Byrne autopsy results released

“Probable hypothermia due to prolonged environmental exposure” is the official cause of death for Alyssa Byrne.

The 19-year-old Petaluma woman died New Year’s weekend in South Lake Tahoe after having attended the SnowGlobe Music Festival near Lake Tahoe Community College.



South Tahoe residents gathered Jan. 17 at Lakeview Commons to remember Alyssa Byrne. Photo/LTN file

The autopsy results were released Feb. 18 by the El Dorado County Sheriff’s Department.

Methamphetamines and other drugs were found in her system, according to the toxicology report.

“We had learned from associates and friends she was using drugs. It’s sad, but we think it did contribute to her death,” sheriff’s Lt. Pete Van Arnum told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The hypothermia is probably what killed her first.”

Byrne’s body was found on the east side of Pioneer trail near Al Tahoe Boulevard after she had gone missing for three days. She had discarded her jacket nearby. This is a classic sign of

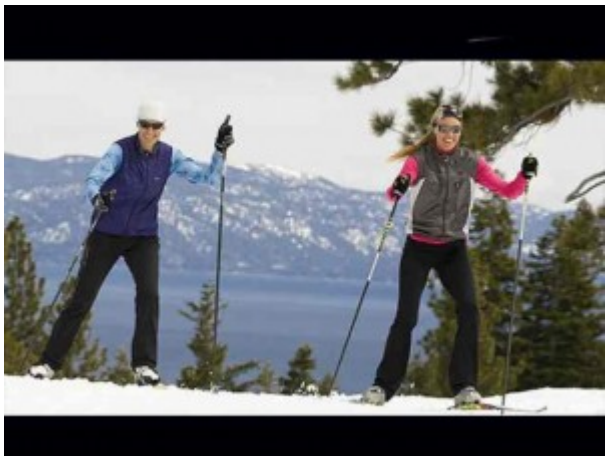
someone with hypothermia; shedding clothing despite freezing temperatures.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Fundraiser blends skiing, eating

Glide, stride, or snowshoe through a gourmet on-snow wonderland at the 12th annual Gourmet Ski Tour on March 10.

A fundraiser for the Tahoe Cross Country Ski Education Association, the epicurean event is at the Tahoe Cross Country Center in Tahoe City from 12:30-2:30pm.



Work up a hearty appetite and experience quilt free noshing before, during, or after touring some of the cross country center's 65 kilometers of forested trails.

Outdoors enthusiasts and foodies will advance from one food station to the next all the while socializing with other participants. Don your most inventive hat creation for this

year’s event theme, “The Mad Hatter’s Ski Party”, for a chance to win a season pass to the Tahoe XC Center for most original hat.

Beginners may rent skis or snowshoes at the Tahoe Cross Country Center and move around at their leisure sampling tastes. The afternoon ends up with margaritas and live music by The Jelly Bread Band from 2:30-5pm.

Food and beverages will be provided by Sugar Pine Cakery, Uncorked, Tahoe House, Coffee Connexion, Christy Hill, Wolfdale’s, Sunnyside, Lanza’s, Mamasake, Jake’s on the Lake, Brockway Bakery, Bridgetender, Ron Allen Personal Chef, Men Wielding Fire, and Uncommon Kitchen. Tickets are $35 (includes a free half day trail pass), $30 for season pass holders, and $25 for volunteers. A limited number of tickets are available – (530) 583.5475.

Balmy Tahoe weather to be replaced with winter

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter weather advisory for the Lake Tahoe Basin for Tuesday from 4am-10pm.



A skier at Northstar plays in the terrain park Feb. 17. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Expect the snow to start falling tonight. The storm could bring between 4 and 10 inches at lake level, and between 7 and 14 inches above 7,000 feet.

Winds will be out of the southwest at 15 to 25 mph, with gusts up to 40 mph. Ridge gusts could reach 90 mph.

There is a chance the white stuff will keep falling through Friday. And the temps will be falling too.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Ski report: Executive order – go ski

Enjoy Presidents' Day on the slopes.

Here is the Feb. 18 ski report.

— Curtis Fong

Brush with Kindness looking to assist homeowners

A Brush with Kindness, the South Lake Tahoe branch of Habitat for Humanity, is looking for homeowners who need some help.



The group of volunteers paints exteriors, does minor exterior repair, and basic landscaping or yard clean up for qualified homeowners.

For more information or to find out if you qualify, call Carolyn at (530) 541.4654 or Bonnie at (530) 577.7762.

Tahoe City area campground to be modernized

By Kathryn Reed

When the William Kent Campground near Tahoe City was created in 1924 there wasn't much else around. Now it's a bit like urban camping, as is the case with most developed campsites in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

But not many upgrades have been made in the last 89 years either. It's still a bit rustic when it comes to amenities even though residences surround it. The road and camping spur design was implemented in 1963, flush toilets came in 1969, and a bathroom at the day use beach was built in 2004.



Proposed changes for William Kent Campground. Rendering/USFS

A range of changes is in store for the campground as well as the Meeks Bay Fire Station that is manned by the Forest Service.

The USFS has allocated $1 million to improve the campground and day-use beach area. (This is the only public camping facility on the West Shore.)

Work on the 22-acre site that is about one mile south of

Sunnyside and adjacent to Meeks Bay Resort could start in May 2014. The forest supervisor signed off on the environmental assessment on Feb. 8, which started a 45-day appeal period.

“The Forest Service recognizes that trends in recreation interests are changing. One of the changes we have observed is that many campground visitors are interested in experiences other than traditional tent camping. One such experience that has become popular is camping in a yurt,” Ashley Sommer with the U.S. Forest Service told *Lake Tahoe News*.

These tent-like cabins have a permanent platform. A wood or metal frame is erected on a seasonal basis.

“Yurts vary in their amenities, but generally have a heated sleeping area and eating area at a minimum,” Sommer said. “We have seen success with the yurts at Fallen Leaf Campground on the South Shore. The proposed yurts would be purchased and owned by the concessionaire that operates the campground.”

This project is just outside the scoping area of the much talked about realignment of Highway 89 to deal with the seismically challenged Fanny Bridge as well as the visioning area for Tahoe City.

Moving the fire station is designed to reduce response time by firefighters because most of that station’s calls are north of Meeks Bay.

“The Meeks Bay fire station is currently the only fire station responsible for wildland fire response and wildland-urban-interface (WUI) fire response on the West and North shores of Lake Tahoe,” Sommer said. “The Meeks Bay Fire Station is also no longer adequate for the size and mission of the fire engine module. The Meeks Bay site is too small, which does not allow enough space for a new building that meets current standards, as well as adequate parking for station employees. Furthermore, the site does not have a year-round water source, which would limit the use of a new facility during the winter

months.”

The new building will be about 3,500-square-feet and look much like the facility on Spooner Summit.

For more information about the project, contact Ashley Sommer at (530) 543.2615 or go online.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Lena came to the shelter when her owner no longer wanted her. It’s difficult to believe that no one would want this beautiful, friendly cat.



And look at those bright blue eyes.

She has lived with other cats, dogs, and children, and she loves to be petted and to sit on laps. Lena was severely matted when she arrived at the shelter and had to be clipped to make her comfortable, but her coat will grow out beautiful and long.

Lena is spayed, microchipped, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go online to see photos and description of all pets at the shelter.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

Letter: S. Tahoe couple deserving of recognition

To the community,

On Feb. 19, two terrific people will celebrate 59 years of marriage and the 80th birthday of wife Joan Young.



Dick and Joan Young on STAR patrol. Photo/LTN

Dick and Joan are long-time residents who have contributed extensively to our community. Both are on the board of the Historical Society and have filled offices over the last 12 years. Joan has researched and written articles on local events and chaired the quarterly meetings of the society. Dick served three years as president and both have worked tirelessly on museum projects.

Also, Dick and Joan are active in the Barton Auxiliary with many hours of work at the Attic and both have driven in the STAR service and both are active leaders in the California-Nevada Trails Association.

All of their volunteer work has been done with a smile on the face!

Congratulations are definitely in order!

Lynne Bajuk and friends

Owl causes lights to go out in parts of S. Tahoe

Wildlife darkened parts of South Lake Tahoe on Saturday night.



"A good size owl got into the line and blew some fuses," Randy Kelly with Liberty Utilities told *Lake Tahoe News*.

When crews arrived about 9pm Feb. 17 people were standing around the animal on Cedar Street.

Residences and hotels near the state line had their power out for less than an hour.

While critters have caused power outages before, usually it’s blue jays or squirrels.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Driving on the East Shore

Another beautiful day in Lake Tahoe. This is a short view of driving on Highway 28 on the East Shore on Feb. 17.