

U.S. attorney, FBI agent singled out for work

By Kathryn Reed

It is never the work of one person to put a criminal behind bars; it often takes cooperation at many levels.

The efforts of Michelle Rodriguez, assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of California, has helped get a number of South Lake Tahoe's notorious criminals off the streets for years.

In her 20 years she has worked on the Jaycee Lee Dugard case, Operation Clean Sheets that involved fraud against the Redevelopment Agency, the Fedora bank robbery, multiple child exploitation cases, and more recently the case of disgraced South Lake Tahoe police Officer Johnny Poland, who in November started serving an 18-month sentence for obstruction of an official proceeding.



South Lake Tahoe Mayor Hal Cole reads a proclamation for Assistant U.S. Attorney Michelle Rodriguez.
Photo/LTN

As Mayor Hal Cole read the list of her accomplishments, he

added, "It sounds like we have a horrible city here."

Rodriguez countered, "We're working together to pull the weeds in the community."

While the veteran prosecutor is not retiring, the South Lake Tahoe Police Department and local FBI office believed it was long overdue to recognize Rodriguez's contributions to making the area a safer place by getting criminals locked up.

"What Michelle excels at is digging deeper, finding out what is really there," local FBI Agent Chris Campion said at the ceremony last week.

Tom Osborne, assistant special agent in charge of the Sacramento FBI office, said Rodriguez "is a model for how to get things done."

Rodriguez refused to take full credit for the accomplishments her peers spoke of.

"You guys make the cases and pound the pavement," she said to the room full of officers.

Afterward Rodriguez told *Lake Tahoe News*, "What makes a difference is this community is interested in dealing squarely with the problems confronting it."

She had high praise for Campion who was also honored for his years of service as the resident FBI agent in South Lake Tahoe. He admitted to the irony in everyone being able to keep the surprise from him.

"He can bring resources together and that makes a difference," Rodriguez said.

While Campion is not retiring, his accomplishments were also noted. Both were given proclamations from the city.

"Mr. Campion goes out of his way. He juggles a lot of balls in

the air at the same time and does so with aplomb and grace,” Rodriguez said.

Several South Tahoe officers praised the work of Campion.

“One reason I’m here now is this man shoots straight,” police Lt. Brian Williams said of Campion. They were involved in a shooting several years ago.

Also being presented was Poland’s badge. Campion returned it to Police Chief Brian Uhler. It was recovered during the investigation. Poland had given it to someone with close ties to gangs and violent people, Campion said.

Soroptimist honor South Shore women, teens



Ten women receive awards
March 6 from Soroptimist
International. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Women helping and recognizing other women. That in large part is what Soroptimist International is all about.

The two South Shore groups came together Thursday night to honor local high school students, women who have made a difference in the community, and to honor two women who despite struggles are turning their lives around.

In the latter category, the Women's Opportunity Award was given to Monica Mata and America Ramirez Aranda. They were each given \$2,000 to help further their education.

Mata is a full-time student at Lake Tahoe Community who hopes to earn her associate of arts degree in a year. Then she plans to pursue a degree in criminal justice at CSU Sacramento.

But Mata is also a single mother of five children between the ages of 2 and 10. She works 40 hours a week at MontBleu. She has overcome domestic abuse and abandonment. But she said if it weren't for her parents, she would not be on the path she is today.

For Aranda, she too is a single mom – of one son. English is not her native language, but she was able to learn the language well enough to graduate in three years from South Tahoe High School. She has an AA from LTCC. Now she is working on a bachelor's.

Aranda has worked at the local college for 10 years. After she gets her degree she wants to become a certified public accountant and work with low-income people.

She is chairwoman of the local Latino Affairs Committee.

The Ruby Award honors women who have worked to improve the lives of women and girls through their professional or volunteer work.

"Kathy has built a legacy and changed a school and the community forever," Wendy David said of Kathy Haven.

Haven was the driving force behind getting Bijou Community School to have a two-way immersion program.

“It’s so nice to hear, but it’s really not about me. It’s a lot of people coming together,” Haven said. “I just have the biggest mouth.”

Also receiving the Ruby Award was Jeanette Shippee. She is the supervising cook at the El Dorado County Jail in South Lake Tahoe.

She does more than cook food. She has designed a culinary arts program in conjunction with LTCC that gives inmates college credits. They also leave jail with job skills. And while they are incarcerated, the inmates are doing most of the cooking.

The Violet Richardson Award is given to girls who are above average when it comes to volunteering in the community.

This years winners from South Tahoe High School are Emily Aminian, Zoe D’Angelo and Jessica Pak. The winners from Whittell High School are Danica Bunnnett, Kelsey Kjer and Tori Jimenez.

Daylight saving time not a healthy concept

By Jennifer Welsh, Business Insider

Daylight saving time is about to start, and an interesting thing that you might not realize is how such a small shift in our time can have a large impact on our body clock and our health.

These negative impacts of daylight saving time even cost us real money in lost productivity.

This is the “bad” time change, since it means we lose an hour of sleep over night.

It was enacted during World War I to decrease energy use. Benjamin Franklin first advocated for the practice in 1784 because he noticed people used candles at night and slept past dawn in the morning. By shifting time by an hour during the summer, they would burn fewer candles and not sleep through the morning sunlight.

The debate still rages as to whether this time-switch does save energy, but along the way we’ve seen signs that it has negative effects on our health and the economy.

Read the whole story

Theories abound on gold treasure’s origins

By Samantha Schaefer, Los Angeles Times

The news of a Northern California couple’s discovery of more than 1,400 gold coins hidden on their property has experts, history buffs and regular folks speculating on the treasure’s origin.

Though officials said it is unlikely the coins were stolen in a turn-of-the-century theft at the U.S. Mint in San Francisco, some wonder if the cache could be one of many believed buried by the Knights of the Golden Circle.

The secretive, subversive Confederate group is thought to have hidden millions in ill-gotten gold across a dozen states to finance a second Civil War.

The coins very well could be a fortune buried by a wealthy businessman, but the time period, markers near the cache and manner in which the coins were buried fit the mold of the KGC, said Warren Getler, a former Wall Street Journal reporter who coauthored “Rebel Gold,” a book about the group.

Read the whole story

Change smoke alarm batteries as clocks turn

By Teri Mizuhara

Smoke alarms saves lives. They are your first line of defense in a structure fire, especially since most home fires start in the middle of the night when you are sleeping.

In the event of a fire, properly installed and maintained smoke alarms can save your life by alerting you and your family and giving you time to escape. Since everyone will be setting their clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night before going to bed, take the time to check your smoke alarms and practice your exit drill.

Photoelectric smoke alarms are better at sensing “smoldering fires” because smoldering fires produce large smoke particles. A smoldering fire may burn for hours before bursting into a flaming fire. Often these fires are caused by a cigarette, dropped match or stick of incense burning in a couch or in bedding.

Ionization smoke alarms are better at sensing small smoke particles which are usually produced by a flaming fire that is

burning items fast and spreading throughout an area very quickly. This may be a grease fire or a garbage can that caught fire. If your current smoke alarm goes off when you cook, consider replacing that alarm with a photoelectric smoke alarm and placing the other ionization alarm away from your kitchen.

Never disable a smoke alarm. Never remove the battery from your smoke alarm. National statistics indicate that 66 percent of people who died in house fires did not have a smoke alarm or the smoke alarm they had was not working.

Consider interconnecting your smoke alarms, although this is more expensive, this would allow one smoke alarm to “talk” to the others by a hardwired system or wireless technology. If one alarm senses smoke it will relay the information and all the alarms in the home will go off making sure everyone is aware of a problem and allow them to safely exit the home.

The best scenario is to make sure you have a linked smoke alarm in each bedroom, outside the sleeping area(s) and on each level of the home. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions when installing the smoke alarm, test the battery monthly and change the battery once a year. Don’t forget to vacuum the smoke alarms since dust and bugs can cause false alarms Don’t forget to replace the smoke alarms every eight-10 years; just because the light is on does not mean it will work properly.

For households with hearing impaired family members, there are smoke alarms designed to meet the needs of these individuals. The systems utilize extra loud (90dB) signaling combined with a bright strobe light to alert sleeping individuals and/or vibrating pager systems that transmit to hardware placed on bed frames, under pillows or to specialized wrist watches.

If your household includes children, some studies suggest that smoke alarms that allow a parent to record their voice instead of the common “beep” alarm work better at rousing children

from stage 4 deep sleep. Although they are more expensive, it is cheap insurance in the event of a house fire. Don't forget to practice your exit drills several times a year, during the day and at night with all of your family members.

Teri Mizuhara works for the Amador-El Dororado unit of CalFire.

Not all ACL tears require surgery

By Lauren Caselli, NPR

An ACL tear is an athlete's worst nightmare. One of the knee's main stabilizers, the ACL keeps you upright when you plant and pivot. Reconstructive surgery and months of recovery often follow ACL tears.

Yet a study suggests that surgery isn't required for almost 25 percent of first-time, skiing-induced ACL injuries.

The reason might have something to do with skiing, says Steven B. Singleton, M.D., FACS, founding partner of the Steadman Hawkins Clinic of the Carolinas. Because many recreational skiers injure themselves at lower speeds, the force of the energy transfer through the knee often leads only to partial ACL tears, which can sometimes heal on their own. Beyond the force of impact, the fixed position of the ankle and foot within the ski boot might help minimize tears, says the study's co-author, Dr. Demetris Delos.

Read the whole story

'10 Questions for the Dalai Lama' to be shown

Unity at the Lake will celebrate the spring equinox March 21 celebration with the film "10 Questions for the Dalai Lama".

From 6-7pm is kirtan, a call and response chanting accompanied by walking labyrinth meditation. The film starts at 7:15pm.

This documentary blends an interview with the Dalai Lama with a look back at the spiritual leader's history and an exploration of the small city of Dharamsala where he was exiled more than 50 years ago.

Donations are accepted.

Unity at the Lake is located at 1195 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

TOCCATA to perform 'The Passion'

Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus continues its Winter MusicFest with the 9th annual presentation of J.S. Bach's masterpiece "The Passion according to St. Matthew".

The first concert of the four concert series will take place April 12 at 7pm at Shepherd of the Sierra Lutheran Church in Carson City (3680 Highway 395).

The program will feature selections from part two of the "Passion" and will be performed in English. Soloists include Daniel Paulson as the Evangelist, Stuart Duke as Jesus, John Rabben as Pontius Pilate and Chris Nelson as Peter. Anna Helwing and Joy Strotz are the soprano soloists, with Katharine DeBoer and Liudmilla Mullin, mezzo soprano soloists. Scott Deupree performs as the High Priest, with MaryAnn Helman, Linda Mitchell and Susan Horst as the false witnesses. David Brock will play harpsichord continuo, along with Nicholas Haines, cello, and Quinton Bunk, bass.

Maestro James Rawie will conduct all performances.

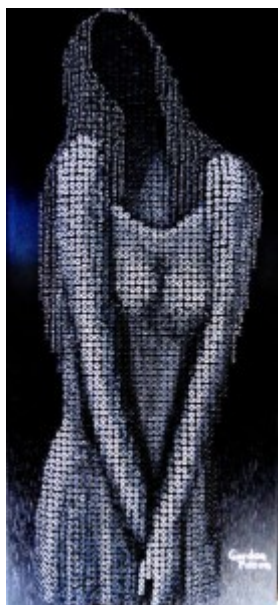
The TOCCATA Youth Chorus from South Lake will also perform on April 16 and 18.

"The St. Matthew Passion" will be repeated on Palm Sunday, April 13, at 4pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reno at 501 California Ave. and on April 16 at 7pm at St. Theresa Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe, 1041 Lyons Ave.

The final concert will be on Good Friday, April 18, at 7pm at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Incline Village, 341 Village Blvd.

Tickets are available at the door or online. General admission to all concerts is \$25 adults, \$20 seniors, \$5 students aged 19 to 23 with valid ID.

Pelton's 3-D artwork on display in Tahoe City



Gordon Pelton, a portrait artist, has been experimenting with ways to produce portraits in three dimensions. When a portrait artist paints on canvas, whether it be in oil, acrylic or watercolor, the result is a two dimensional representation of what is actually a three dimensional subject.

Recently, Pelton has developed a technique for adding the third dimension to his portraits.

Pelston's three dimensional portraits (Mark Twain, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson and a clown) are on exhibit at the James Harold Galleries in Tahoe City.

Rebuilding iconic engines a passion for Reno resident

By AP

RENO -- In a lifetime spent under the hood, Reno's Everett Adams has quietly built an encyclopedic knowledge of engines and a museum's worth of cars, boats, airplanes and memorabilia.

Adams, 80, has had a hand in the restoration and recreations of some world famous motorized machines -- ranging from George Whittell's famed boat the Thunderbird to the around-the-world-

winning Thomas Flyer automobile to the 1911 Renault Town Car in which Kate Winslett and Leonardo DiCaprio famously made out in during the James Cameron film, "The Titanic."

Adams and his crew at Adams' Custom Engines on Glendale Avenue built a replica of the Renault that went down with the Titanic in only 60 days. Adams was in Baja, Mexico during the filming of the movie, even getting a bit part as a chauffeur in the film.



The Thunderbird is one of the engine's Everett Adams has rebuilt. Photo/LTN file

"It was quite an experience," said Adams, who has numerous great experiences since moving to Reno in 1957 to go to work as a Ferrari mechanic for Bill Harrah. He also built engines and was the crew chief for Harrah's racing hydroplane, the Tahoe Miss; worked as a crew chief for Indy cars; and worked as a mechanic at Harrah's Automobile Collection until 1965 when he left and started Adams Custom Engines.

It's safe to say his business is largely a well-kept secret. The company has never advertised itself, instead relying on word-of-mouth recommendations from one car person to the next.

The name is also a bit of a misnomer, because the company does much more than just engines. It rebuilds and restores classic vehicles, often from the ground up, often hand-crafting parts that are impossible to find. It also has a "modern side,"

where it works on contemporary vehicles.

The business has completed more than 380 body-off vehicles over the years, meaning the body is taken off the frame and the vehicle is restored from the ground up. Each of those vehicles is documented in photo albums that Adams keeps in his office.

Almost 50 years later, it is still a labor of love for Adams, who said he still enjoys being in the shop and the fabrication area where parts are refurbished, restored or built from scratch. Through the years, the shop has created its own molds and dyes for parts that are hard or simply impossible to find anymore.

Adams has also amassed a huge collection of manuals, books, magazines and other materials that can help he and his staff in any project brought to them – from Rolls Royce and Ferrari to Corvettes to classic cars of any vintage.

“We’re just now organizing our books and moving them to one of the other warehouses, which we’re converting into a library,” he said. “We’re going to have a research section with probably 1,500 volumes.”

When completed, the research library will also be a bit of a museum with displays on the history of the business, vintage posters, memorabilia and ephemera that Adams has accumulated through the years.

When it’s completed, the plan is to have the research library available to car enthusiasts.

For Adams, who still enjoys driving the 1932 Ford he bought for \$25 in 1949, it’s about sharing a love and a passion for all things mechanical.

“We’ve had a lot of fun,” he said. “I’ve had a lot of enjoyment out of this.”