Arizona shooting victims have ties to Reno

By Denise Wong, KOLO TV

That shooting tragedy in Arizona is hitting very close to home. We've learned two of the victims had grown up in Reno and raised their children here.

76-year-old Dorothy Morris was one of the six people killed in the shooting. She was known as Dorothy Burns when she was a student at Reno High School. That's where she met her future husband, George Morris. He was also shot and is in the hospital. The couple's friends can't believe what's happened.

"They're so well known here in Reno. They were born and raised here. High school sweethearts," says Marilyn Melton. She's still in shock after learning what's happened to Dorothy and George Morris, near their home in Arizona. Before the couple moved to the Tucson area about 13 years ago, they had built a life here in Reno.

Read the whole story

No foul play suspected in New Year's death at Stateline

Douglas County sheriff's deputies do not believe the death of a 26-year-old man on New Year's Day is the result of foul play.

However, Nevada law requires all unattended deaths be

investigated as homicides. Toxicology reports may not be available for two months.

David Marriner, an Incline Village High School graduate who was living in Southern California, was found at the bottom of a stairwell at the Horizon casino in Stateline.

Sheriff's Capt. John Milby said Marriner's injuries were consistent with having fallen down stairs. It is not known how long he was there before being discovered.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Reward offered for info about damage done to Gardnerville park

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office is seeking the public's help in identifying a suspect wanted for Destruction of Property at Heritage Park in Gardnerville.

The park off Gilman Avenue and Courthouse Alley was damaged sometime between Dec. 31 and Jan. 3.

The damage was committed by an unknown person who intentionally drove his/her vehicle on the grass and spun their tires while driving in circles.

In addition to the grass that was damaged, five valve boxes and other irrigation parts were also damaged in the incident. The value of repair is estimated at $3,000.

A reward of up to $250 is being offered to anyone with

information leading to the arrest and conviction of the suspect. Your identity is not needed and you will remain anonymous.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is urged to call Secret Witness at (775) 782.7463); or DCSO Valley Investigations Office at (775) 782.9905.

Judge upholds environmental review of proposed Lassen area ski resort

By Jane Braxton Little, Sacramento Bee

Three environmental groups opposed to a four-season resort on Dyer Mountain lost a legal bid seeking to force Lassen County to redo an environmental review of the development.

Lassen County Judge F. Donald Sokol ruled the county acted properly in its 2007 assessment of the project proposed for nearly 7,000 forested acres near Westwood.

In his five-page decision, Sokol specifically found that the Lassen County Board of Supervisors adequately analyzed the environmental effects related to population growth, air quality, traffic and cumulative impacts. He also ruled that the county had properly mitigated the impacts of climate change “to the extent feasible.”

Lassen County Counsel Richard Crabtree said he was pleased with Sokol’s Dec. 30 decision, which he received Thursday.

The plaintiffs plan to appeal the decision, said Tom Mooers,

executive director of Sierra Watch, which filed the lawsuit with Mountain Meadows Conservancy and the Sierra Club.

Read the whole story

Southwest Airlines changing rapid rewards program

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Southwest Airlines is converting its popular Rapid Rewards loyalty program to a points-based system with accrual based on how much money a customer spends for a ticket.

The Dallas-based airline, the busiest at Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport, is unveiling the new system today with the conversion scheduled to occur March 1.

Customers won't lose credits they've accrued when the conversion takes place because Southwest will automatically convert credits to points.

Information on the new system is available at newrapidrewards.com.

"We're looking at this as an extension of currency," said Southwest CEO Gary Kelley in an embargoed media briefing Wednesday morning.

Under the new system, customers will accrue points whenever they buy a ticket on the airline's website with higher multiples for higher levels of Southwest's three-tiered pricing. For the airline's "Wanna Get Away" fares – the least expensive tickets Southwest sells – customers will earn six

points for every dollar spent.

Read the whole story

Doctors upbeat about congresswoman; politicians denounce shooting

By Michael Muskal, Los Angeles Times

Critically wounded U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords is able to respond to simple commands, doctors said Sunday. Meanwhile, the nation tried to come to grips with the Arizona shooting rampage, which killed six and spurred a troubled country to reexamine its political culture.

At a televised news conference in Tucson, Dr. Michael Lemole, a surgeon at the University Medical Center, said Giffords had responded to doctors' commands. In great detail, he described how the gunshot went through the left side of the congresswoman's head and how doctors worked to remove bone fragments to help reduce the swelling and possible damage to the brain.

Though the news was a positive, Giffords remained in critical condition, doctors said.

Even as doctors continued to be upbeat about Giffords, the toll from deadly shootings continued to climb. In addition to the six dead, at least 14, including Giffords, were injured when a gunman opened fire in the Tucson supermarket where Giffords was meeting constituents. One suspect is in custody, and police announced earlier Sunday they were seeking a

“person of interest” for questioning.

Among the dead was a 9-year-old girl, the granddaughter of noted former baseball manager Dallas Green and the daughter of Dodgers baseball scout John Green. In emotional appearances on several networks, Roxanna Green described her daughter, Christina Taylor Green, as an angel, born Sept. 11, 2001, the day of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil.

Noting that her daughter’s life began and ended in tragedy, Green called for an end to violence.

“I just want her memory to live on that she’s a face of hope, face of change, face of … us coming together as a country to stop the violence and hatred and the evil wars,” Green said on MSNBC. “We have to protect our government officials and our innocent young children.”

Even as politicians on both sides of the aisle called the shootings horrific and unacceptable, investigators were stepping up their search for what they described as a person of interest who was wanted in connection with Saturday’s shooting. The unknown person was photographed by a surveillance camera near the shooting suspect, Jared Lee Loughner, 22.

Read the whole story

California lawmakers react to Arizona colleague being shot

By Michael Doyle, Sacramento Bee Washington Bureau

The shooting of Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords on Saturday

struck home with California public officials of all stripes, reminding them anew of their own vulnerabilities.

Shortly after the shooting, Rep. Dennis Cardoza, D-Atwater, said he and other House members received multiple e-mail warnings from Capitol Hill law enforcement officials.

“They told us to increase our vigilance, and to have more security at our public events,” Cardoza said, adding that “we will follow the recommendations of the police.”

One e-mail advised lawmakers that “the U.S. Capitol Police are directly involved in this investigation” and urged members and staff to “take reasonable and prudent precautions regarding their personal security.”

The Saturday meet-and-greet Giffords was attending with constituents is not unlike those that occur frequently in federal and state legislative districts across California.

U.S. Rep. Dan Lungren, R-Gold River, called the shooting a tragedy and said Democrat Giffords is an upbeat and open member of Congress who, by virtue of her Republican past and moderate present stances, is known on both sides of the aisle.

“We’ll keep her in our prayers,” Lungren told The Bee.

Such a shooting would be less likely there. “We have, I consider, very good security at the Capitol, at the office buildings and so forth,” said Lungren, who serves on the committee that oversees security. “Obviously, the Capitol of the United States is a tremendous symbol. … When members go to their districts, security does not follow them,” Lungren said.

“It’s a real problem,” Cardoza said of the security conundrum. “You want to be accessible, but I also care very deeply about the security of my staff and of the people who attend these public events.”

Cardoza said security considerations contributed to his

previous decision to relocate his Modesto and Merced congressional district offices to government buildings that already maintain a security presence. He indicated security concerns also played into his earlier decision to curtail some public town hall meetings during the politically heated summer of 2009.

Threats against lawmakers are not uncommon. Cardoza said his office has been on the receiving end of some. He added that Giffords, a friend and political ally for whom he campaigned in Arizona during 2008, had previously reported that one of her own congressional offices had been vandalized.

“She’s been concerned,” Cardoza said.

Giffords and Cardoza are both members of the so-called Blue Dog Caucus, largely comprised of moderate House Democrats.

One of the conservative Republicans in the House, Rep. Tom McClintock, whose Northern California district includes Placer and El Dorado counties, expressed outrage that Giffords “was struck down in the performance of a duty central to representative democracy – reaching out and listening to her constituents.

Read the whole story

Surgeon optimistic congresswoman will survive shooting; 6 dead, 13 wounded

By Arizona Republic

Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik said Arizona U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was the intended target in the shooting and he described suspect Jared Loughner as one with a criminal record and one with mental issues. Dupnik also said he was "not convinced" that the suspect acted alone, but he declined to elaborate.

Giffords, 40, a third-term Democrat, was shot through the head at shortly after 10am Saturday at a Safeway at Ina and Oracle roads in northwest Tucson. Loughner, 22, is currently in custody. (Initial news accounts and reports from authorities misidentified the name as Laughner.)

Giffords has undergone brain surgery after being shot by a man who opened fire with a handgun when the Congresswoman was holding a public appearance in Tucson.

One of the surgeons who operated on Giffords said afterwards, "I'm very optimistic about her recovery."

Six people were killed, including U.S. District Judge John Roll, a Giffords aide and a young girl, and 13 others were wounded in the shooting, authorities said. The aide was identified as Gabe Zimmerman, 30, Giffords' community outreach director; he was engaged to be married.

Read the whole story

Coalition: Climate change threatens Sierra Nevada

habitat

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Both the Sierra Nevada and the San Francisco Bay-Delta have been named by environmental groups to a new list of 10 American habitats threatened by climate change.

The list was released Wednesday by the Endangered Species Coalition, a network of hundreds of conservation groups in the United States.

The 10 threatened habitats – deemed most important for endangered species in a warming world – were selected by a panel of 10 scientists from across the country representing academia and the conservation community. They relied on existing data rather than new research.

It is a first by the coalition, which previously generated annual lists focused on individual species rather than whole habitats.

Read the whole story

David Walley's plans more time shares, improvements

By Rob Sabo, Northern Nevada Business Weekly

The new owner of David Walley's Hot Springs near Genoa in the Carson Valley plans to build up to 100 single-family and condominium time-share and rental units at the historic resort founded in 1862.



Pat Joyce, president and founder of Summerwinds Resort Services of Branson, MO., purchased the resort and adjacent lands out of receivership from Bank of America last year for about $12 million and has invested more than $1 million upgrading the restaurant facilities, which reopened in December after closing in 2009.

“When Bank of America gets a troubled asset they call me and other investors,” Joyce says. “I took at look at the property and realize that it is going to be a while before I see any cash coming out of it, but the potential is there, especially with Lake Tahoe and the hot springs.”

Read the whole story