

Lake Tahoe customer of Carson City shooter – ‘This came out of nowhere’

By Susan Wood and Kathryn Reed

The gunman in a massive fatal shooting at IHOP in Carson City Tuesday morning who injured seven people and killed five including himself gave no indication to his South Lake Tahoe customers and neighbors of the Mi Pueblo market that he was unstable.

The mood was solemn and one of disbelief Tuesday night as those who knew Eduardo Sencion, 32, of Carson City reflected on the tragic news.

“This is so devastating,” said Robin Carlson, who lives behind the store off Pioneer Trail. “This came out of nowhere.”



Customers of Eduardo Sencion's at Mi Pueblo are in shock.
Photo/LTN

Carlson insisted she had seen no change in Sencion's demeanor lately. Carlson and neighbor Patrick Lauzon had just seen Sencion, and they described him as being “himself.” Business

has been steady at the store, but nothing would indicate that things were so bad he was about to snap.

She added that Sencion said business went well over the Labor Day weekend.

"He said it was great," Carlson said. "And this store is vital to this community."

A sign on the front door read: "Sorry we are going to be close for today."

Carlson even recalled how Sencion would cover her purchases on occasion.

Monica Morales, who lives around the corner from the small store, grew up with the store over the last dozen years.

"Is this crazy, no?" she said, standing beside her children outside the storefront. "We just saw him (Monday). When I heard this happened, my stomach was sick," she added, while rubbing her stomach.

The scene around the store Tuesday night was quiet, albeit a bit eerie as if something wasn't right with the store being closed and word catching on that such a tragic shooting could have originated with such a fixture of the local community.

History of mental issues

Sencion has had mental issues since at least April 2000. That is when South Lake Tahoe police officers assisted with getting him committed to receive psychiatric care.

South Tahoe Police Chief Brian Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News* the police report is being given to Carson City officers to assist them with their investigation into the Sept. 6 shooting spree at the IHOP in Nevada's state capital. Uhler would not release it to the media.

Officials with El Dorado County Mental Health Department in South Tahoe deferred comments to the Placerville office, which did not return calls Tuesday afternoon.

Sencion with his two brothers own Mi Pueblo market in South Lake Tahoe on Pioneer Trail and one in Stead.

According to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, Sencion's brother, Gilberto Sencion Gonzalez, 46, said he arrived in South Lake Tahoe from Sacramento Tuesday afternoon to find the market closed.

"I feel very sorry about what happened," Gonzalez told the *RGJ*. "I feel very sorry about those people. I'm trying to find out what happened."

Sencion walked to the back of the IHOP with an AK-47 and then began shooting, according to officials. Carson City Sheriff Kenny Furlong said at a 5pm press conference there is no apparent motive as to why the 32-year-old unloaded his weapon. He has no military background, though two who died were in the National Guard.

Two other guns were found in Sencion's vehicle.

Chaos in Carson

While South Tahoe was quiet Tuesday, quite the opposite could be said for the scene in Carson City, where the morning started out with traffic stopped on Highway 395 on the south side of town and helicopters and ground ambulances evacuating the injured. The afternoon gave way to a massive display of news teams at a police command post behind the IHOP and the Wells Fargo Bank.



Media swarm
the command
area behind
the Carson
City IHOP.
Photo/Susan
Wood

Nearby businesses were closed and the entire parking lot in front of Kohl's was cordoned off as a crime scene. The shooting became the talk of the town, with state offices closing and nearby businesses taking a page from their own makeshift emergency manual.

Raley's in Carson went on lockdown when an employee saw the gunman in the parking lot on a rampage. Shoppers were walking by looking bewildered while others stood with their hands over their mouths dazed in disbelief that such a huge crime could happen so close to home.

A bouquet of flowers was placed at the crime tape as a gesture of sympathy to the crime victims.

Western Nevada College in Carson City was spearheading a candlelight vigil starting at 8:30pm Tuesday at the capitol complex, at the statue of the fallen soldier.

Tahoe's clam colonies may not be blooming

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

When it comes to invading clams, Lake Tahoe might not be a very good place to make babies.

That's the encouraging conclusion of new research by scientists at the University of Nevada, Reno who found that cold temperatures and lack of food combine to discourage reproduction of Asian clams in the lake.

"This could be good news. It really could be," said Sudeep Chandra, a UNR researcher specializing in freshwater science.

"The fact is Lake Tahoe has a few things going for it when it comes to this invasive species spreading around," Chandra said.

Diminished ability to reproduce could mean that efforts to manage clam populations – including killing them by covering clam beds with rubber mats – have a better chance at long-term success, Chandra said.

"The question is at what rate do they grow? If they are outgrowing what you manage, the problem will keep coming back," Chandra said.

Read the whole story

Opposition to bill that would make well logs public

By Tim Hearden, Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — Farm groups are lining up against a bill in the California Legislature that would make landowners' well logs available to the public.

Since 1949, the state has required notification from well drillers whenever a well is created, deepened, reperforated or destroyed. The well completion reports include details about the well's depth, the type of soils encountered at each elevation and depth to water, according to a state Assembly bill analysis.

Until now, the information provided to the state Department of Water Resources has not been readily accessible to the public. State Sen. Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills, wants to change that, reasoning that the geophysical data is important to groundwater managers, consulting hydrologists and others.

But the California Farm Bureau Federation, the California Cattlemen's Association and other farm groups oppose the bill, calling it unnecessary and worrying it could jeopardize the safety of drinking water.

"Number one, the information is available to the people it needs to be available to," said Justin Oldfield, the CCA's director of government relations. "From a public perspective, there's a lot of concern about putting this information out there about what wells are pumping water and how much they're pumping.

"This wouldn't help anything," he said. "It wouldn't solve a problem. It's creating a solution for a problem that doesn't exist."

The bill passed the Assembly Appropriations Committee, 11-6, on Aug. 18 and was sent to the Assembly floor. It passed the Senate, 25-14, on June 2.

Read the whole story

Nevada losing millions of dollars not collected from online sales

By Anne Knowles, Nevada News Bureau

Nevada could take in \$16 million less in tax dollars this year due to online sales, according to a new report by the Retail Association of Nevada.

Sales tax currently accounts for 28.3 percent of the state's general fund revenue while gaming taxes bring in 23.6 percent. Nevada ranks 11th in the nation in terms of sales tax reliance, according to a Congressional Research Service report, while the state's maximum sales tax rate, 8.1 percent in Clark County, ranks 20th.

According to RAN, Internet sales means Nevada will lose upwards of \$16 million in 2011, with other reports estimating as much \$100 million lost annually. The Economic Forum forecasts the state will collect about \$815.3 million in sales and use tax in 2011.

"As e-commerce becomes increasingly popular, Nevada faces ever greater sales and use tax revenue losses," Mary Lau, RAN president, said in a statement on the findings. "Current estimates may only predict losses equivalent to 0.5 percent of

total sales and use tax collections, but the impacts are certain to grow larger with time.”

Technically, buyers are supposed to pay a use tax with the state for purchases made online, but many consumers are either not aware of the tax or rarely pay it and is almost impossible for the tax department to monitor.

“It’s an odd tax, because the costs of compliance are actually higher than the costs of evasion,” said Geoff Lawrence, deputy director of policy at Nevada Policy Research Institute in Las Vegas. “One alternative could be to require online retailers to email shoppers at the end of each year with their total purchase amount throughout the year and informing them of their total use tax liability, directing them to remit the use tax directly to the Nevada Department of Taxation. An alternative like this would get around many problems while still protecting the privacy of individuals.”

Lawrence said states have no authority to collect sales tax from entities that have no physical presence in the state.

A bill amendment to tax online retailers failed during the 2011 Nevada legislative session.

Nevada is a member of the Streamlined Sales Tax Governing Board, a national effort to reduce the complexity of sales tax compliance so online retailers could be required to charge state sales on their goods sold.

Concealed weapon permits

increase dramatically in El Dorado County

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

The number of people with concealed weapon licenses in Sacramento and El Dorado counties has jumped in 2011, following the election of new sheriffs who vowed to make the licenses easier to get.



Sacramento County sheriff's officials issued 739 CCWs – licenses to carry a concealed weapon – as of July 25 this year, more than four times the number issued in all of 2010.

That year about 175 licenses were issued.

In El Dorado County, 380 people received CCWs in the first six months of the year, already a 75 percent increase over 2010's total of 217 permits.

"I made no secret about my philosophy," Sacramento Sheriff Scott Jones said. "I was more permissive on whether I would allow them."

People are "very appreciative of the streamlined process," said El Dorado County Sheriff John D'Agostini.

In both counties, elections for sheriff were dominated by the weapons permit issue. Critics of concealed weapon permits were scarce.

Read the whole story

Incline youth found safe; back with family

Updated Sept. 5 2:45pm:

Sam Singer has been found in good health. He has been reunited with his family.

An 11-year-old Incline Village boy has been missing since Saturday.

Sam Singer was reported missing by his mother. The boy was last seen in the area of Laura Court and Dorsey Drive at approximately noon Sept. 3.

Officials now believe the boy ran away after a fight with his parents.



Sam Singer

Sam is approximately 5-foot-4, 105 pounds, with blond hair and blue eyes. He was last seen wearing a red polo style shirt, blue shorts, black shoes, a backpack, and possibly carrying a tent and sleeping bag.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Sam or who can provide

information on this case, is asked to call (775) 832.9276.

Reid's alma mater names academic center after him

By Mark Havnes, Salt Lake City Tribune

CEDAR CITY, Utah – One of the most powerful politicians in the country was at Southern Utah University on Thursday reminiscing about his time at the school he graduated from in 1959 and being recognized with an academic center named in his honor.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid was invited to the Cedar City university, which has named its new Center for Outdoor Engagement after the Nevada Democrat.

When he heard the name of the center, Reid joked: "I thought it was a place where young students could be romantic."

The center will work for the preservation of natural, cultural and historical resources on public lands, further develop public lands alliances with the university, conduct research and service projects and make SUU a national center for the applied study of parks and public lands.

Reid touted his congressional record on public lands in Nevada, noting the creation of the Great Basin National Park, designating wilderness areas and a summit held every year on the clarity of water in Lake Tahoe, which Nevada shares with California.

When asked about those in Utah who believe the federal government has too much power over public lands and want

ownership to revert to local control, even if it means invoking eminent domain, Reid had harsh words.

“They need a mental examination,” he said. “It is just political drivel.”

He said many of the public lands issues were challenged in the 1970s and 1980s during the “Sagebrush Rebellion,” a conservative movement that failed to influence federal environmental policies.

Read the whole story

Caltrans spending \$11 billion on California highways

By Gary Richards, San Jose Mercury News

Kelly McDonough was in for a pleasant surprise when she turned onto Interstate 880 in San Jose recently during the morning commute. The bumps, potholes and deep cracks that for years have lined this dilapidated freeway between Interstate 280 and Highway 101 were gone – replaced by dreamy, dark asphalt.



“The road surface is magically improved,” McDonough said. “Great job!”

Highways from the Bay Area to Lake Tahoe to the Central Coast are being repaved this summer at a pace not seen in years, even though the state and nation are coming out of a deep recession with major budget problems.

Spurred by an infusion of federal stimulus money, state bonds and millions of dollars in savings from low bids, segments of nearly every local freeway are being resurfaced, plus much of Interstates 5 and 80. Head out for a nighttime drive and you'll almost certainly run into a cone zone.

"There is a near-record amount of Caltrans activity going on right now, nearly \$11 billion statewide," said Russell Snyder, executive director of the California Asphalt Pavement Association.

He said Caltrans has been able to pave rough roads that might otherwise be on a long waiting list because of savings on bid prices of about 30 percent – "the silver lining to the Great Recession," Snyder called it.

There is more at play, say numerous transportation officials. The condition of California's highways is among the worst in the nation, with just 28 percent rated in good condition. There's an urgency to fix them now, when money is available, rather than pay much more for bigger repairs down the road.

Read the whole story

Nevada looking to cash in on unredeemed slot tickets

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – A proposed regulation to divert most of the money from unredeemed slot machine tickets to the state took another step forward Tuesday.

The state Gaming Control Board held a workshop on the

preliminary regulation that could mean millions dollars more for the state treasury.

Board Chairman Mark Lipparelli said he was surprised no one showed up to testify about the proposal. The proposal drew spirited opposition from the Nevada Resort Association and other casino representatives during the last Legislature.

By one estimate, it could mean \$43 million now being kept by the casinos would go to the state.

Slot players routinely put cash in machines and receive a printed ticket for their balance when finished playing. Mostly gone are the days when coins were used in the one-armed bandits.

Read the whole story

Gaming Commission agrees to stronger rules for places like Dotty's

Publisher's note: *A Dotty's is going to replace part of the former Bill's Casino in Stateline.*

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

The Nevada Gaming Commission on Thursday amended its regulation for licensing small casinos, placing more requirements on establishments like the Dotty's chain.

The amended regulation will require slot parlors like Dotty's to build new amenities within two years to maintain their

licenses.

Dotty's caters primarily to women who don't like traditional bars and taverns.

Under terms of the revised Regulation 3.015, licensees will now be required to have a permanent bar with seating for at least nine customers, a contract or service agreement with a licensed liquor distributor and facilities to serve alcohol by the drink, and a restaurant of at least 2,000 square feet with seating for at least 20 customers. Establishments also must be open at least 12 hours a day, if the company wants to have more than four slot machines. With a restricted license for small operations, companies can have up to 15 slots.

Read the whole story