Probation for Incline woman who stabbed husband to death

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Judge Robert Perry sentenced an elderly woman Friday to probation in the slaying of her husband of 42 years, a sentence the couple's children had requested.

Mary Baymiller told Perry how remorseful she was for the slaying of Charles "Skip" Baymiller, 73, and said she believes it was strictly her medication, including Paxil and sleep drugs, that led to his stabbing.

"The killing was done in a catatonic, drug-induced state," her attorney Tom Viloria said.

Baymiller, who now lives in Reno, said she felt like she ruined her children's lives and that she loved her husband a great deal.

The Baymiller children also pleaded with Perry to grant her probation, saying it's what their father, a developer and winery owner, would want.

Read the whole story

Tree felling accident ends without serious injuries

A member of a tree cutting crew was pinned beneath a tree Friday afternoon.

It took members of the Lake Valley Fire Protection District and South Lake Tahoe Fire Department to free him.



Fire personnel provide aid to the injured worker. Photo/Leona Allen

The victim's name has not been released. He was taken to Barton Memorial Hospital with minor injuries.

A section of tree being cut approximately 100 feet above ground splintered and fell, causing the victim to be pinned against the tree with his harness.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

I-80 construction closes 2 off-ramps heading east

Caltrans is alerting motorists of eastbound ramp closures on Interstate 80 due to construction.

On Interstate 80, the eastbound on-ramp at Castle Peak and the eastbound off-ramp to Donner Lake are closed through Oct. 14.

The closures are necessary to reconfigure traffic to facilitate work on the $71 million Donner III pavement rehabilitation project. The project will reconstruct and improve the section of roadway between Castle Peak and Donner Park. Completion is expected by fall.

Roadside message boards will be used to post the latest information. Unexpected weather may prolong or cause the work to be rescheduled.

Echo Summit slated to open Saturday

Highway 50 over Echo Summit is expected to reopen Saturday.

It has been closed since May 11 to replace the deteriorating rock wall that no longer functioned as much of a barrier for vehicles that might have drifted off the road.

Exact timing of the May 21 opening will be determined by the weather and temperatures. Caltrans and contractor C.C. Myers Inc. anticipate the highway will be opened as soon as Saturday afternoon.

Once the road is open, it will be subject to controlled traffic while work continues.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Contractors snared in sting operation in Truckee

For the first time, the California Contractors State License Board and the Nevada State Contractors Board teamed up this week in a joint enforcement operation on both sides of the state line. Particular attention was paid to people who crossed the state line to illegally bid on jobs.

The effort began Thursday with an undercover sting operation at a pair of neighboring cabins in Truckee. Members of CSLB's Statewide Investigative Fraud Team led the sting by posing as owners of the cabins, getting bids for various improvement projects including landscaping, painting, and flooring. Those who bid more than $500 for labor and materials were issued a notice to appear in court.

Thirteen NTAs were issued for contracting without a license and related violations including illegal advertising and requesting an excessive down payment. Six of the 13 were issued to residents of Nevada. One of those six is a Nevada-licensed contractor. CSLB investigators received more than $86,600 in illegal bids during Thursday's sting, with three of the bids for at least $12,000.

California law requires any home improvement job valued at $500 or more for labor and materials be undertaken by a California-licensed contractor. California and Nevada have a reciprocity agreement, making it easier for contractors licensed in one state to get a license in the other.

California law also requires advertisements for home improvement contracting services to include the California contractor license number. Those who perform jobs valued at less than $500 are allowed to do so in the state of California, but their ads must state that they are not a

California-licensed contractor. In California a down payment for home improvement work cannot total more than 10 percent of the contract or $1,000, whichever is less.

Sweep operations will also take place on both sides of the state line today.

The following suspects who received NTAs are scheduled to be arraigned in Nevada County Superior Court facility in Truckee on July 18:

SUSPECT NAME/CITY	AGE	WORK CLASS	VIOLATION
Richard Mark Russell Reno, NV	49	Flooring	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising
Ildefonso Colmenero Kings Beach, CA	33	Earthwork and Paving	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising
Benjamin Munoz Truckee, CA	39	Landscaping	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising, illegal advertising, soliciting excessive down payment
Edgar Ramon Solorio Zaragosa Truckee, CA	29	Landscaping	Contracting without a license
Jorge Fernando Pena-Campos Reno, NV	49	Painting	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising

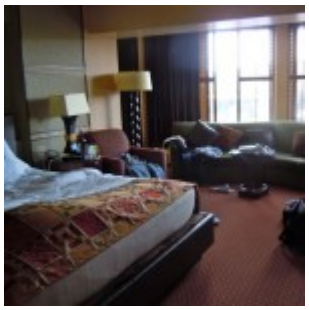
Jeffrey James Drake Truckee, CA	50	Cabinet, Millwork and Finish Carpentry	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising
Michael David Durfee Reno, NV	42	Painting	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising, soliciting excessive down payment
Aleta Jeanine Renteria Reno, NV	46	Painting	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising, soliciting excessive down payment
Steven Gregory Snider Reno, NV	54	Landscaping	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising, failure to carry workers' compensation
Matthew Nestore Williams Truckee, CA	29	Painting	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising
Tomas Prochzka Truckee, CA	34	Landscaping	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising

Donald L Otto Sparks, NV	61	Painting	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising
Bradley John Allen Moran Soda Springs, CA	38	Landscaping	Contracting without a license, illegal advertising

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Lodging managers get primer in attracting business online

Heading into the historically busy summer season, lodging professionals on the South Shore got a short lesson in how best to use Travelocity to their benefit.



Alania Henry, a rep from the online site, spoke to the South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association last week about services to drive people to their property.

Keeping content updated, reviewing it like a consumer and not a manager, and offering promotions were some of her suggestions.

When it comes to having a hotel pop up closer to the top, Henry said hotels with posted rates and ones with availability get preference.

She also suggested hoteliers use the Top Secret Hotel option. This allows people to pick their destination, price and

rating, but not the actual hotel. It’s also non-refundable – a bonus for the lodging property.

Henry claims the return on investment is good for the hotels using sponsored searches at the top or bottom of pages.

Travelocity has also partnered with sites like Kayak, Ski Lake Tahoe and Yahoo to make it easier for travelers to book rooms.

– Kathryn Reed

Tahoe’s population may change power in Placerville

By Kathryn Reed

For the last 10 years the South Shore of El Dorado County has had one voice in Placerville on the Board of Supervisors.

The previous decade it had two reps, with one living in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

What the next decade will look like is being discussed. At a meeting in South Lake Tahoe on May 19, county officials went over the five proposals they have come up with. Ultimately it will be up to the Board of Supervisors to decide how the district lines are drawn.



County
Surveyor Rich
Briner
discusses
redistricting
options.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Les Lovell pointed out that perhaps this board should not be the one to make the decision because it's possible they would not actually have a district to represent based on how the lines might be drawn.

While the law allows a supervisor to finish his or her term, he or she might have to move to be in a district they really want to represent come the next election.

This could be the scenario for Supervisor Norma Santiago who lives in South Lake Tahoe, but represents the entire basin. Some of the proposals have the South Shore being split. Santiago wants to keep the basin its own district.

Though it's true the five electeds represent the entire county, they are voted into office by the people in their respective districts – thus the assumption certain people represent certain areas.

While politics is not supposed to be a criterion for how district boundaries are drawn, that has not historically been the case here or other places in the country. All one has to do is look at how the lines were drawn with a little population bubble on the West Slope that benefitted then-Supervisor Helen Baumann. At that time she had the Meyers portion of the South Shore in District 4.

Even Bruce Grego, the lone South Lake Tahoe councilmember to attend the meeting, wanted politics to be part of the process.

He said voter registration should be a criterion.

He was told that’s not legal.

Grego also believes Tahoe would be better off with two voices in Placerville.

What the U.S. Constitution says is population equality is of utmost importance when it comes to parceling out districts. This would have each of El Dorado’s five districts having 36,212 residents.

Based on 2010 Census data, this is how the current districts stand:

District 1 pop 38,670 (2,458 over target)

District 2 pop 44,434 (8,222 over target)

District 3 pop 32,010 (4,202 under target)

District 4 pop 35,198 (1,014 under target)

District 5 pop 30,746 (5,466 under target).

(District 5 is Lake Tahoe.)

Depending on how the lines are drawn and who is elected in the future, Tahoe could have one or two reps on the board and neither would have to live in the basin.

Only 20 people showed for a meeting that ultimately will have political consequences for everyone living in El Dorado County.

While the back of the council chambers were covered with maps outlining five proposals, county officials were quick to say they don’t believe one of them will be the final one. They expect public input and comments from the supervisors to help massage the final map.

Rich Briner, county surveyor, said alternatives 4 and 5 are more like what the county had in the 1990s. He described No. 3 as one people hate or love.

“I would be surprised if any one of them is accepted by the board. I believe all will be tweaked,” Briner said.

Another unknown is if El Dorado Hills will be incorporated in the future. In 2006 the attempt to do so failed. But momentum is growing to bring it back for another vote. This would make it the third incorporated city in the county and the largest population-wise, thus significantly shifting the power base.

It’s almost a given El Dorado Hills will be split in representation to divvy up its population.

More information about the proposals, including maps, and a form to make comments are on the county’s website. Comments will be accepted through the first week of June.

Supervisors are expected to tackle the issue in late June, with a final decision made later in the summer.

On a larger scale, California is the first state to have a citizens committee draw the lines for federal offices. To learn more about that, go online.

Gardnerville pilot missing; crews searching near Placerville

By Marijke Rowland, Modesto Bee

Gardnerville resident and former Manteca businessman Robert H. “Budge” Brown is missing after his plane apparently went down near Placerville.

The founder of Oakwood Lake Resort, home of the Manteca Waterslides, left Minden-Tahoe Airport at 4pm Wednesday in his single-engine aircraft bound for a private airstrip in Tracy, according to the FAA and a family spokesman.

Brown, who is in his late 70s, was flying solo in a Lancair Legacy aircraft. Family members reported him overdue at 8:30pm Wednesday, 4½ hours after he took off.

The Minden-to-Tracy flight should take about 45 minutes, said Civil Air Patrol Capt. Matt Scherzi. Family members said Brown has flown the Minden-to-Tracy route 200 to 300 times.

FAA Western-Pacific Region said search crews were looking for the plane near Placerville.

Read the whole story

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3 teenagers arrested in Truckee burglary attempt

Three teenagers are in custody and fourth is being sought in the connection with an attempted residential burglary in Truckee.

When Truckee police officers arrived at an apartment complex on May 19 at 2:05am three suspects were outside.

One tried to run, but was arrested after a short struggle. A second subject was located hiding in a nearby stairwell.

Screams from a woman in another unit led officers to the third suspect who they said was attempting to force his way into an apartment unit through the front door. The suspect was physically assaulting the female resident in an attempt to gain entry to her apartment, officers said. The suspect was arrested after a short struggle with officers.

The female resident suffered minor injuries from the assault, but did not require treatment.

Several items of property were recovered by officers. The property appears connected to vehicles that were burglarized during the night at the complex.

A Placer County Sheriff's Department K-9 unit searched the area for a possible fourth subject. During the search, the K-9 led officers to other units that had apparently been tampered with by the suspects. The fourth subject was not located.

Two of the people arrested are 17-year-old males; the third is Isreal Angelo Tenorio, 18. Charges included burglary, attempted burglary, conspiracy to commit burglary, violation of probation, and resisting arrest. One of the juveniles was also charged with the assault on the resident.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

First U.S. geothermal academy to open in Nevada this summer

By Jason Hildago, Reno Gazette-Journal

Things are about to get hot and steamy at the University of Nevada, Reno's Redfield Campus as the country's first national

academy for geothermal energy kicks off this summer.

A collaboration between the country’s top geothermal schools, the academy is expected to draw 52 attendees – a quarter of whom will come from overseas. Attendees include professionals, graduate students and undergrads. Classes will be taught by 15 instructors from across the country, including Jefferson Tester of Cornell University and Roland Horne of Stanford.

Participants should expect plenty of geothermal industry know-how to be drilled into their heads during the eight-week course.

“It covers all aspects of geothermal energy development, from permitting, finding a geothermal resource, engineering and drilling, to constructing a power plant and building a business model,” said Wendy Calvin, director of the National Geothermal Academy and the Great Basin Center for Geothermal Energy. “There’s no other thing out there right now in the U.S. that’s like it.”

Read the whole story