

EDC teen accused of killing relative

By KCRA-TV

Several hours after a Ponderosa High School student was arrested Thursday for bringing a loaded firearm to school, a relative of the teen was found dead at his Shingle Springs home, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office said.

The teen, whose identity has not been released, was arrested in connection with the woman's death, whose body was found at a home on Neef Lane, according to the sheriff's office.

The student was taken into custody by deputies about 8am after he was detained at Ponderosa High School in Shingle Springs.

[Read the whole story](#)

Bill would improve Nevada's mental-health system

By Pashtana Usufzy, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The mental health system in Nevada has long been a lightning rod for criticism, with the Silver State consistently ranking at or near the bottom of most national rankings.

But state legislators and health officials say a trio of bills now being drafted would make some small improvements by streamlining licensing of mental health professionals,

updating the state's definition of "mental illness" and making it easier to share information on individuals who have been deemed mentally ill with law enforcement.

Assemblyman James Oscarson, R-Pahrump, said legislators have long heard complaints about the drawn-out process for out-of-state and new applicants to become licensed mental health workers in Nevada.

[Read the whole story](#)

Resorts closed, travel in Tahoe dangerous



A Heavenly ski patroller digs out the protective pad Jan. 21 from a lift tower. Photo/Heavenly Mountain Resort

There is such thing as too much snow.

“Due to these blizzard conditions we will not be opening Alpine Meadows and only very limited terrain will be available at Squaw Valley,” these two resorts said early Jan. 22.

Sierra-at-Tahoe and Sugar Bowl are also closed for today. Homewood has limited offerings.

Check with the ski resort before going there to make sure it is open and has the amount of terrain open to your liking.

Sierra Avalanche Center says, “High avalanche conditions exist at all elevations.”

Placer County Office of Emergency Services has deemed certain streets in Alpine Meadows at risk of high avalanche danger. In the storms earlier this month a dozen homes in that area were

struck by avalanches, but with no injuries or serious damage reported.

More than 150 NV Energy customers at the lake are still without power. The transformer problem is expected to be fixed Sunday morning.

Liberty Utilities had 52 customers without power in the Tahoe Keys of South Lake Tahoe on Saturday, with that problem being fixed.

Roads are expected to be difficult to travel on throughout Sunday-Monday; this includes highways and streets in residential areas. For highway road conditions, click on the the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

Most agencies, including the National Weather Service in Reno, are saying to not travel at all today in the Sierra.

A winter storm warning for the Tahoe basin and Truckee remains in effect through 4am Monday. Several more feet of snow are expected on top of the multiple feet already on the ground. Wind is also going to be a factor.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

STPUD reduces sewer connection fee 25%

By Kathryn Reed

South Tahoe Public Utility District is cutting its sewer

connection fee 25 percent. This is on top of the 25 percent reduction made in 2015.

“We have priced ourselves out of the market. People are not doing projects because they can’t afford us,” board member Duane Wallace said at the Jan. 19 meeting. “Somebody has to be the domino to start things going. I hope all agencies start to do the same.”

Many who want to build in the district’s territory have complained about the high fees.

The current rate is \$3,666 per connection. The reduction, which will take effect in 30 days, will lower it to \$2,745.

Each house has one sewer connection per bathroom, plus the kitchen. The above price is for each connection in a house or commercial property. This means STPUD used to charge \$10,998 for a three-bedroom, two-bath house. This construction season the fee will be \$8,235.

Board member Jim Jones, who was out sick, had asked his colleagues to delay the vote so the topic could be discussed in the bigger picture of the capital improvement program. Jones believes reducing revenue could impact infrastructure upgrades.

CF0 Paul Hughes said the fee change will impact the district by about \$125,000 a year. He said that with property tax revenue coming in higher than forecasted, those dollars will offset the loss in connection fee income.

The three board members in attendance (Chris Cefalu was also absent) realized the agenda items would pass with them and therefore did not see a reason to delay the vote.

South Tahoe marches in solidarity for equality



The women's march on the South Shore drew more than 500 people. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

By Susan Wood

It was like the 1960s all over again Saturday – with a mountain twist.

More than 500 women and their supporters in the South Lake Tahoe region braved the elements to show how advocating women's rights is not for the faint of heart or the body.

Blowing snow, winter boots, parkas and cross country skis on some participants made the bi-state, high-altitude 2-mile-plus march unique as it wove along Highway 50 from the Hard Rock at Stateline past Lakeview Commons at midtown to the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center.



Kayden Morales, 8, wants his three younger sisters to have the same opportunities he has. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The resilient mass of mountain women, children and men joined millions of sisters in arms at walks that took place around the world in an act of peaceful solidarity on Jan. 21. A million women were expected to march on Washington, D.C., alone to demonstrate their defiance over what's perceived as a threat to their reproductive rights and other aspects of their lives because of their gender – all because of the 45th president of the United States.

Ironically, Sunday marks the 44th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that ultimately gave women the right to choose to end their pregnancy in a medically safe environment.



People voice their opinions with a variety of signs. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The women of South Lake Tahoe's opinions and signs were as diverse as our nation. The constant message – treat women and men equally.

"I'm here to support my community. It's important to be a part of this global event. It means we're done with being discriminated against and isolated. The world is coming together," Lori Cramer said, while she launched her march from the Hard Rock parking lot.

She was not alone.

"I am just hoping to make a statement regarding our values that make our country great," Janice Eastburn said, while holding a sign that read: "Love makes America great."

She listed freedom, compassion, love and dignity as worthwhile goals for humanity.

“And I’ll continue fighting for these values through this president and through the rest of my life,” she said.



Longtime South Lake Tahoe resident Peg Kortess talks of the fight it took women to get the rights that are now being threatened by the current administration. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The unified message not only got through to the mass of

walkers. Honking in support from a long line of vehicles on Highway 50 resonated throughout the march.

A very excited Naylet Martinez of Santa Clara hung out the window of the honking vehicle she was in, taking pictures.

“Do you feel like you’re part of the parade?” *Lake Tahoe News* asked.

“Now I do,” she yelled. “I love it.”

Ditto from local Whisper Krimmer, who didn’t make it in time to get to the starting point – but had an excellent vantage point of the long line of marchers from her vehicle.



Snowy weather did not diminish the turnout Jan. 21 in South Lake Tahoe. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

People from all walks of life took part in hitting the streets. Some parents brought their youngsters as a history lesson in different stages of activism in our democracy.

“I wanted to show them how they can use their voices to be heard by those who make the rules in telling them what we want,” Erin Buck said, while marching with husband Josh and daughters Winter, 7, and Elin, 5. The youngest was holding one of several creative signs. Hers said: “Girls can be president.”

Jane Frame intended to show the same example. Her daughters Liberty, 8, and Sierra, 10, took the sentimental approach – holding a sign that read: “I wish with all my might to be treated right.”



Peacefully people march along Highway 50 on Jan. 21 in support of equality for all. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

As a tourist bus going by honked loudly, Frame explained she had a discussion with her offspring about why they were marching – and the girls agreed to it.

Sierra looked up with piercing eyes and belted out: “Women don’t get paid enough.”

And lest we forget how far the women’s movement has come.

Jenny Hdariis and Leo Singer from Carson City were carrying a

“Battleborn” Nevada banner and provided *Lake Tahoe News* with a moving tribute to the U.S. women’s movement.



All ages show their support for women’s rights. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The couple originally hails from the Middle East.

“We took it for granted all the women’s rights we have. At least we have them,” she said, calling the latest in a series of threats toward women’s benefits such as Planned Parenthood “a wake-up call.”

In Jordan, Hdariis felt she never had rights. So when a U.S. election emerges in which references to women being equated to chattel from elected leaders in high office are made, she takes offense to women resting on their laurels.

Her Israeli husband was right alongside her. He took to Hebrew in sharing his thoughts of the recent diatribe associated with the presidential campaign.

“There’s a saying we have that when the head feels pain, the whole body suffers. When the leading country of the free world suffers, the whole world suffers,” he said, while passing cheering supporters on the second-floor balcony of their Lake Tahoe Vacation Resort unit at Ski Run Boulevard.

In other words, women’s plights are human plights – which afflict the whole world.



Allen Strickland Williams, who is in town performing at the Improv Comedy Club, said marching “is a positive way to cope and process and commiserate with what’s going on.”
Photo/Kathryn Reed

"I support our democracy. Even though (President Donald Trump) is not who we voted for. I still wish the best for our country," Singer said.

Cara Battalico, 33, of South Lake Tahoe was a little more biting and specific with her expectations of the man who took office Friday and the cabinet he is assembling.

In a passionate plea, she listed immigration and women's reproductive rights as being issues she has no intention of seeing returning to the Middle Ages. She doesn't want to compromise with what is deemed as the most conservative federal government in modern times – from the executive to legislative branches.

"I thought we were passed this s–," she said of what the pioneers of woman's suffrage accomplished. "We are not going to go back. We are only going forward. I'm here to raise awareness – no matter what the weather," she added, giggling over the tufts of snow and slush.

Battalico held a cerebral sign that read: "Examine what you tolerate." It appeared she was prepared to take on the "never go back" cause in which women performed back-alley abortions and had fewer rights in comparison to their husbands.

Her husband, Jesse Mancillas of South Lake Tahoe, had been wrestling with issues of his own – trying to hear the opposing political views of his family without arguing. Being the progressive he is, Mancillas proudly waved a sign that identified him as "Men of quality don't fear equality."



Rachel Krufpe worries about her 13-year-old daughter's generation; fearful the country is going backward.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

The signs of the days were the signs of entering an era anticipated to be hard-fought and grueling.

Signs read: "Proud to be a nasty woman," "Our rights are not up for grabs," "Left or right, we all see wrong," "Vagina power," "Pussies in formation," "No grope zone," "Tweet women with respect," "I believe in Planned Parenthood" and others.

One woman carried a wooden sign of a bear that read: "Mamma bear marches for human rights." Another carried the American flag to get her point across.

The chants were just as creative and intense "Love not hate makes America great." "What do we want? Equality. When do we want it? Now."

The demonstration was reminiscent to the gay rights, black and women's movements.

"I think we're in for a hail storm (of a resurgence) like we've never seen before," South Lake Tahoe businesswoman Debbie Brown said, while gliding on her cross country skis. "Think about this. We had a blizzard going on, and I thought we'd have 12 people. Look at this – hundreds (of people)."

"This is so much fun – cathartic," longtime local Sandy Myron described the march.

"South Lake Tahoe women, you rock," City Councilwoman and Soroptimist member Brooke Laine yelled out with a fist pump to the energized crowd of women and their supporters gathered at the Senior Center.

Laine didn't even flinch at saying she expected hundreds of people – despite the weather.

"We're mountain women," she said.

"I can truly say I'm the only Puerto Rican woman to walk (today in all the marches) through a snowstorm," former El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago quipped.

While she did so, Santiago shared that she came out to "send a clear message that the strength of our community lies in our diversity and commitment to constitutional values."

Stuck in the snowbank at the center was the Soroptimist sign that read: "We recognize that in our vibrant and diverse community lie our strength...."

The banner read like a testament to all who have stood together in times that try men and women's souls.



Charlene Jones got out of her car on Highway 50 at Ski Run Boulevard, blocked traffic and made her opinion known – Womens' Rights are Human Rights. Photo/Kathryn Reed

One such person who knows all about those times – Peggy Kortess – addressed the crowd to provide a history lesson of the women's movement.

"There have always been obstacles. This is just part of the mix," Kortess laid out to the assembly of willing listeners.

Take those critical years. Although women were allowed the right to vote in 1920 when ratified, it came with an asterisk for black women – who essentially gained the freedom in 1965. Seven years later, another milestone tested women.

"The Equal Rights Amendment was difficult because women couldn't figure out what it meant," she said.

So, we may have come a long way baby – but perhaps not far enough.

Kortess left the audience with three major points:

- Women have advocated for their rights for a long time.

- Democracy is threatened when we sit back and take the system for granted.

- Democracy is hard work and “not a spectator sport.”

The segue was ideal for Annie Davidson’s appeal for women wanting to channel the energy gained by the day to get involved.

“If you take that chairlift up and look out at that beautiful lake and care about the Earth, then get involved,” she said, as her daughter, Miri, 6, hugged her mother.

“Care” is right within women’s nature, Davidson explained – in how we care for children, families, the environment and humanity.

“This is our time for women in America. We have an important history in the things we know. We’ve been controlled in the past and had to take direction from our husbands and our leaders. I want all our girls to be in a position to take control of their own voices. The most important thing is to get involved,” she said.

Threat of avalanche in Crystal Bay area

If the storm materializes as predicted, the substantial rapid wind loading of new snow and slightly rising temperatures large natural or human triggered avalanches will be possible in the Crystal Bay and Third Creek areas.

Third Creek and the adjacent South Slope are not expected to

produce avalanches that will affect houses or roads, but Crystal Bay homes and upper roads may be at risk by Sunday morning, according to North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District.

The Sierra Avalanche Center has issued a considerable avalanche hazard warning for the backcountry. Residents in the Crystal Bay and Third Creek areas should exercise caution if accessing the slopes above their homes.

Residents are asked to pay attention to snow load near windows. The warning to be prepared to stay indoors Sunday through possibly Monday until this next storm system passes.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Interim contract proposed for Placer County, NLTRA

Placer County Board of Supervisors on July 25 is expected to approve a six-month transitional contract with the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association.

The contract would be effective from Aug. 1 to Jan. 31 for \$1,779,496. NLTRA would be responsible for marketing the North Lake Tahoe area, limited transportation and developing capital projects with the cooperation of the county.

The two entities have been at odds since the county earlier this year drastically altered the contract because it had a desire to have more control. The county also wanted to eliminate the middleman and go right to its constituents.

The meeting will be in Tahoe City starting at 9am.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Property tax fight expected in Nev. Legislature

By Michael Scott Davidson, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Republican leadership in the Nevada Legislature appears split on a proposal to modify a decade-old property tax cap law.

Michael Roberson, the top Republican in the Senate, has vowed to stop the bill, but Assembly minority leader Paul Anderson is keeping a more open mind ahead of the legislative session that begins Feb. 6.

Assembly Bill 43, submitted by the Nevada Association of Counties, would modify formulas used to calculate annual property tax increases and set a floor of 3 percent for annual commercial property tax increases. The bill would not remove caps on annual increases of residential and commercial property taxes, which are set at 3 and 8 percent, respectively.

Read the whole story

Severe storm warning for Sierra



California Conservation Corps members help Lake Tahoe Community College on Jan. 18 with snow removal. Photo/LTN

By Lake Tahoe News

Caltrans is alerting motorists traveling to the Sierra, particularly those using Interstate 80 over Donner Summit or Highway 50 over Echo Summit, to be prepared for significant travel delays through Monday.

Expect passes to be closed at times either for avalanche control or to clear wrecks. For current road conditions, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

Non-essential travel is being discouraged on Sunday and Monday, even on local streets.

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a winter storm

warning through 4am Monday. "Travel into the Sierra on Sunday could be nearly impossible. Strongly consider staying at home on Sunday," the agency says.

Liberty Utilities and Nevada Energy anticipate outages as snow and trees bring down lines. Prepare in advance by having other sources of lighting and heat, and keeping communication devices charged.

Residents in Tahoe-Truckee are reminded to clear gas meters of snow and are encouraged to clear neighborhood fire hydrants.

Backcountry adventure could be deadly. Ski resorts are having a hard enough time keeping up with conditions.

Sierra-at-Tahoe on Jan. 20 issued this statement, "The forecast is calling for an additional 3-4 feet of snow to fall throughout the weekend with as much as 3 inches falling per hour at points, so please be patient as we work to get lifts spinning and trails open. This is what dreams are made of, but guest safety is always our top priority, which means delayed starts and limited operations are sometimes necessary during the variable conditions we're expected to face throughout the weekend. If it's closed, it's closed for a reason. Please respect all closures and signage."

Squaw Valley's record snowfall for January came during the 1981-82 season with 175 inches. In the first 20 days of this year, the resort has received 115 percent of that accumulation.

The U.S. Forest Service office in South Lake Tahoe will be closed Monday because of the storm.

Waste Management in Incline Village will close collection and transfer station operations on Jan. 23 because of the incoming storm. Residential collection will occur Jan. 28 for customers who are missed Monday. Commercial collection will be Jan. 26.

El Dorado County continues to deal with infrastructure problems because of the January storms. In the Tahoe, staff have been working 24 hours a day to plow roads, clear blocked drains due to snow berms, and remove downed trees.

There is a sinkhole on Arapahoe Road between San Diego Street and Country Club Drive.

Current West Slope road closures:

- Fort Jim Road at Newtown Road – failing drainage structure.
- Kyburz Drive – mudslide/trees/ debris blocking drainage. Will take several days to remove. Local access available for residents.
- Weber Creek at Jurgens/Luneman – low water crossing flooded and unsafe for vehicle traffic.
- Cosumnes Mine Road at North Fork of Cosumnes River – bridge approach failure. In addition, other sections of the road not associated with the bridge, have slid down the slope.
- Peavine Ridge Road just to the north of Highway 50 – The road is slipping.

County staff has been responding to calls regarding hundreds of downed trees, flooding, potholes, and small and large slides. The most significant slides have occurred along Salmon Falls Road, Rock Creek Road, Mosquito Road, Newtown Road, Forni Road, and Hassler Road.

STPUD survives first storms

with no spills

By Kathryn Reed

On Jan. 8, South Tahoe Public Utility District pumped more than twice as much treated water than it does on July 4 – normally it's busiest day.

That's what happens when the skies open and rain doesn't stop.

In that 24-hour period more than 12½ million gallons passed through the South Shore sewer district. This was the seventh largest 24-hour flow in the district's history. The record was 17.29 million gallons on Feb. 17, 1986.

South Tahoe PUD's board got an update Jan. 19 on how the district handled the first round of January storms.

The best news is there were no spills. Plus, the district stayed within its permitted allowable discharge per Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. STPUD has a permit for 18½ million gallons at one time. It hit 17½ million gallons on Jan. 8. Changes to its infrastructure allows it to handle 20 million gallons at once. Because of these improvements the district plans to ask Lahontan to revise its permit.

If the district were to go over the permitted allotment, it could be fined. The last fine came in March 1995.

Once things dry out, district personnel will be investigating the Upper Truckee pump station because it had one of the largest flows when normally it has one of the smallest.

"This indicates a failure in the system," district Assistant General Manager Shannon Cotulla told the board. "Going forward we want to look at that collection area."

Power outages kept crews busy. It was hard to find diesel in town because STPUD was buying so much to keep its generators

at the plant and pump stations going.

"It took a Herculean effort to keep things from spilling out there," Cotulla said of Fallen Leaf Lake.

Employees worked around the clock, some sleeping at district facilities, to ensure the equipment kept running and no wastewater got into the environment.