

California Assembly curtailing media's access

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

The California Assembly has begun enforcing a dusty rule in which the media can watch lawmakers debate public policy on one condition: Turn off the video cameras and microphones.

Sergeants-at-arms, in a broad push by Assembly leaders to enhance decorum, recently began confronting credentialed members of the media and others who were recording or videotaping official business during public session.

The issue pits the right of the media to document actions of public officials affecting public policy against lawmakers' concerns that a private conversation or an unseemly gesture could be captured and transmitted instantly via the Internet.

Read the whole story

Suspected drunken driver takes out school fence

By Kathryn Reed

A driver lost control of her vehicle on Pioneer Trail, taking out a log fence and metal cyclone fence at Sierra House Elementary School.

"We intend to have some temp fencing up this morning and permanent repairs complete within a few days," Steve Morales,

Lake Tahoe Unified School District facilities director, said.

Taylor Atkinson, 18, of South Lake Tahoe was driving a black Honda Civic on Sept. 5 at about 2:20am when she hit the fence, according to officers.

“During the collision investigation, Atkinson displayed signs of alcohol intoxication and was subsequently arrested for driving under the influence,” California Highway Patrol Officer Jeff Gartner said.

She was booked into El Dorado County Jail.

STHS prank results in suspensions

South Tahoe High School students involved in a senior prank the first week of school have been suspended for three days, will have to pay to clean up the mess and are not allowed to park on campus.

No permanent damage was done with writing “class of 2011” in water soluble chalk at the front of the school.

The district is not releasing the names of the students involved or saying how many were suspended. No one was arrested.

“We met with students regularly last year and provided them a structure to work with staff when planning and implementing any ‘school spirited’ events,” Principal Ivone Larson said. “Unfortunately, students did not follow this process. Staff members met with some of the students involved the Friday prior and advised the students of consequences.”

Women in Kenya talk

Hellen Barclay, a South Shore resident and Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra member, will be speaking about conditions of women in Kenya from a personal perspective.

The meeting is Sept. 9 7:30am at Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Breakfast and coffee is served.

Contact (530) 409.2791 for more information.

Chamber exec rents room without license or paying TOT

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce Executive Director B Gorman and her husband have been renting the lower portion of their South Lake Tahoe home without a business license and without paying transient occupancy tax.

When reached Sept. 7, Gorman said it was “pretty much friends and friends of friends” who stayed at their house.



B Gorman

But then why advertise the fully equipped downstairs apartment on a website? The reviews on the Airbnb website read more like people who don't know the Gormans.

Gorman wasn't on the phone long enough to ask her why she doesn't have a business license or why she doesn't pay TOT.

"I'm not going to have this conversation with you," Gorman said. "We are not going to dabble in it (meaning the rental) and that's all I'm going to say."

The reason this is an issue is that as head of the chamber she advises people how to operate a business. One thing she tells people is to get a business license. The chamber sells people a packet of information about how to open a business on the South Shore. Gorman meets one-on-one to advise people how to open a business.

Gorman is violating the law according to Chapter 28A of the South Lake Tahoe City Code Vacation Home Rentals ordinance which says, "No owner of a vacation home rental shall rent that unit for 30 consecutive calendar days or less without a valid vacation home rental permit for that unit issued pursuant to this chapter."

Part of the ordinance also says owners are required to have, "Evidence of a valid transient occupancy tax registration certificate issued by the city for the vacation home rental."

Christi Bozes in the Finance Department said the Gormans don't have a business license or a vacation rental permit and there

is no record of them ever paying TOT.

In the terse and short conversation Gorman had with this reporter she said they no longer plan to rent out the house. The listing on Airbnb was up the morning of Sept. 7 and down that afternoon.

According to Airbnb's website, it "is an online marketplace allowing anyone from private residents to commercial properties to rent out their extra space."

Patrick Atherton, president of the chamber board, knew nothing of Gorman's second source of income until *Lake Tahoe News* called.

"I had no idea. I will research a little more and go from there. I am completely unaware," Atherton said.

Here are some reviews on Airbnb about the Gormans' fully equipped lower residence:

From Dec. 26, 2009, "This was our first time using airbnb, and these hosts set the bar high."

From July 6, 2010, "suite accommodations at hotel prices. added bonus: great location with water/mountain views. already planning a return trip. note: this was our first experience with airbnb; it definitely won't be our last."

From July 15, 2010, "We can only say that all the wonderful things previous reviewers have written about B and Jim's place and their hospitality is just scratching the surface."

From Sept. 4, 2010, "We have a very nice stay with Jim and B. The place is beautiful. Jim and B were very friendly and helpful. We highly recommend them."

'The American' worth seeing, but slow compared to Bond flicks



The American

Rated R

3 bagels out of 5

By Howie Nave

In probably one of his most detached roles ever, George Clooney plays an assassin for hire in director Anton Corbijn's "The American." It's ironic, too, because this movie is billed as a dramatic thriller, but most Americans will probably find this movie too slow. By slow I mean no car chases, explosions, mass killings or handheld cameras that make you almost want to throw up until the person behind the camera runs out of steam.

Don't get me wrong, the opening sequence jumps right into the story, shaking up your senses and revealing that Sweden doesn't like Clooney's character Jack (and also going by the name of Edward). But rather a game of cat 'n mouse it's more of who can you trust around any cobblestone corner?

Speaking of trust, Jack doesn't like using too many things high tech where one can be traced. He prefers the low tech style of communication using a land-based phone in a phone booth for communicating with his superior. He holes up in a small Italian village for his next assignment. Jack is multi-talented too because he's also adept at making firearms from spare parts found in the garage (there's another story going on here, too).



George
Clooney
is no
James
Bond in
"The
American."
"

His contact is the stunning Mathilde (Thekla Reuten), but you're wondering if she too might be trying to eliminate him. Why is it that just when you decide that it's time to get out of a specialized occupation people want you killed off?

Adapted by Rowan Joffe's screenplay (from the novel "A Very Private Gentleman: by Martin Booth) "The American" has Clooney in virtually every scene and proves that his star power is still marketable and can carry a movie. What worked in the movie was Clooney's character coming to terms that he could never have friends or more important an intimate relationship as long as he was on the radar.

His one friend – if you can call him that – is with the local Italian priest, Father Benedetto (Paolo Bonacelli). At first I

thought this was an odd association for someone who does nothing but commit sins, but then it made sense for having him as a friend be it either for unloading his sins (doubtful) or needing someone to be there for a final confession if you laid there dying from a gunshot wound.

Dutch director Corbijn has given us an anti-hero and framed it in a movie that is stylistic with a dark mood in its lead character. Those expecting to see a James Bond type of action movie with a nice, complete ending tying up loose ends will be greatly disappointed. And, yes, there is a love interest in the way of Clara (Violante Placido) who actually is the perfect love interest for him being the local hooker. They're compatible not just because it's in the script, but because when you think about it they both have their assignments and when finished are paid handsomely being experts in their chosen field.

"The American" is rated R for action and adventure, mystery and suspense, drama with a running time of 1 hour 45 minutes.

Howie Nave is host/emcee/manager of The Improv at Harveys. You can hear him Monday-Friday 6 to 10am on KRLT FM-93.9.

Opinion: Stop state's looting of local tax dollars

By Chris McKenzie

By voting "yes" on Proposition 22 on Nov. 2, voters can stop state politicians from raiding local taxpayer funds that should be used at the local level for vital local services like emergency 911 response, police departments, fire

departments, libraries, parks, and transportation improvements.

For years, Sacramento politicians have used loopholes in the law to take billions in taxpayer funds dedicated by voters to local government and transportation services.

These billions in state raids and losses of revenue due to the declining economy have forced deep cuts in local services people depend on every day.

For example, Redwood City cut a dozen police positions, took a fire engine company out of service, cut park maintenance, cut street maintenance and announced that approval of building permits and processing would take longer from now on. In 2009-10 the city was forced to “loan” the state \$2.9 million of property taxes, which cost the state of California steep interest payments to Wall Street bankers and reduced funding for other services. This “loan” comes on top of \$5.4 million each year in property tax shifts from the city by the state.

Read the whole story

Chris McKenzie is the executive director of the League of California Cities. For more information visit www.savelocalservices.com, join our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter @yesonprop22.

Harrahs-Harveys to host wine-food fest

The Lake Tahoe Food and Wine Festival arrives at Harrah's and Harveys Lake Tahoe Sept. 30 and lasts through Oct. 3.

Events include lots of food and wine, plus discussions, presentations and demonstrations by celebrated food and wine experts including: Gary Vaynerchuk, author and host of the video blog Wine Library TV; Elizabeth Falkner, master chef and owner of Citizen Cake patisserie and Orson restaurant in San Francisco; Anthony Bourdain, chef, raconteur, author of bestsellers including No Reservations and Medium Raw, and host of the popular travel and food series, Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations; and Chef Martin Yan, celebrated host of more than 3,000 cooking shows including the Yan Can Cook and author of over 30 cookbooks.

Of course, food and wine are the biggest stars and a spectacular "Epicurean Expo," featuring dishes from Harrah's best restaurants across the country and the finest wines of Napa Valley and beyond, highlights the weekend.

The Lake Tahoe Food and Wine Festival kicks into high gear on Friday night with an "Asian Delights Dinner" at Gi Fu Loh restaurant at Harrah's. Gi Fu Loh's Master Chef Hung Wong and Master Chef Martin Yan will join forces to present an authentic, Cantonese-style five course dinner, presenting Asian specialties in an intimate setting.

At 7:30, the festival moves to the legendary South Shore Room at Harrah's where Chef Elizabeth Falkner brings her high-energy presentation to the stage, featuring the unstoppable creativity that have made her one of the most recognizable faces of the Bay Area culinary scene.

Next door at 19 Kitchen, Gary Vaynerchuk hosts a Wine Pairing Dinner. Vaynerchuk matches-up some of his favorite vintages with an exquisite, multi-course meal prepared by the Harrah's culinary team.

On Oct. 2, events get under way with "Beyond the Fork Epicurean Expo: An Affair for the Senses" at Harrah's Special Events Center. Stroll through the Epicurean Expo and enjoy the

multifarious tastes of Harrah's best restaurants from around the country, plus local favorites and samplings from the best wineries in Napa Valley and beyond. There's plenty of entertainment and exhibitions, too, featuring Chef Martin Yan's popular Yan Can Cook demonstration, among others. Chef Falkner will be there and the Expo marks the official West Coast launch of the "Harrah's Seven Stars Cookbook." A full afternoon of culinary delights.

Also on Saturday afternoon is a special Wine Tasting with Gary Vaynerchuk at Friday's Station Steak & Seafood Grill, located on the 18th floor of Harrah's.

On Saturday night, Harrah's South Shore Room will host a special evening with Anthony Bourdain. A hugely insightful and entertaining author, chef, restaurateur, storyteller and TV star, Bourdain is best known for his many books and, especially, his hit show on the Travel Channel, Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations. His latest book, Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook, is a major success and currently on the New York Times Bestseller list.

On Oct. 3, a Farewell Brunch at Harveys 19 Kitchen will feature a variety of dishes from the "Harrah's Seven Stars Cookbook," prepared by Harrah's chefs. Editor of the new Harrah's cookbook, John Schlimm, will help host the event and autograph copies of the book. Schlimm is also author of the hugely popular Ultimate Beer Lover's Cookbook.

Additional events during the "Lake Tahoe Food and Wine Festival" include a special Saturday night Lafite Rothschild Winemaker's Dinner at 19 Kitchen and a unique, one-day Tahoe Tech Talk Conference, featuring Gary Vaynerchuk and a panel of the top innovators in the world of the internet and social media.

For more information and to register for this special

conference, go to: <http://tahoetechtalkconf.com>.

Regional property values continue downward skid

Jim Wasserman, Sacramento Bee

Sacramento-area property values collectively tumbled another \$10 billion from 2009 to 2010 – about 12 percent of losses suffered statewide by property owners, according to new statistics from state tax authorities.

But some believe the hard-hit capital region has seen the worst of its declines.

A report from the California Board of Equalization pegs land and building values assessed for tax purposes at about \$260 billion in Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. That's the amount subject to taxes for government services provided in the fiscal year that began July 1, 2010.

Read the whole story

Jitloff putting on tennis

shoes to raise money for cancer research

By U.S. Ski Team

Alpine Olympian Tim Jitloff of Reno is back in the start this fall with his second Susan G. Komen Northern Nevada Race for the Cure on Oct. 3, an annual running race centered on raising money to find a cure for breast cancer.

Jitloff's mother, Pam, was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2007 and is now two years in remission following successful radiation treatments. His mother's experience had a profound effect on Jitloff and propelled him to a new level of awareness – a level he's driven to help grow.

"I want to have an impact in my community and help spread awareness. Being a World Cup ski racer, my community is pretty global," said Jitloff, a six-year veteran of the U.S. Ski Team and a member of the 2010 U.S. Olympic Team

"Susan G. Komen Northern Nevada is excited to be working with Tim again, especially after his tremendous success last year as the number one fundraiser for the Northern Nevada Race for the Cure," said Lucy McGuire, president of Susan G. Komen Northern Nevada. "We are thrilled that a local, as well as an international athlete, is putting together a team to help save lives and work towards a world without breast cancer."

Last fall, Jitloff raised just less than \$10,000 through sponsorships of his 5K run. This year, he's set the bar at \$10,000 again, but hopes to surpass it. Reno's Grand Sierra Resort and Casino has already matched its 2009 pledge with another \$5,000 and additional sponsors have brought Jitloff's current total to \$7,330 with a month left to race day.

"It was an instant 'absolutely' from Grand Sierra and I've had

amazing support from other returning sponsors,” added Jitloff. “I’ve also had a number of new folks who have come on board and are excited to be a part of this, but there’s still more we all can do.”

In order to take the message globally, Jitloff plans to complete one run of the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup opening giant slalom in Soelden, Austria, with a specially painted Uvex helmet in support of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The helmet will later go to auction to benefit Komen.

“I started off last year with a very basic plan to help; now I am being a bit more creative by adding some new twists to how I can have an impact. Soelden is a huge race with thousands of spectators in the stands and hundreds of thousands more watching on television across the world. It should be a cool way to kick off the season,” said Jitloff.

Join Jitloff’s team for the 12th annual Susan G. Komen Northern Nevada Race for the Cure. Worldwide, breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in women.