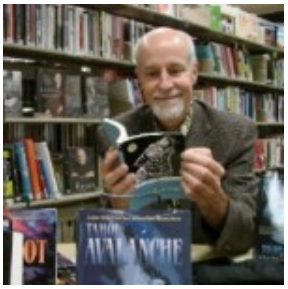
Separating Tahoe author from lead character

By Allen Pierleoni, Sacramento Bee

Who is better known around Lake Tahoe, private eye Owen McKenna or award-winning mystery writer Todd Borg?

“Sometimes people confuse the two, but Owen is a much nicer guy than I am,” Borg said on the phone. “Because the Owen books are written in first person, I get e-mails that (address McKenna), saying, ‘When you were up on that mountain …’ ”

Borg created his PI character soon after he and his wife, artist Kit Night, moved to Tahoe from



Todd Borg

Minnesota in 1990. The seventh title in the series is “Tahoe Night” (Thriller Press, $16.95, 350 pages), a mystery involving murder, art forgery (“Rembrandt” paintings) and secrets from the past revealed.

Read the whole story

Valhalla season opens with comedic play

Oscar winning screenwriter of “American Beauty” Alan Ball has created a stage play called “Five Women Wearing the Same Dress” that will run in South Lake Tahoe from April 29-May 9.

Directed by Dave Hamilton, the play kicks off the Valhalla Arts and Music Festival. The cast is full of local Tahoe folks like Briana Biller; Stephanie Grigsby; Ginger Davis; Meg Peart; Michelle Hirschfield and Matt Ault.



Briana Biller; Stephanie Grigsby; Ginger Davis; Meg Peart; Michelle Hirschfield

During an ostentatious wedding in Tennessee, five reluctant, identically clad bridesmaids hide out in an upstairs bedroom, each with their own reason to avoid the proceedings below. As the afternoon wears on, these five different women joyously discover a common bond in this funny stage-play, an irreverent and touching celebration of the women’s spirit.

Show dates and times are: April 29, 7:30pm; April 30, 7:30pm; May 1, 7:30pm; May 6 at 7:30pm; May 7, 7:30pm; May 8, 7:30pm; and May 9, 2pm.

Ticket prices (except for opening night) are $18 for adults and $15 for seniors. (Due to language and adult situations this play is not recommended for children under 17.) Tickets may be purchased at www.valhallatahoe.com or call (530) 541.4975. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

On opening night April 29 Apres Wine Company will host a special wine tasting at the Valhalla Grand Hall. Ticket prices for opening night will include the wine tasting at $28 per person and $50 per couple. Wine tasting starts at 6pm, followed by the show at 7:30pm.

The Tahoe Tallac Historic Site is located at 1 Valhalla Road, Highway 89, South Lake Tahoe.

For the full schedule, call (530) 541.4975 or go to www.valhallatahoe.com.

CASA's Evening of Opulence

CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates, is hosting its fourth annual South Lake Tahoe fundraiser on May 1 at 7pm at the Marcus Ashley Fine Art Gallery called, An Evening of Opulence.

Cuisine is by The Cork & More, desserts by Katie Cakes, wines by Madrona Vineyards, FOLIO Wine Partners and Crystal Basin Cellars.

This gala will offer an evening of live entertainment, fine art, plus a live and silent auction led by George Alm.

Tickets are $75 a person, with all of the proceeds going to support local children.

CASA El Dorado, a nonprofit organization, recruits, trains,

and matches volunteer advocates with children that are part of the court system as a result of abuse or neglect. CASA volunteers are appointed directly by a judge and attend each court hearing, advocating for the best interests of the child.

CASA is a national organization serving in counties throughout the United States.

CASA El Dorado has served more than 400 children in the last 12 months, speaking up as a voice for children in court and in life.

Call Laurie at (530) 622-9882 for tickets.

Contest winners to win a stay at Granlibakken

Granlibakken Conference Center & Lodge in Tahoe City invites the public to be victorious by creatively naming the resort's three Viking Ambassadors.

Tahoe's original ski resort recently selected three Vikings to represent Granlibakken and is hosting an online contest to give them proper names by May 5. Contestants can enter here for a chance to win a free trip to Lake Tahoe for four, including lodging, breakfast, dinner and a private cocktail party with one of the Vikings.

Why Vikings? Granlibakken – Norwegian for "hillside sheltered by fir trees" – was founded by Scandinavian ski jumpers. The Viking Ambassadors will demonstrate the property's desirable amenities for families and vacationers, such as a delicious daily breakfast buffet, free Wi-Fi, and outdoor resort

activities on 74 wooded acres just a mile from downtown Tahoe City.

Explorer talks about what's in Lake Tahoe

When we are asked, "What do you see under there?" the most common response by divers with the Tahoe Divers Conservancy is "not much." Swimming among beautiful waves of granite boulders the size of houses, bright reflections of light from mica studded sandy lake bottom and a generally stark but surreal crystal environment. TDC often describes diving in Lake Tahoe as "Zen Diving".

But today the underwater world of Lake Tahoe is disturbingly full of strange, new life.

In just a few years, vast sandy areas that for centuries covered the bottom of Lake Tahoe have disappeared under a carpet of invasive plants. The change is not merely cosmetic. Invasive species will upend the ecology of Lake Tahoe, shifting distribution of species and starving familiar fish of their usual food supply. Eurasian watermilfoil, Curlyleaf pondweed and the Asian clam are all found in Lake Tahoe now. It is not just invasive plants. In summer 2009 scores of brown bullhead catfish were found in Emerald Bay. Once confined to the Tahoe Keys and Taylor Marsh, non-native fish are propagating all over Lake Tahoe.

Phil Caterino has spent the last 40 years working to protect Lake Tahoe. He was the founder of Alpengroup, the Sierra Avalanche Center, the Nevada Conservation League, the Tahoe Divers Conservancy, and the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation

Society. He is a strong advocate for grass-roots activism to engage the public in meaningful projects committed to the preservation of Lake Tahoe.

Presentation by Phil Caterino, Tahoe Divers Conservancy

Date: May 13

Time: 6:30pm no-host bar/door opens; 7pm program

Cost: $10. No-Host Bar.

Location: Assembly Rooms 139 & 141, Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village, Nevada (on the campus of Sierra Nevada College)

Program is presented by Squaw Valley Institute and UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center.

TAMC searching for next artist to feature



Tahoe Arts and Mountain Culture is searching for an image for its fourth annual collectible sticker.

To promote the local art community, each year TAMC website creator Becky Bell produces a collectible sticker featuring artwork from a local artist that captures the essence of Lake Tahoe and represents our mountain culture.

Only 1,000 stickers are printed.

“Mackerel Sky” by South Lake Tahoe artist Phyllis Shafer, shown here, was selected in 2009 as the third in the series of collectible stickers because of its lyrical interpretation of our communion with nature.

Local visual artists who would like their artwork considered should send a jpeg file of the image and a brief artist statement by May 15 to Becky Bell at editor@tahoeculture.com. Paintings, mixed media, and photography will be considered.

South Tahoe celebrates Earth Day April 17

Celebrate Mother Earth at the South Lake Tahoe Earth Day Festival on April 17 from 10am to 5pm at Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.

The South Shore Earth Day Festival recognizes, celebrates, and promotes the region’s unique beauty and educates the public on local environmental issues. Learn about ways to counteract global climate change through recycling and composting, alternative energy, water conservation, forest health, sustainability, and reducing our ecological footprint. Earth Day is one of the largest public environmental events of the year in the Lake Tahoe area and is a zero waste, volunteer-run, and nonprofit event.

Earth Day Schedule

10:00–10:45 Mojo Green Project

11–11:15 Washoe Earth Day Opening Ceremony

11:15–12:15 The Big Nasty

12:30–12:45 Kids’ Eco-Costume Parade

12:45–1:45 The Pine Needles

2– 2:15 Alternative Transportation/Small Prize Raffle Drawing

2:15–3:15 Patafunk

3:15–3:30 Big Prize Raffle Drawing

3:30–5 Big Light

There will be live music all day.

The Earth Day Raffle is an integral part to supporting each year’s event made possible by generous donations from the Tahoe community. Take an alternative form of transportation (bike, walk, etc.) to South Shore Earth Day this year and get a free raffle ticket to be entered into a special drawing.

Poetry comes in many forms at SNC

National Poetry Month has always been celebrated at Sierra Nevada College in Incline in a big way, and this year is no exception, with several high-caliber poet-performers gracing the campus—and one even joining the SNC English faculty.

On April 22 from 7-9pm in the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, the community is invited to a poetry reading by Nathalie Handal, an award-winning Palestinian-American poet, playwright, and writer who has authored multiple poetry collections and has been involved either as a writer,

director, or producer in more than 20 theatrical and/or film productions worldwide.

She served as editor of “The Poetry of Arab Women: A Contemporary Anthology” and “Language of a New Century: Poetry of the Middle East”, was a finalist for the 2009 A Room of Her Own’s Freedom Award, and is the author of “The Lives of Rain”, as well as a forthcoming poetry book, “Love and Strange Horses”, which will be published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

Copies of her books will be available for sale at the SNC Bookstore.

Local poets will stand and deliver for a chance to take home the title of Tahoe Slam Poet of the Year at SNC’s Annual Tahoe Slam Competition on April 30 from 7-10pm in Patterson Hall.

This year the festivities will be hosted by a trio of MCs known collectively as the Aerosol Love Letter Campaign: Matt Blesse, Terry Taplin, and Abe Becker, former members of the UC Berkeley National Slam Team. Competitors will be limited to the first 10 people to sign up, so hopeful contestants should plan on arriving a minimum of 20 minutes before the event to sign up for a chance to compete.

Judges will be chosen at random from the audience, and audience members are encouraged to participate (Note: booing or cheering the judges is acceptable; heckling the poets is not).

Poets will be limited to a maximum of three minutes for their first utterance (just the poem, please; no long preambles). First-, second-, and third-place winners will receive cash prizes.

And in the fall, Iraq veteran soldier/award-winning writer Brian Turner will be joining SNC’s English faculty on a full-time basis. Turner is currently promoting his latest work,

“Phantom Noise” (Alice James Books), which is being launched—coincidentally or not—during National Poetry Month, and which will be available in the SNC Bookstore.

Turner’s “Here, Bullet”, a collection of poetry about a year he spent deployed in Iraq, has garnered a number of literary awards, including the 2006 PEN Center USA Best in the West Literary Award in Poetry, the 2007 Poets’ Prize, and selection in the New York Times Editor’s Choice.

For more information on any of the events, contact English Program Chair June Saraceno at jsaraceno@sierranevada.edu or at (775) 881.7514.

Feminism unable to bring about total equality

By Jessica Bennett, Jesse Ellison and Sarah Ball, Newsweek

They were an archetype: independent, determined young graduates of Seven Sisters colleges, fresh-faced, new to the big city, full of aspiration. Privately, they burned with the kind of ambition that New York encourages so well. Yet they were told in job interviews that women could never get to the top, or even the middle. They accepted positions anyway—sorting mail, collecting newspaper clippings, delivering coffee. Clad in short skirts and dark-rimmed glasses, they’d click around in heels, currying favor with the all-male management, smiling softly when the bosses called them “dollies.” That’s just the way the world worked then. Though each quietly believed she’d be the one to break through, ambition, in any real sense, wasn’t something a woman could talk about out loud. But by 1969, as the women’s

movement gathered force around them, the dollies got restless. They began meeting in secret, whispering in the ladies' room or huddling around a colleague's desk. To talk freely they'd head to the Women's Exchange, a 19th-century relic where they could chat discreetly on their lunch break. At first there were just three, then nine, then ultimately 46—women who would become the first group of media professionals to sue for employment discrimination based on gender under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Their employer was NEWSWEEK magazine.

Until six months ago, when sex- and gender-discrimination scandals hit ESPN, David Letterman's Late Show, and the New York Post, the three of us—all young NEWSWEEK writers—knew virtually nothing of these women's struggle. Over time, it seemed, their story had faded from the collective conversation. Eventually we got our hands on a worn copy of In Our Time, a memoir written by a former NEWSWEEK researcher, Susan Brownmiller, which had a chapter on the uprising. With a crumpled Post-it marking the page, we passed it around, mesmerized by descriptions that showed just how much has changed, and how much hasn't.

Read the whole story

Nevada parks photo contest

In commemoration of this being 75 years since the Nevada State Parks were created, the agency is having two contests open to park visitors.

The first contest is comprised of two separate photo contests. In the first one, contestants can choose to visit any 12 of the state parks over the next six months to qualify for a random drawing. The idea is to photograph the entrance sign at

each park entrance, with or without family members in the photo, to prove you've been there.

The second photo contest involves more traditional photos in any of following three categories: park scenery, wildlife and family fun in the park. Winners will be judged and awarded prizes, including publication on State Parks' website and in a future Nevada State Parks calendar.

The second contest set involves three geocaching challenges, including a northern region, southern region and a statewide challenge. Participants will need to use a Geographic Positioning System (GPS) unit to locate a hidden cache in a number of designated state parks. Each cache will have a stack of business size cards unique to the park in which they are located. Participants are encouraged to collect cards from these parks and to send them to designated park offices with an entry form

The park entrance sign photo contest and the geocache challenge contest winners will be selected by random drawings. The drawings will take place as part of the Nevada Day celebration in Carson City in October.

Deadlines and information on each of the contests and their entry forms can be found on State Park's website.