first U.S. mens aerialist to win a World Cup since Ryan St. Onge in February 2009 in Moscow.

No U.S. women competed in Austria.

K's Kitchen: Not the run-of-the-mill tofu dish

By Kathryn Reed

All of a sudden I hear a ruckus in the kitchen. Then the sounds of cooking follow. Pretty soon an aroma I can't quite make out reaches the other side of the house. I go to

investigate.



Sue is busy stirring this and that. Clearly, I had no idea dinner was going to be anything other than the popcorn we shared at the movie theater. Well, we didn't really share it. I pretty much ate a whole large buttered popcorn by myself. No wonder Sue was hungry.

That's why it wasn't until the next day that I tried this concoction of hers. She got the recipe from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. It's a keeper.

We both agreed it could use more peanut sauce. The cucumber adds a wonderful crunchiness. And, yes, there is a difference between an English cucumber and the regular ones.

Sue said it was easy and quick to make. She also used some sesame oil.

While it says it serves 3 to 4, it only fed the two of us once. But we didn't have anything else with it.

Peanut Sauce-Braised Tofu (serves 3-4)

12 ounces extra-firm tofu

Black pepper, to taste

2 T olive oil

½ C jarred peanut sauce, plus more if desired

½ English cucumber, peeled and cut into sticks

2 green onions, trimmed and thinly sliced on the bias

Sesame seeds, for garnish

Cooked rice, for serving

Cut the block of tofu into 1/2 -inch slices. Cut again

diagonally to make triangles, and lay on paper towels to drain for 5-10 minutes. Season with black pepper.

Warm the olive oil in a large nonstick pan over medium-high heat until very hot, but not smoking. Add the tofu triangles in one layer, being careful not to crowd the pan. You may need to do this in two batches. Cook until one side is golden brown, about 3 minutes. Flip over and finish cooking, another 2-3 minutes. Drain briefly on paper towels.

Return all the tofu to the pan, and reduce heat to low. Stir in the peanut sauce until the tofu is evenly coated; cook a couple more minutes until the tofu has soaked up some of the sauce.

Transfer to a bowl, and top with the cucumbers, green onions and sprinkling of sesame seeds. Spoon over rice to serve, adding more peanut sauce if desired.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Harveys Outdoor Summer Concert Series is starting to take shape with Chicago-Doobie Brothers on July 13 at 7pm, Beach Boys on July 15 at 7pm, Maroon 5 on July 21 at 7pm, Brad Paisley with The Band Perry and Easton Corbin on July 28 at 6:30pm, and Sugarland on Aug. 18 at 7pm.

• Squaw Valley has launched a new website.

• A fire chief in El Dorado County has a 10-year, $1 million contract. This link will tell you more as well as what county

Auditor Joe Harn thinks about it.

• Fitness, nutrition and stress management are part of an eight-week class starting March 1 through Lake Tahoe Community College's community education. More info is on the flyer.

• Here is Caltrans' Sierra roadwork plans for this weekend and into next week.

TTUSD plans to cut at least 18 teaching positions

The Tahoe Truckee Unified School District board on Feb. 16 agreed to lay off up to 18.4 certificated positions at the end of this school year in order to decrease the $5 million budget deficit for 2012-13.

The district will use $3.2 million from the reserve fund to completely close the gap.

According to Steve Jennings, TTUSD superintendent, some of the positions being cut have nothing to do with the budget deficit, but are because of declining enrollment.

"No adjustments for declining enrollment were made last year, but in order to be fiscally prudent, we need to address this," Jennings said in a statement.

With state law mandating teachers be notified by March 15 of a potential reduction in force, the board had to take action even with the state budget being in a state of flux.

Negotiations between the Tahoe Truckee Education Association and the district have been taking place since last fall. Jennings explained that both sides plan to work collaboratively to come up with solutions that have the least impact on teachers and students.

TTUSD is in the process of making cuts in management and district operations that will total a minimum of $201,000. In addition, non-personnel areas to cut back have been identified, including $214,000 in cuts to utilities, athletics, and deferred maintenance, plus an increase in transportation fees, have been approved by the board. The target for cost savings in the non-personnel arena is $401,539.

However, because nearly 90 percent of the district's expenses are in employee payroll, lay offs are inevitable.

The next regular board meeting is March 7 at 5:30pm.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

In-N-Out rewarding young readers with burgers

The Douglas County Public Library is again joining with In-N-Out Burger for the Cover to Cover Club reading program from March 3 to April 14.

Children ages 4-12 are eligible to receive certificates for a

free In-N-Out hamburger or cheeseburger by reading books. The Zephyr Cove and Minden branches of the library are participating in the program.

Children must fill out a file card at the library to enroll in the program. Each reader will earn an Achievement Award redeemable for an In-N-Out®hamburger for every five books read at their reading level. Each participating child may earn up to three award certificates. Children too young to read may have a parent read to them.

The Douglas County Public Library is located at 1625 Library Lane in Minden and 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove.

For more information, call the library at (775) 782.9841.

Ex-STHS football player on a new track – without heroin

Publisher's note: ***This is the second of two stories about heroin use on the South Shore. Click here to read the first article.***

By Jessie Marchesseau

Josh does not look like your stereotypical Hollywood heroin addict. In fact, he sat two tables away from me at a local café for nearly 20 minutes while I waited for the subject of my interview to walk in, someone who *looked* like a heroin addict.

In black pants, black beanie and a white long-sleeved shirt, Josh looks like a typical Tahoe twenty-something-year-old snowboarder. He is clean shaven with a strong, muscular build,

something he attributes to working out six days a week and eating healthy.

By looking at him, you would never guess that eight months ago Josh (whose name has been changed) was in a very different place. He was 60 pounds heavier, homeless, living on the streets in Los Angeles and instead of working out, he was shooting up heroin.

“I’ve replayed the whole thing, how it started, how it just spiraled all the way down, and I ended up at the very bottom,” he said. “I can’t imagine any lower you could go than Skid Row in LA. I can’t imagine anyplace worse.”



“It’s like a horrible relationship, you know the person’s so bad for you, but you can’t get away from them because it’s all you know, and it’s all you want.” – Josh

Now 27, Josh’s downward spiral started 10 years ago, in high school. He was athletic, had lots of friends, snowboarded and played football for South Tahoe High School. When a doctor prescribed him pain killers for a football injury, he remembers liking it right from the start.

Though Josh did not get addicted to the pain killers, he did continue to dabble in other drugs. It was not until after high school that he tried heroin for the first time.A friend had done heroin before, and the pair drove all the way to the Bay Area to get some. Josh decided to just snort the drug at first, but after seeing the instant high his friend had from injecting it, he reached for the needle.

“It was all over from there,” Josh said. “I was 19, and until just seven months ago, it was constant.”

Back here in Tahoe, heroin was not readily available. But OxyContin, another opiate, was. Injecting the prescription painkiller became a multiple times per day habit for nearly five years.

At first, Josh was able to hold together a fairly normal life. He had a girlfriend, a car, a job, even enrolled in the culinary program at Lake Tahoe Community College. He managed to hide his habit from family and friends.

But as the spiral continued downward, those things ceased to matter. He started blowing off work, sold his car for two eight balls of heroin (an eight ball is one-eighth of an ounce), and gave up trying to hide it. The only thing that mattered was getting high and getting enough money to get high. He sold everything he could and began stealing from friends and family: money, ATM cards, anything he could pawn.

At the same time, OxyContin was becoming harder to find and more and more expensive, up to $80 for a pill that would last about six hours. Heroin, on the other hand, was becoming easier to find and was only $5 to $10 for a bag that could last just as long. Making the switch was easy. After all, this had all started with that first hit of heroin. But Josh’s addiction was also escalating. One point, or a tenth of a gram, is considered a single dose of heroin for most people. Josh was doing six at a time.

His first run-in with the law was in 2008. Josh was pulled over with methadone in his possession, something he kept around for emergencies when he could not find heroin fast enough. He went to jail. Over the next three years he would go to jail six or seven more times. Even though he would detox while he was there, as soon as he was released, Josh would start using again.

“In my head it seemed like if I didn’t have it, I didn’t know who I was,” he said. “It’s like a horrible relationship, you know the person’s so bad for you, but you can’t get away from them because it’s all you know, and it’s all you want.”

With the price of heroin going up, and Josh unable to hold a job, he and his new girlfriend decided to move to LA where the drugs were cheap. Once there, they blew all their money on heroin and ended up on Skid Row, sleeping on a cardboard box, all their worldly belongings in a shopping cart. He was arrested twice, held up at gunpoint and their shopping cart stolen. Josh had hit rock bottom.

“I just woke up and was like, ‘Who am I? What the hell has happened?’” he said.

For the first time in his life, he did not want to do heroin anymore. Josh had already been through court-mandated rehab numerous times, counseling, Narcotics Anonymous, methadone programs. Nothing had worked because he had never *wanted* to quit. This time was different. June 12, 2011, he called his mom and caught a bus back to Tahoe.

With a warrant out for his arrest, it was not long before the police caught up with him. He had never been so happy to be arrested. Josh spent the next three months in El Dorado County jail sobering up. It was finally over.

Clean since the day he went to jail, Josh said he has had no urge to start using again. His girlfriend also returned from LA and joined him on his journey to recovery. They motivate

and support each other, neither one looking back.

At 27, Josh said heroin has taken nearly a decade from him. He is starting over, building a new life from the ground up. He is taking care of his body for a change, he and his girlfriend want to get married, and he hopes to finally finish culinary school.

While Josh got a second chance, not everyone is so lucky. Two of his friends made the El Dorado County coroner's list of heroin-related deaths last year, and several others are in jail.

Josh said he feels like he has a good head on his shoulders today, and he never would have met the love of his life if he had not gone through this. Even so, if he could do it all over again, he wouldn't.

"If I could go back in time and not stick that needle in my arm, I would have never, ever done it, knowing what I know now."

Truckee resident competing in World SUP Championships

Truckee's Jay Wild is serving double duty for Team USA, racing in the technical and distance divisions at the ISA World SUP Championships.

This is Surfing America's first time to participate in the

PacSun USA Stand Up/Prone Paddle Team competition. The event in Miraflores, Peru, runs Feb. 19-25.

Wild is considered one of the best racers in the nation and is highly regarded and feared by fellow competitors for his speed, endurance and technical skills that he honed in the tricky waters of Lake Tahoe.

GOP candidates talk about feds releasing control of Western lands

By Rocky Barker and Dan Popkey, Idaho Statesman

GOP presidential candidate Rick Santorum's call to sell or transfer federally owned public lands Tuesday night in Boise earned him several rounds of applause.

But Idaho Gov. Butch Otter found in 2005 that while Idahoans don't like how federal lands are managed, they don't want to lose access to the places they hunt, fish and camp.

President Herbert Hoover and former Interior Secretary James Watt learned similar lessons in their times.

But Santorum's detailed proposal on an issue close to the heart of Westerners may help set him apart from Republican Mitt Romney in the March 6 Republican caucus, which is expected to attract the most devoted party members.

"We need to get it back into the hands of the states and even

to the private sector," Santorum told an overflow crowd at Boise's Capital High School. "And we can make money doing it."

Santorum said national parks like Yellowstone and Grand Canyon should remain under federal management. But based on the poor management he has seen in the federal lands in his home state of Pennsylvania, he said he believes Westerners could do better.

"We do not need this huge amount of federal land under federal purview and I would be happy to work with your senators and congressmen out here in the West to put a plan together that's going to have a much more responsible management of land in the West than we've had in the last many years, OK?"

Santorum isn't the only Republican in the race urging the federal government to transfer public land.

Rep. Ron Paul has called for eliminating the Department of Interior, which manages more than 500 million acres of public land and a big chunk of Idaho, almost two-thirds of which is owned by the federal government.

Read the whole story