

Then and now: Bombing transformed Harveys



The bomb blast at Harveys in 1980. Photo/FBI

Thirty-five years ago this week – Aug. 27, 1980 – an extortionist's bomb exploded inside Harvey's Resort Hotel at Stateline.



This view from the California side of

the state line is a frame from the FBI documentary just seconds before the 1980 explosion.

The FBI ultimately arrested John Birges of Clovis as the mastermind. Birges tried to extort \$3 million but plans went awry and a robot detonated the bomb during an attempt to disable it. The entire area had been evacuated. No one was injured. The explosion hollowed-out a five story cavern inside the hotel, from the basement up to the fifth floor.

Two years later, the rebuilt hotel had a grand opening. One of the invited attendees is said to have been John Birges. Later, by the time of his arrest, Birges had completed building another bomb, supposedly intended for the Transamerica building in San Francisco. Birges died in a Nevada prison on Aug. 28, 1996, exactly 16 years and one day after the Harveys bomb exploded.

Click on this link to view a fascinating six-minute documentary by an FBI special agent.



The rebuilt hotel-casino looks completely different. It is the largest hotel at Lake Tahoe. Photo/Bill Kingman

– Bill Kingman

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Lavish Green and Black Star Safari will perform at the final Live at Lakeview concert in South Lake Tahoe on Aug. 27 starting at 4:30pm.

- The El Dorado County senior nutrition program's home-delivered meal service is looking for volunteers to help deliver meals from 10:30am-12:30pm one day each week. For more information, call 530.621.6160.

- Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra roadwork schedules from Caltrans for the coming week.

- The 13th annual Tour de Tahoe – Bike Big Blue cycling event is Sept. 13.

- El Dorado Winery Association donated nearly \$3,000 to the Food Bank of El Dorado County from a portion of the tickets sales generated by the annual Passport event.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The Sept. 6 fireworks show on the South Shore starts at 8:30pm.

• Russ Nygaard has been hired by Tahoe Transportation District as transportation capital program manager to oversee the planning, design and execution of the agency's capital projects.

• Heavenly Resort Mountain Run is a 5.8-mile trek that begins at California Base Lodge on Sept. 6, climbs to the top of the ski resort, and finishes at the Tamarack Lodge at 9,150-feet. Runners may take the Heavenly gondola back to the base or descend on their own. Sign up **online**.

• The Village at Squaw Valley hosts the sixth annual Peaks and Paws event, benefiting the Human Society of Truckee-Tahoe on Aug. 22. The day of dog-friendly activities begins at 7:30am with a 10K for owners and canines, followed by more festivities from 11am-7pm.

• Construction begins on Glenshire Drive near Highland Avenue in Truckee on Aug. 26. The majority of work will occur during the daytime on weekdays with alternating one-way traffic and flaggers. Two-way traffic will be in place on school days during the morning and afternoon peak school bus periods. On Aug. 29 Glenshire Drive will be closed from 7am-10pm from just east of Olympic Boulevard to east of Highland Avenue.

Foundation has grant money for SLT nonprofits

The El Dorado Community Foundation has \$74,000 to give to nonprofits that offer services and/or programs for residents of South Lake Tahoe.

Seventy percent of the total is open to the entire community, while 30 percent will toward classroom curriculum support. Proposals of up to \$5,000 will be considered.

The grant process will open Sept. 15, with a deadline of 5pm Oct. 15. Further details and application forms will be available online beginning Sept. 15.

Cocktail event to benefit Barton trauma center

Barton Health's Signature Cocktail Contest is Sept. 23 at Riva Grill in South Lake Tahoe.

This year all event proceeds will expand medical services and community programs for Barton Memorial Hospital's Level III trauma center.

The event starts at 5:30pm and ends at 8pm. Admission, which includes heavy appetizers, music, and cocktail samples, is \$35 in advance and \$40 at the door. Attendees must be 21 or older.

Purchase tickets by calling 530.543.5909.

Women's health subject of talk in SLT

Kenneth Spielvogel from Barton Women's Health will be giving a talk Sept. 2 about identifying gynecologic malignancies.

He will discuss the latest screening tools and technology to identify cancer. The doctor will also tell people about lifestyle choices to reduce the risk of cancer.

The free talk is from 6-7pm at Lake Tahoe Community College's board room.

Wi-Fi coming to Genoa

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners, acting as the Douglas County Redevelopment Agency, approved \$20,000 to fund the Genoa Main Street Wi-Fi Project.

Much like the system recently installed in Virginia City, the project will add a full-scale Wi-Fi network in Genoa's downtown corridor, allowing people to access the Internet, find out more about local attractions and recreational opportunities, retrieve e-mail or surf the Web. Currently, obtaining a sufficient wireless signal in many areas of Genoa is challenging.

Very small devices will be installed on the town's street

lights and several buildings throughout downtown to create the mesh network. The new system will allow event vendors the opportunity to complete sales transactions via Squares or other data-enabled devices.

Talk: Faulting and geologic history of the region

UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center will host Courtney Brailo from the UNR Nevada Seismological Lab on Sept. 17.

The discussion will be about faulting and geologic history of the region, and using newly acquired LiDAR imagery.

A \$5 donation is suggested. Doors open at 5:30pm with a no-host bar, and the program is at 6pm. TERC is on the campus of Sierra Nevada College, 291 Country Club Drive in Incline Village.

Evening of Mystery benefits

SLT Library

Beer, bargains, books and more are all part of South Lake Tahoe Library's fundraiser on Aug. 23.

The Friends of the Library will be hosting A Toast to Die For: An Evening of Mystery. It is at the library from 4-7pm.

There will be hearty appetizers, beer, wine, a silent auction, music and games. In addition, there will be readings and book sales by local mystery book authors.

Tickets are \$45 and available at the South Lake Tahoe Library, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd. For more info, call 530.573.3185.

CHP offers free car seat inspections

The California Highway Patrol office in Meyers will be hosting a child passenger safety seat clinic on Aug. 19 from 8am-noon.

There will be a second clinic on Aug. 29 from 2-6pm.

Trained professionals will inspect the seats for free. There will also be free car seats for those who qualify.

The office is at 2063 Hopi Ave.