

Gang shooting at Jackson Rancheria Casino

By Scott Thomas Anderson and Bill Lavallie, Ledger Dispatch

The impact of gangs operating in Amador County took a sudden and shocking turn at 5am (Sunday) morning, when a confrontation at the Jackson Rancheria Casino led to one teenager getting shot in the neck and another getting shot in the face.

The Amador County Sheriff's Office learned of the gun play almost immediately after it happened. Deputies rushed to the scene and discovered two young, Hispanic men bleeding amidst the shot machines and lights. Each had been hit with pistol fire at close range.

Read the whole story

Personal trainer to speak to Soroptimist

Cindy Gaffney, a personal trainer, will speak about exercise and nutrition to Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra on March 18 at 7:30am.

Coffee and breakfast will be served at the meeting at the Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd., near the Visitors Center in South Lake Tahoe.

Everyone welcome.

Call (530) 409.2791 or visit
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=wall&gid=131249110835>.

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 15



Spring has arrived a little early to Lake Tahoe. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Play provokes frank discussion of hate in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Laramie, Wyoming, and South Lake Tahoe, California, have more in common than the latter would probably like to admit.

The populations are about the same. Both are small Western towns. Both have snowcapped mountains to look at this time of year. One relied on the railroad and now mostly ranching, the other had logging and now tourism as the economic heartbeat.



Panelists
discuss "The
Laramie
Project" and
hate in South
Lake Tahoe on
Sunday.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Hate crimes is the sinister link.

Laramie, for what two men did in Matthew Shepard in 1998. They beat him to death because he was gay.

South Lake Tahoe, for what a local couple did to two tourists in 2007. Last week they were convicted of the brutal beating of the Indian-American man at El Dorado Beach.

Hatred is alive in Lake Tahoe. Ethan Niven has been a victim for years. It started when he was a freshman at South Tahoe High School. At 20, the homosexual taunts have continued in town.

He and six others were part of a panel discussion Sunday after the matinee performance of "The Laramie Project" at Lake Tahoe Community College.

(The play is based on how the town of Laramie dealt with Shepard's killing.)

Joining Niven were Robert Autre and Alisa Bindel, both of the South Lake Tahoe Police Department; Lisa Utzig-Schafer of

South Lake Tahoe Women's Center; businessman and City Councilman Jerry Birdwell; FBI agent Chris Campion; and Matt Huckabay with the Center for Violence Free Relationships in Placerville.

"I was scared to try out for this play," Niven, who is a student at LTCC, told the audience. He and the nine other actors each play a variety of roles.

Campion pointed to 2004 when Nazi graffiti littered Temple Bat Yam.

"We don't want to think it happens in our community and it does," Campion said of hate crimes.

Birdwell spoke of how when he was appointed as a judge in Texas that he and his partner had security living with them because they were openly gay. Death threats were multiple. Property was destroyed. Their home and work picketed.

"In 1969, when I started practicing law the hate in Dallas, Texas, was tremendous. We made progress just by working," Birdwell said. "People were afraid of losing their jobs and they still are. When we moved here we didn't see the hatred."

Much of the afternoon's discussion, with input from those in attendance, centered on the need for education inside and outside of the classroom.

"Think about the power of community. The bottom line is it really isn't about being right, but the values we share as a community," Huckabay said. "We can all agree it is not OK for kids to be unsafe at school."

Utzig-Schafer spoke of the curriculum she takes into the schools, with this being the first school year an 11-week segment on violence is being taught to freshmen.

Niven didn't have anything good to say about how his

situation was handled at the high school “ by staff, administration or law enforcement.

Alex Boyar, a friend of Niven’s who was in the audience, spoke to the need for educating youth as prevention so laws like the federal Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Hate Crime Act that was passed in October don’t have to be used by prosecutors.

Apparently the education needs to start at the college. Unbeknownst to director Susan Boulanger until after Saturday night’s performance was a group of LTCC students taunting the actors.

Utzig-Shafer said that as enthusiastic as students are with what she has to teach, it has to continue at home.

“You need to talk to your kids. There are a lot of things going on at the high school,” she said.

Huckabay said, “Education is key, but we have to educate ourselves. If you really care, then you have to get involved otherwise the status quo continues.”

A white South Tahoe High School sophomore attending the play said he believes Hispanic students get more help with harassment.

To this, Autre said, “Our officers try to be racially sensitive.”

Jen Gurecki, an attendee, asked what was going to be done about the planned protest on March 19 by the Kansas Westboro Baptist Church followers.

The college has hired a police officer to be on duty. Peaceful protests are in the works starting at 7pm March 19. Campion said he doubts they’ll show, but said the First Amendment protects their right to protest the play. Huckabay called it an opportunity.

“The best thing is to fill this theater,” Huckabay said. “The thing you can do is be proactive. Have fun with them. It’s not new to use religion as a tactic to keep people down and oppressed. Show them the hypocrisy.”

A candlelight vigil is planned for March 20 following the performance.

The Laramie Project will be at the Duke Theatre at LTCC in South Lake Tahoe on March 18, 19, 20 at 7:30pm and March 21 at 2pm.

St. Paddy’s Day DUI checkpoint in South Lake

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department will be conducting a DUI-driver’s license checkpoint on St. Patrick’s Day from 9pm to 1am along Lake Tahoe Boulevard.

In an effort to reduce the number of people killed and injured in alcohol involved crashes, DUI checkpoints are conducted to identify offenders and get them off the street, as well as educate the public on the dangers of impaired driving.

Traffic volume and weather permitting, all vehicles may be checked on March 17 and drivers who are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs will be arrested.

Funding for this operation is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

TRPA looking at restructuring boat inspection program

Expanding the boat inspection program and changing the fee structure will be discussed March 24 by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board.

Lake Tahoe boat inspections may include an annual clean boating certification. Known as Blue Boating, it is designed to augment the current inspection program aimed at preventing the introduction of aquatic invasive species.

Even as engines become cleaner with newer technologies, TRPA is taking proactive steps to reduce the potential environmental impacts of boats on Lake Tahoe including engine emissions, dirty bilges, excessive noise and shoreline erosion.

Since 2007, mandatory watercraft inspections have been in place at all Lake Tahoe launch sites to prevent the introduction of potentially devastating mussel species. Last year, fees were introduced to pay for the inspection service and approximately 14,000 boats were inspected.

The proposed updated fee structure is designed to cover the costs of watercraft inspections for invasive species as well as other elements such as noise controls and proper bilge and sewage containment. A key change proposed from last year's fee structure is conversion to an annual fee versus a per-inspection fee. The new fee would be scaled according to boat size, engine horsepower, and whether a boat is local or expected to travel to other lakes. Fees could range from \$20 to \$125 for an annual Blue Boating certification sticker and a full year of aquatic invasive species prevention services.

The inspection and certification process will include boater education and compliance with:

- â€¢ Aquatic invasive species program

- â€¢ Noise and no-wake-zone standards

- â€¢ Clean bilge practices

- â€¢ Wastewater management

- â€¢ Engine tuning and propeller pitch

- â€¢ Payment of mitigation fee

Those wishing to join the discussion or offer input on clean boating can send comments via mail or email or can attend a public meeting. The TRPA Governing Board meeting will be March 24 in Incline Village. Location and agenda information are available on the Meetings and Notices page.

For additional information, email jcowen@trpa.org.

Taste El Dorado County wines in SF

Taste medal-winning wines from 24 El Dorado wineries March 20 in San Francisco.

In addition to the 100 or so wines available for sampling, there will be live jazz and appetizers including Moroccan braised short ribs, prosciutto-wrapped squab and Hamachi crudo, prepared by local chef Jordan Grosser.

Participating El Dorado Wineries: Auriga, Boeger, Busby,

Cedarville, Chateau Rodin, Colibri Ridge, Crystal Basin, David Girard, Fenton Herriott, Fitzpatrick, Gold Hill, Granite Springs, Holly's Hill, Latcham, Lava Cap, Madroña, Miraflores, Mount Aukum, Narrow Gate, Perry Creek, Sierra Oaks, Sierra Vista, Single Leaf, and Windwalker.

What: El Dorado County Winemakers Tasting

When: March 20

Where: Postrio Restaurant in the Prescott Hotel, 545 Post St., San Francisco

Time: 2-5pm Public Tasting

noon-2pm Trade Tasting (invitation only)

Tickets: \$38 per person for the Public Tasting, available [here](#).

Lodging discount: The Prescott Hotel is offering a special rate for our guests. Use code REY.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



Kirkwood Mountain Resort ski patrollers took home five of ski trophies in a recent competition.

Truckee and Washoe County youth sports groups received more than 1,000 first aid kits from Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority and CareFlight.

NV Energy has donated \$95,000 worth of service vehicle to various fire departments. Lake Valley on the South Shore of

Tahoe will be the recipient of one.

Roger VanAlyne was hired as Minden's town manager.

Tani Pettit of North Tahoe High School in Tahoe City is one of 30 finalists in Safeway's The Art of Dairy Taste of Moo-sic Art Contest.

The FBI is involved in a string of regional bank robberies from South Lake Tahoe to Kings Beach to Grass Valley. The suspect wears a fedora and fake beard.

Life-threatening injuries in Spooner Summit collision

By Kathryn Reed

Two people were fighting for their lives at Renown Medical Center in Reno on Sunday night after the vehicle they were in was broadsided by a full-size pickup at the intersection of highways 50 and 28.

The Sunday afternoon accident briefly closed Highway 50 at the top of Spooner Summit.

The names and hometowns of the people involved in the accident are not being released by the Nevada Highway Patrol.

The green Subaru Wagon was making a left onto Highway 50 from Highway 28 about 3pm. It was struck on the driver's side by a blue Ford pickup.

The two occupants of the Subaru were airlifted to Reno.

"I would say they are life-threatening," Sgt. Tom Lawson

said of their injuries.

The driver of the pickup was taken to Carson Tahoe Hospital with minor injuries.

The cause of the accident is under investigation. The roads were dry at the time. As is normal, drivers will be tested for alcohol and drugs.

Although itâ€™s not the NHPâ€™s job to rule a vehicle totaled, Lawson said, â€œI donâ€™t think either insurance will want to fix them.â€

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 14



Put on the sunscreen if you are headed for the slopes. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.