

# What happens when officers wear body cameras

By Christopher Mims, Wall Street Journal

Sometimes, like the moments leading up to when a police officer decides to shoot someone, transparency is an unalloyed good. And especially lately, technology has progressed to a point that it makes this kind of transparency not just possible, but routine.

So it is in Rialto, where the entire Southern California police force is wearing so-called body-mounted cameras, no bigger than pagers, that record everything that transpires between officers and citizens. In the first year after the cameras' introduction, the use of force by officers declined 60 percent, and citizen complaints against police fell 88 percent.

It isn't known how many police departments are making regular use of cameras, though it is being considered as a way of perhaps altering the course of events in places such as Ferguson, Mo., where an officer shot and killed an unarmed black teenager.

What happens when police wear cameras isn't simply that tamper-proof recording devices provide an objective record of an encounter—though some of the reduction in complaints is apparently because of citizens declining to contest video evidence of their behavior—but a modification of the psychology of everyone involved.

The effect of third-party observers on behavior has long been known: Thomas Jefferson once advised that “whenever you do a thing, act as if all the world were watching.” Psychologists have confirmed this intuition, showing that something as primitive as a poster with a pair of glaring eyes can make

test subjects behave better, and even reduce theft in an area.

One problem with the cameras, however, has been cost. Fortunately, fierce competition between the two most prominent vendors of the devices, Viewu LLC and Taser International Inc., which makes the cameras used by Rialto police, has driven the price of individual cameras down to between \$300 and \$400. Unfortunately, one place where expenses can mount is in the storage and management of the data they generate.

**Read the whole stor**

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# Hunger crisis hitting U.S. college students

**By Ned Resnikoff, MSNBC**

Hungry students don't enter the on-campus food pantry at New York's LaGuardia Community College; instead they sit in an office in the college's financial services center while a staff member or volunteer runs upstairs to get their food, bringing them unmarked grocery bags to take home.

Little more than an unlabeled office, containing a series of unmarked file cabinets, the pantry goes undetected to most – and that's the point.

Michael Baston, the college's vice president of Student Affairs, says the whole process is designed to be invisible.

"We did this because we feel like it is a stigma reducing strategy," he said. "Because we want students to feel like whatever the resource they need to sustain themselves, that would be available to them."

Battling stigma is a challenge for food pantries of all stripes, but the struggle appears to be especially pronounced on college campuses. After all, universities are supposed to be islands of relative privilege. If you can afford to spend thousands of dollars a year on a college education, the thinking goes, you can't possibly be hungry enough to require emergency food assistance.

Rhondalisa Roberts, a LaGuardia sophomore and food pantry client, has witnessed that stigma firsthand. She says that when she suggested that a hungry classmate of hers visit the pantry, the classmate told her, "Oh, I'm not going to go there. I'm not poor."

"It's very, very alarming," Roberts told MSNBC. "Most students have a negative stigma when it comes to receiving help for food. Everybody doesn't want to receive food or seem needy, even when they are in dire need of resources."

It's difficult to track just how many college students are in dire need, but new data from the country's largest emergency food service network suggests that the number is at least in the millions. Feeding America's 2014 Hunger in America report estimates that roughly 10 percent of its 46.5 million adult clients are currently students, including about 2 million people who are attending school full time. Nearly one-third of those surveyed – 30.5 percent – report that they've had to choose between paying for food and covering educational expenses at some point in the last year.

Feeding America, a network of some 46,000 emergency food service agencies in the United States, releases its Hunger in America report once every four years. This latest iteration of the report, which is based on a survey of more than 60,000 Feeding America clients, is the first to include data about college students in need of emergency food services. The new research suggests that America's chronic hunger emergency has not spared institutes of higher learning.

Maybe that should come as no surprise, given that food insecurity – defined by the Department of Agriculture as lack of “access ... to enough food for an active, healthy life” – has been rising steadily for years. In part that’s due to the Clinton and Reagan administration’s significant revisions to the welfare state. Yet the situation didn’t become a true crisis until after the 2008 financial collapse, which caused food insecurity to rise by 24 percent in the space of a single year, according to USDA figures. In response, the federal government approved an emergency transfusion of funds into the food stamp program; but then it began to roll back those additional funds in November 2013, even though food insecurity had never returned to pre-2008 levels. The result was an unprecedented state of permanent emergency for emergency food assistance programs across the country.

**Read the whole story**

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## **Drought drains recreation revenues at Tahoe**



Normally this area at Cove East in South Lake Tahoe is under water. The beach is toward the upper left corner.  
Photos/Kathryn Reed

**By Susan Wood**

With a mere 3 inches of snowmelt adding to the level of Lake Tahoe this year, the dire trickle-down effect of the drought on recreational outlets like Lake Tahoe Balloons has not been overinflated.

By the time the anticipated lake level for Tahoe reaches its natural rim of 6,223 feet by mid-October, businesses and agencies tied to the fun and the sun may see more severe conditions than what is being witnessed now from shore-to-shore.

To many who follow the trends, there's nothing normal about the weather patterns. And this includes the lake's experiencing more abnormal monsoonal weather conditions that reduce evaporation and provide heavy downpours. The positive of the whacky weather is that it delayed the lake's hitting the natural rim.

"I used to be able to get right up there close to shore. Now I

have to be a quarter mile out. That makes it difficult," Harley Hoy of Lake Tahoe Balloons told *Lake Tahoe News*.

For many years, Hoy has run his company out of the Tahoe Keys Marina. But he may be forced to move if the lake level keeps sinking and the marina operators fail to live up to their pledge of dredging the boat channel. It's been a tricky situation for boats getting in and out of the popular South Shore marina, and it's only getting worse.

Hoy said he was told the dredging would occur this summer. Now he's heard October, and that may be too late for his business. He's sought another place to run the company.

"If the guy would have the common courtesy, he would see that one day there could be in an accident and someone will find him negligent," Hoy said of marina General Manager Robert Spinnato, who did not return *Lake Tahoe News'* phone calls. Hoy cited the removal of lights once placed outside the channel that have made conditions hazardous going into the Keys.



Paddlers have more area to maneuver because motorboats can't get close to shore without serious consequences.

### **Dangerous boating conditions**

Between the sand washing out and the rocks exposing themselves in Lake Tahoe, concerns have been rising for the U.S. Coast Guard. The federal agency, which has a station in Tahoe City,

was forced to send a crew out to help with an unprecedented call to rescue more than 200 passengers on board the Tahoe Queen paddle-wheeler because it was stuck on a sandbar off shore.

"It's been awhile since we've had any commercial incident like this," Coast Guard Officer in Charge Daniel Polhemus said.

The matter is under investigation.

"The lake continues to go down, and boaters may not realize how the low lake level is creating hazards. Boulders normally covered up by 5 feet of water are now exposed. It's a dangerous situation for (those at) marinas not familiar with the drought effects," Polhemus told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Sand Harbor, Kings Beach and Camp Richardson have joined the list of closed marinas with El Dorado Beach, which often closes to motor boat traffic. The upside is human-powered vessels such as paddleboards have easier access to the water.

Polhemus described Cave Rock, one of the more promising launching spots, as "extremely dangerous" without local knowledge of the terrain. The Tahoe Keys Marina is characterized "very, very shallow," while Ski Run Marina – home of the Queen – is considered iffy to negotiate around.

In the Coast Guard's home-base of Tahoe City, Polhemus has seen owners paddling their boats out as a safer alternative to dealing with bringing the motors down in shallow water.

The Coast Guard warns boaters about driving their trailers down too far on the ramps and urges boat captains to slow down considerably.

"We're asking people to be extra careful," Tahoe City Marina Manager Jim Phelan said, adding he's noticed some boaters have lost use of slips. Some sailboats have experienced more challenges than usual because they can't use rudders in

shallow water. Phelan expects more limitations as the lake nears its natural rim.

“Under normal conditions, we would have hit the rim in a few weeks,” federal water master Chad Blanchard told *Lake Tahoe News*.

But the downpours and cloud cover from the strange July and first part of August have been “extremely helpful” in slowing the process, he added.

It’s like the summer is struggling with occasional tropical storms to make up for three years of drought given last year’s lackluster winter and dismal snowmelt runoff. In 2012 during the period starting in April, Lake Tahoe rose 7.68 inches. The following year was worse with 5.76 inches. This year marks the fourth worst lake level runoff in 114 years with only 3.48 inches.

This trend has culminated into how more than 80 percent of California continues to suffer extreme drought conditions.

The consequences are far-reaching and dire to some who rely on the health of the environment. Moreover, the concerns have not been limited to those doing business at the lake.

Victor Babbitt of Tahoe Fly Fishing applauds the recent storms that have cooled things off in the waterways based on how fish behave.

“Every time we have a thunder shower, it helps in a huge way,” he said.

Babbitt has been worried about the fish going into shock when the water is too shallow and warm. Catch-and-release fishing in times of elevated temperatures may increase stress and hinder survival of fish populations. Avoiding 70-degree water holes is the key.

“The fish try to move to different parts of the river,” he

said.

But they could run out of places to go – especially in the Truckee River that feeds from Lake Tahoe.



Rafting companies normally fill this expanse of the Truckee River by the River Ranch.

### **Commercial rafting ran out of water**

As of July 24, the Truckee River rafting companies that usually do a banner business in August stopped operating because of the water level. Water officials have been forced to accommodate the lake instead.

Although concessions were made in early spring to give Aaron Rudnick with Truckee River Raft Co. a head start on renting boats, it didn't help much because the tourists weren't in the region then like they are now.

The low water level has made conditions dangerous with many rocks exposed like the ones in the rapid called "the pit" near the River Ranch.

The rafting company usually makes up to 40 percent of its revenue in August.

"This is huge. Every weekday in August is like a weekend day,

and every weekend day is like the Fourth of July,” Rudnick lamented to *Lake Tahoe News*. “You miss out on all that.”

Rob Curtis, the general manager at the River Ranch, found it necessary to be creative with making up for at least 60 percent of lost revenue from rafters frequenting the inn located at the end of the rafting companies’ river run. The usual 1,000 lunches served on the deck on most weekend days have been cut in half, prompting the small, boutique hotel to implement the “no rafting event series.” One example is a crawdad festival designed to draw the masses.

When the rafting companies cease operating, the effects span other areas of responsibility.

The two companies located at the heart of Tahoe City clean up the trash in the river – but this requires they run their rafts. Placer County had to step in to establish a partnership with the Tahoe City Public Utility District and the U.S. Forest Service to do the cleanup, especially considering individual raft runners on bottomless inner tubes may have the tendency to dump more in the river, Rudnick pointed out.

“We needed to deal with this because it could be a problem,” Placer County Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery said.

Montgomery added that local government has taken extra steps in conserving water including the turning off of water features and fountains. She estimated Placer County has saved about 15 percent of its water consumption in doing so.

### **Finding alternatives**

From government to industry, most entities dealing with recreation are watching their water use.

Lake Tahoe Golf Course has cut its water use in half, manager Joe Lockwood indicated. Its usual everyday, 11-minute sprinkler rotation is now down to 5 minutes every other day.

“Thankfully, our water comes from a well. And we hand water so that controls the amount of water better,” Lockwood said.

The same goes for Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, as it was forced to buy water from its so-named Stateline-area water company.

South Lake Tahoe’s Bijou Golf Course is making sure it doesn’t over water.

The city also sweeps its pool patio at the recreation center, so no water is used to clean up debris, Recreation Manager Lauren Thomaselli pointed out.

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## Burned bear cub making progress at LTWC

By Associated Press

A black-bear cub burned in a devastating Washington state wildfire is making a slow recovery at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

The cub, named Cinder, still has third-degree burns on her paws that require new bandages every other day, and she’s still on pain medications and antibiotics, the *Wenatchee World* reported

But Denise Upton, a caretaker at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care, says the cub has a good appetite and has been enjoying fresh fruit and trout brought in by local fishermen.

“She’s a good patient,” Upton said. “She’s eating everything

we put in there.”

Methow resident Steve Love discovered the 37-pound bear under a horse trailer in his yard in north-central Washington’s Methow Valley, where the largest fire in recorded state history burned about 400 square miles and destroyed 300 homes. The fire had swept past his house two weeks earlier, and the bear was so badly burned on her paws she was walking on her elbows.

A Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officer captured her, and a volunteer pilot flew Cinder to California on Aug. 4.

Upton said it’s too soon to know whether Cinder can be returned to the wild. The bear lost some of her claws, which could make it difficult.

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care successfully rehabilitated one other bear cub after a wildfire in 2009 and released him back to the wild, she said. They know from his radio tracker that he survived at least a year, until the batteries in the tracking device died.

Upton said Cinder doesn’t like people.

“And that’s a good thing,” she said. “I think she’s going to be a perfect candidate, once she heals.”

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# Drones a threat to firefighters

By Keith Ridler, AP

BOISE, Idaho – Drones flying over wildfires could lead to firefighter injuries and force retardant bombers to be called off, wildfire managers say.

At least three drones have flown within or near restricted airspace intended for wildfire fighting aircraft so far this year, the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise announced Friday. That's up from one incident last year.

"We're seeing an increase in people wanting to film from a distance with hobby aircraft," said spokesman Mike Ferris, noting wildfires are often buzzing with low-flying planes and helicopters. "If you had one of these would you fly it near an airport?"

In June, a drone was spotted at the Two Bulls Fire near Bend in central Oregon. Drones have also been spotted at a fire in Washington state that destroyed hundreds of homes, and another that went aloft at a Northern California wildfire.

"Anytime that that happens, folks working these fires are going to feel compromised and they're not going to want to fly until they're sure the airspace is safe to fly in," said Aitor Bidaburu, chair of the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group at the center. "We have enough hazards on the ground."

Managers said tankers trying to make drops to protect firefighters or homes might have to turn away if a drone is in the area.

The Federal Aviation Administration allows hobbyists to use model aircraft or small drones as long as they keep them away from airports, fly them under 400 feet and keep the aircraft within sight of the remote-controlling operator at all times.

However, wildfires typically have temporary flight restrictions that extend up and out from the fire so helicopters and retardant aircraft can do drops without worrying about other aircraft. The restrictions include small

drones.

“If they’re going to be flying these things, they need to educate themselves,” Ferris said.

Those seeking to fly drones near wildfires might be able to do so legally, but they would first need permission from wildfire managers. The center said individuals using drones that interfere with firefighting efforts could face civil penalties and criminal prosecution.

Center spokesman Randy Eardley said some state agencies fly drones over fires to find hotspots, but the operators are communicating with wildfire managers.

“The problem with these hobbyists and recreationists is we have no communication with them,” he said.

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# Mountaintop dinner complements scenery



Wining and

dining at  
Homewood.  
Photos/Kathryn  
Reed

## **By Kathryn Reed**

HOMEWOOD – Lakeview dining at Tahoe just got elevated – to about 7,000 feet. And the food will have you rethinking your opinion about ski resort fare.

This is no ordinary mountaintop dinner. It's five courses with a different wine with each dish. And it's an opportunity to mingle with the people responsible for creating the edibles and liquid refreshments.

Homewood Mountain Resort for the second summer is hosting the Farm to Peak Dinner Series. Chefs and vintners create food and pour wine at the top of the Quail chairlift. Seated at long tables with crisp white linens, guests have a sprawling view of Lake Tahoe for their eyes to feast upon.

Skiers know this resort as being the one place in the Lake Tahoe Basin where it feels like you are about to land in the water as you schuss down the mountain. Dining atop the mountain was not adrenaline pumping, but the setting for this meal far outshines anyplace I've eaten in Tahoe.

"We are taking baby steps to make it a year-round resort," Paul Raymore, spokesman for Homewood, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The mountaintop is one of our prime assets. Unless you ski or ride, you don't have a chance to ride the chairlift."

Homewood hopes to bring the West Shore resort into the 21st century by modernizing lodges, adding lodging and creating a year-round destination. Legal issues are delaying that, but Raymore said owners hope construction could begin in 2016.

For now, though, the resort is hosting a few Farm to Peak

Dinners each summer.



Axel Schug tells guests about his wines.

Guests on Aug. 9 arrived at the South Lodge where Axel Schug was pouring a 2013 Sauvignon Blanc. Schug and his wife, Kristine, own Schug Carneros Estate in Sonoma. They have a home in Tahoma, and he used to live in Incline Village when he worked in food and beverage at the Hyatt in the late 1980s.

They worked with guest chef Grog Verbeck of Hey Chef! in Truckee to ensure the wines would pair well with his concoctions. Kristine Schug handles the food at the winery. She contributed herbs from her garden to the meal.

Verbeck provides private chef services in Truckee, Tahoe and east to the Reno area.



## Burgundy Braised Brisket

The Schug winery has deep roots in the business. Walter Schug established it in 1980 after having been the founding winemaker for Joseph Phelps Vineyards in the 1970s. Schug grew up among the vineyards of Germany.

When he left Phelps he did so with the winery's permission to use his label for what was then their Pinot Noir. It is that delicate red varietal that is Schug's signature wine.

The 2012 Pinot was paired with the main course – Burgundy Braised Brisket with Chimichurri and Summer's Best Vegetable Succotash.

Sue said the meat was cooked perfectly, a little peppery, but not overbearing. Shawn simply said it was "delicious."

I had portabella mushrooms substituted for the brisket.

"My god, that's like a steak," Sue said of the mushroom. I had to agree. It was one of the best portabellas I have ever had. It was cooked perfectly; and the marinade – well – it was as good as the view.

Both entrees were braised in the Pinot we were drinking.



Wild Mushrooms and Smoked Fontina

Overall, though, Steve and I thought our entrees were a bit on the salty side. The onion ring on top in particular needed a chaser of water to be able to swallow.

But considering one of the challenges to cooking this meal is that part of it is done in the lodge below and part on the mountain, quality control can be hard to manage. Even Chef Robert Irvine of “Dinner Impossible” fame might find this dual cooking arrangement for more than 100 people a challenge.

Still, as the plates went back to the tent, there was nothing left on them.

We started our food venture at the lodge with a Wild Mushroom and Smoked Fontina Phyllo Purse. For someone who loves mushrooms, I could have filled up on these. The pastry was flaky, a perfect complement to the warm, smooth mushroom-cheese filling.



Four spreads

The appetizer made the fruitiness of the Sauvignon Blanc stand out even more. This combo was perfect on a late summer afternoon.

With wine glasses in hand, we then boarded the chairlift.

The second course came served totally Tahoe-style – on a round that in other locales would be used as a stepping stone. It was a creative presentation for the four spreads that were served with bread.

The farm cheese was the favorite of those seated around us. I also particularly liked the pickled onions. So often anything pickled can taste too vinegary – not so with these. The fig and tomato jam tasted just like a sweet jam, which was disappointing to Shawn and me. We were expecting something spicy, with more tomato flavor.



Salad of Heirloom Cucumbers

The Rouge de Noirs Brut was the least favorite of the wines for those seated by us. As much as winemakers keep professing how wonderful roses are, I'm not buying it.

The Salad of Heirloom Cucumbers, Toasted Almonds, Goat Cheese and Cress Oil was the favorite of the night for Debbie. "The cucumbers exploded," she said.

They tasted so fresh I would have been surprised if they had not been picked that day. "The salad tastes wild and fresh," I wrote that night.

On top of many of the plates was a spring of lavender – which some found a bit foreboding to taste. But no chef who is going to stay in business puts food on a plate that is not edible.



Chef Grog Verbeck

“The lavender flower counteracts the garlic. And there is a little bit of lavender in the dressing,” Chef Verbeck told his guests.

The 2012 Chardonnay was liked, but not everyone thought it went well with the salad. Debbie said no to the pairing, while Shawn thought they were a nice combo.



The Schug Pinot Noir was the star of the night.

“It’s oaky, but it’s still crisp,” Shawn said of the wine. Fifteen percent of the barrels the Chardonnay is processed in are new oak.

“We go easy on the oak,” Axel Schug said.

Wrapping up the dinner was a Hazelnut Dacquoise and Vanilla Bean Ice Cream Cake with Chocolate Ganache and Peach Compote that was paired with a 2012 Late Harvest Riesling.

Sue and Shawn said this was a perfect pairing. Just the peaches and ice cream would have been fine with me – and the wine.

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### **Notes:**

- Chef Jessica Stutz of Coastal Culinary personal chef service will be doing the cooking Aug. 30.
- For reservations, call 530.584.6849 or go online.
- Cost is \$150 per person.

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# Congressional support for Tahoe funding iffy

By Michael Doyle, McClatchy News Service

WASHINGTON — Capitol Hill and courthouse shadows will cloud the Lake Tahoe Summit that convenes Tuesday.

No doubt, the political A-listers gathering for the 18th annual summit have much to celebrate, starting with the spectacular views from the location near South Lake Tahoe. They also have their work cut out for them.

“We have our challenges, environmentally,” Amy Berry, CEO of the Tahoe Fund, said in an interview. “There’s a lot more to be done.”

Little time, for instance, remains for the current Congress to finish Lake Tahoe restoration bills introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Lake Tahoe Restoration Act would authorize \$415 million over 10 years for forest fuels management, watershed restoration, storm-water management and other projects. It would continue an earlier law passed in 2000 but that expired in 2010.

The House version introduced last October has not yet had a hearing.

Underscoring the political challenge, the House bill is not co-sponsored by Republican Rep. Tom McClintock, whose district spans California’s share of the 191-square-mile lake. In the Senate, where members of the minority party can easily erect roadblocks, four Republicans voted against the Senate’s version in committee in June.

Brian Baluta, spokesman for the House bill's author, Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Nev., said, "We hope to get a hearing by the end of this Congress."

**Read the whole story**

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# Republicans' 'Fire Harry Reid' campaign grows

By Amber Phillips, Las Vegas Sun

WASHINGTON — Sen. Harry Reid is not running for re-election, but Republicans are turning up the volume on a new campaign slogan to "Fire Harry Reid."

With momentum recently swinging to their side to take back the Senate in November, the Republican National Committee is sending out a memo to reporters and donors daring Democrats in tough re-election campaigns to distance themselves from the Senate leader. The committee launched the anti-Reid campaign in late July with robocalls and a social media push, #FireReid.

The strategy is to paint Reid, the Senate majority leader, as the boogeyman, especially for voters in Republican-leaning states with contested Senate races that could decide the future of the Senate, said Michael Short, an RNC spokesman.

"He's not a very popular figure, he's the face of Senate Democrats," Short said.

Kristen Orthman, a Reid spokeswoman, said Republicans are attacking Reid because he calls them out for not helping get legislation passed. Reid also said on the Senate floor in May

that Republicans' attacks against him are a sign nothing else is working.

**Read the whole story**

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# Bruno Mars shakes up Lake Tahoe

**By Kim Wyatt**

STATELINE – If there is a population explosion in Tahoe nine months from now, Bruno Mars is to blame. The charismatic showman and his fantastic band delivered a romance-drenched retro pop fest to devotees young and old Aug. 14 at Harveys Lake Tahoe Outdoor Arena.

In Mars' Tahoe debut, he put on the kind of joyous, sexy show that's sure to spark sales and grow new fans. The stripped-down stage, reminiscent of "Soul Train," ensured that the front man and his stellar musicians were front and center the entire evening, and their smooth choreographed dance moves conjured the Jackson Five at their infectious best.

The Moonshine Jungle Tour showcased songs from Mars' second album, the double-platinum "Unorthodox Jukebox," including the hits "Locked Out of Heaven" and "Treasure." With only two albums behind him, Mars has created already a bestselling body of work, with five No. 1 singles. It doesn't hurt that the songs are all great when performed live, perhaps even better.



Bruno Mars with his band the Hooligans deliver a sexy, high-energy show Aug. 14 at Harveys. Photos/Kim Wyatt

And Bruno delivered. Born and raised in Hawaii by a family of musicians, the singer-songwriter has amassed quite a following, with many in the full house singing along to every song. Mars' faithful fans swooned, arms in the air, as if they were at a revival. It's a good time for an earnest singer-songwriter who croons about love and heartbreak without irony – maybe every generation needs one.

Mars' 13-song set was funk, R&B, Motown and pop-infused. I heard the influences of James Brown, the Police, Earth, Wind & Fire and the Bee Gees. But rather than sound like something old, the songs sounded like something new. Mars' eight-man band, the Hooligans, matched him step-by-step. This hardworking group had a great time and it was contagious. The high-stepping lineup of horn players and funk guitarists made great music look easy, right down to their '70s stylings. A few of them even seemed to be wearing polyester slacks, or some kind of miracle fabric that emphasized their swiveling hips and musculature.

Speaking of fashion, this was a well-appointed, fedora-wearing

crowd. Seriously, there were a lot of fedoras, even on children. Maxi-dresses and makeup were more Miami than mountain girl, and I saw several clean-shaven young men sporting tiny pompadours getting their groove on. Mars, wearing a Panama hat and shiny penny loafers sans socks, offered a straight-up, genuine connection with the audience and his band, stopping several times to chat up the crowd, encouraging lovers to love one another, and to let the band take care of the rest.



Bruno Mars delivers like a veteran musician.

“Tahoe, it’s time to get your freak on,” Mars cajoled, and many gladly obliged.

Mars’ energy never flagged, not after executing flawless dance moves, wailing on an electric guitar, or performing emotional vocals. Is there anything Mars’ can’t do? If so, we weren’t aware of it at this show. The encore featured two of his most popular numbers, “Locked Out of Heaven” and “Gorilla,” my least favorite song in his oeuvre. While Mars’ music is known more for its sincerity and pop hooks than its depth, the lyrics of this song never fail to make me laugh or cringe, depending on the day. I think it’s supposed to be Prince-like, but ... no. It’s too bad because I like the tune. I’m probably not the intended demographic. I did see several young women in the audience clutching stuffed gorillas.

Norwegian duo Nico & Vinz – they called themselves “Afro-Vikings” – primed the crowd with good vibrations and infectious pop, the kind of music you want to listen to in the summer with an umbrella in your drink. They ended their set with their hit, “Am I Wrong,” to the delight of a sing-along audience. It’s a real treat when an unknown opening group turns out to be so charming and talented, and a great introduction to what turned out to be a masterful show.

It will be fun to see what Bruno Mars does next. In the meantime, having a little soul doesn’t hurt, and the world could use more love. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’m off to buy a polyester suit.

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## Hikers, bikers, swimmers keep SAR team busy

By Kathryn Reed

One fatality and multiple rescues have kept El Dorado County’s search and rescue team out in the field much of the last week.

As the search team was getting one victim onto a helicopter Aug. 12, they got a call of a person having drowned at Eagle Lake. Because they were in the vicinity it did not take them long to locate the man.

“He was swimming out to the island and got into some trouble,” Deputy Greg Almos, who is in charge of the department’s SAR team, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Michael Christensen, 27, of Elk Grove was later pronounced

dead at Barton Memorial Hospital.

The earlier incident involved another male tourist. The SAR team got the call at 11:15am Tuesday saying an unresponsive male was by Eagle Lake and not moving.

Almos said a trauma nurse at Renown Medical Center in Reno said when the victim regained consciousness he told the medical staff he had been caught in a flashflood on Monday that swept him down a drainage.

He had been lying there unresponsive for nearly 24 hours before someone found him. Almos said despite suffering traumatic injuries, the man – whose name has not been released – is expected to live.



El Dorado County search and rescue, CalFire and Lake Valley firefighters carry a cyclist off Corral Trail on Aug. 11. Photo/Provided

Afternoon thunderstorms contributed to a rescue on Aug. 11, too. A man not from Tahoe – whose name was not released – went down while cycling on Corral Loop in South Lake Tahoe.

The team had to carry him out on a litter in a downpour. He reportedly injured his pelvis.

The team almost was deployed to Pyramid Peak on Aug. 13 to search for a missing hiker when a follow up call came in saying the person had walked out safely.

A multiday rescue in Alpine County last weekend resulted in finding a West Sacramento man who had been lost in the wilderness for five days without food.

Mike Vilhauer, 58, went fishing by himself Aug. 8 at Lower Sunset Lake. He got disoriented when he left his campsite.

A California Highway Patrol helicopter spotted his vehicle last Friday, which gave rescue teams a good idea where to start searching. El Dorado's search teams from Tahoe and Placerville were called Saturday to assist.

Scott Gabler, a veteran and decorated member of EDSO's SAR team, located footprints mid-afternoon Aug. 10. Tracking began and then Washoe County's Raven helicopter eventually found Vilhauer.

"He had spent two days where he we found him. He had written poems to his wife," Almos said, adding, that Vilhauer's condition had deteriorated. Vilhauer has recovered from his ordeal.

Almos said it's been a busy summer for search and rescue, though the year started off slow. From Jan. 1-April 20 the team responded to 16 calls. Normal is closer to 25. As of Aug. 15, there have been 61 calls for all of 2014.