

# Shooting at Sparks Middle School

Two people died and two others were injured in a shooting at Sparks Middle School on Monday morning.

For more info, [click here](#).

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# Fire cuts power in parts of Placer County

By KCRA-TV

A fire in Placer County led to a power outage to at least 500 customers early Monday morning.

CalFire officials said that the fire has spread to about three acres in an area near Foresthill by Spring Garden and Mountain roads.

[Read the whole story](#)

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# Firefighting community says farewell to Underhill

A massive contingent of firefighting units passed through

South Lake Tahoe this afternoon en route to St. Theresa Catholic Church where the services for Mitch Underhill started at 2pm. A CareFlight helicopter flew overhead, following the line of emergency vehicles along Highway 50 from Lake Valley to the church.

The 34-year-old Lake Valley firefighter died Sept. 29. The cause of death has not been released.

Underhill was born and raised in South Lake Tahoe.



Firefighters from throughout Northern California and in the Lake Tahoe Basin are part of the Oct. 20 procession. Photo/LTN

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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**It takes billions of dollars  
to preserve and improve Lake**

# Tahoe's environment



Tahoe City's Lakeside Trail is decorative, has interpretive signs, seats and endless views of Lake Tahoe. Photos/Kathryn Reed

**By Kathryn Reed**

TAHOE CITY – A catastrophic inferno like the Rim Fire could wipe out the more than \$1.4 billion worth of improvements that have been made to Lake Tahoe through the Environmental Improvement Program.

That was the warning Julie Regan, external affairs chief with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, issued Oct. 18.

While 50,000 acres in the Lake Tahoe Basin have received a fuels treatment – or thinning – to make them more fire safe, many have never been touched.

“We can choose our fire. It's a matter of will and funding,”

Mike Vollmer, TRPA forest fuels manager, said.

The TRPA officials along with others were speaking during a tour of a handful of the more than 400 EIP projects that have been completed in the last 15 years. The EIP was created out of the inaugural environmental summit in 1997.

Having trees be spaced out, branches not dangling on the ground and brush removed can help prevent a canopy fire. A goal of thinning is to create terrain that would keep fire on the ground.

Vollmer said a healthy forest has between 90 and 100 trees per acre, whereas there are places now in the basin with 400 trees per acre.

But all of this thinning takes money and that is practically an endangered species these days. If the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act is reauthorized, it calls for \$135 million going to fuels reduction projects.



Blackwood Creek near Lake Tahoe was restored by the California Tahoe Conservancy, while the U.S. Forest Service fixed the upper watershed.

Money is an issue with most of the improvements.

It cost \$12 million to build one mile of trail along the lakefront in Tahoe City.

It's considered an economic benefit considering more than 400,000 people use it each year. Known as the Lakeside Trail, it's a definite showcase as the entire lake is visible, with snow on the higher elevations and aspens at lake level. A play area is being used, cyclists are out, and pedestrians are brushing past.

Kelli Twomey, with Tahoe City Public Utility District – the lead agency on the trail project, and Wally Auerbach with Auerbach Engineering spoke of the collaboration needed to get the trail built, how it was a redevelopment project, and that besides recreation it brought water quality and other improvements to the area.

Keeping fine sediment out of the lake is a major component of most environmental improvement projects. Stuart Roll with the California Tahoe Conservancy pointed out how the 54-acre Blackwood Creek project is an example of how restoration of a channel can reduce dirt from clouding Lake Tahoe.

This area has been logged twice and had a quarry in the creek. Banks were steep, the forest was so thick the aspen stand couldn't thrive, and a user-created trail to Eagle Rock was steep. Now the channel meanders more naturally, sediment reaching the lake has been dramatically reduced, aspens are in full bloom, and a new trail to Eagle Rock has been established.



Milfoil near the dam in Tahoe City.

The federal government shutdown prevented the milfoil removal project by the Tahoe City dam from starting, so it will be delayed until next year.

The plan is to put black tarps on the invasive weed to kill it.

There is so much milfoil that it almost covers the width of the channel near the dam. The weed comes from Lake Tahoe and is making its way down the Truckee River. (It's also going up the Upper Truckee River.)

Tahoe Keys on the South Shore is the largest area with milfoil. Boats distribute it to the rest of the lake via propellers. It's possible one day herbicides could be applied to kill the milfoil.

But it was pointed out that it's near impossible to eradicate any of the aquatic invasive species. It's all about controlling them.

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# Women slowly making difference in Congress

By Casey Capachi, Washington Post

As the fiscal impasse began to show signs of breaking Wednesday on Capitol Hill, one group may have emerged as a voice of reason all along: female lawmakers.

"I know my colleagues are tired of hearing about the women in the Senate," Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, said with a smile on Wednesday, before continuing to give "kudos" on the Senate floor to those involved in the bipartisan proposal to end the shutdown and temporarily raise the debt ceiling to avoid default.

Six of the fourteen senators behind the compromise that the House approved Wednesday night are women.

"In my experience, women are much more willing to sit down together, build consensus and try to get to 'yes' without really clobbering the other side and leaving them bloody," said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., in an interview with PostTV's "InPlay" on Tuesday.

Wasserman Schultz, who is also chair of the Democratic National Committee, said that even though the end result of the budget debate remains "elusive," one thing has become clear.

"What I think the issue is is that we don't have enough women in positions of authority to actually make that move and negotiate," said she said. "That's why if we get more women elected, more women will be able to move up and be in that position of power."

**Read the whole story**

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# Grant makes Fanny Bridge upgrades more likely

Money is in hand to reroute Highway 89 in Tahoe City so it no longer crosses Fanny Bridge.

A \$25.5 million federal grant was awarded to the Tahoe Transportation District for this project as well as bike paths in Meeks Bay and Dollar Point.

An additional \$7.5 million needs to be secured to complete the bridge project.



The 100-year-old dam between Fanny Bridge on the Truckee River and the lake outlet.  
Photo/Bill Kingman

“Although the SR89/Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project is still in the environmental stage, the TTD is extremely pleased that a federal agency will fund a major portion once an alternative is chosen,” said Carl Hasty, TTD manager, said in a statement.

The bridge is seismically challenged. The plan is to make upgrades to it and then turn that stretch of the highway into

a city street.

The highway will be rerouted through U.S. Forest Service land where the transit center is. The exact route is not set. Alternatives are being studied in the environmental documents. Draft environmental documents could be released in winter 2014.

In addition to the safety concerns, the goal is the new route would relieve congestion at what is now a choke point where highways 89 and 28 come together. Environmental gains are also expected.

Placer County Board of Supervisors will hear an update on the project Oct. 22. An economic study is expected to be completed later this year. Construction could begin in 2015.

The 84-year-old bridge that crosses the Truckee River not far from the mouth of Lake Tahoe got its name because of all the backsides of people that look at the water.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## 3 S. Tahoe residents accused of burglary



The arrest Friday of three South

Lake Tahoe residents may have broken up a burglary ring that was going on in South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County and Douglas County.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies said they caught Jeffrey Lee Stephens, 44, Jean Rene Winters, 45, and Joseph Alan Winters, 48, while they were inside a residence Oct. 18 in Valley Crest Estates, located in north Douglas County.

Investigators from the three jurisdictions' law enforcement agencies have been working together to solve a string of burglaries.

"The investigation has so far revealed that the suspects may be responsible for other residential burglaries committed throughout the region," Sgt. Jim Halsey with Douglas County said in a press release.

He said at the time of arrest deputies recovered several stolen items.

The suspects allegedly forced entry into the residence where they were caught.

Anyone who has seen the suspects or the white 2000 Ford Explorer they drove, is asked to call DCSO Investigators Ted Duzan or John Preston at (775) 782.9905.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## **Park family splits Tahoe,**

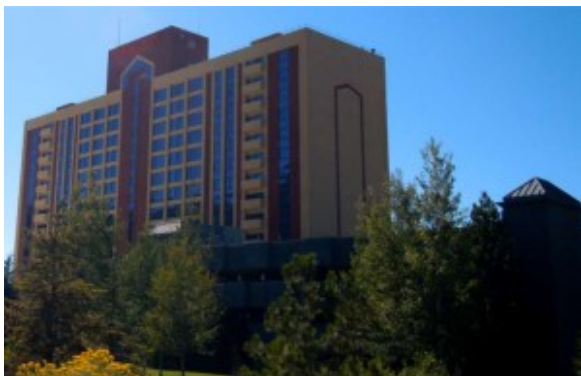
# valley holdings; Horizon hotel-casino to be revamped

By Kathryn Reed

Descendants of the Park family are dividing their thousands of acres at Lake Tahoe and in the Carson Valley, including buildings and business operations, among family members. The property has been in the family since the late 1800s.

"We had a differences with the business philosophy of the company. This split allows us to move forward with ideas that are aligned with our long-term goals," Jon Park told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Once known as Park Cattle Company based in Minden, the company this century evolved into Edgewood Companies.



Expect changes at the Horizon hotel-casino in Stateline after the lease expires March 31, 2014.

Photo/LTN file

The Blach, Seeliger, Lourdeaux and Kelly families will continue to operate Edgewood Companies. The Park family will establish a yet to be named company.

Edgewood Companies will retain Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course,

MontBleu casino, Harveys parking garage land, Friday's Station and Edgewood Water Company. The company also owns other undeveloped parcels and beachfront properties on the South Shore as well as commercial real estate investment properties in Colorado, Georgia and North Carolina.

"Everything on our end stays the same minus the assets, and they won't be on the board when the deal is finalized," Bryan Davis, spokesman for Edgewood told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The changes do not impact the plan to develop Edgewood Lodge at the golf course.

The new company will own the 539-room Horizon casino at Stateline and the 4,000 acres in Carson Valley, including all of the ranching operations.

The change in ownership is expected to be completed in January or February. The Nevada Gaming Control Board needs to approve the changes involving the casino ownership.

LV Casino LLC, which operates the Horizon, has a valid lease and gaming license until March 31.

Park said, "A big step going forward is improving the operations at the Horizon property. We are hands-on owners and we will definitely be involved in the business at the lake and in Carson Valley on a daily basis."

He would not get into what the plans are for the rundown casino when the family takes over the operations.

The Horizon has fallen on hard times that go beyond gaming declining at Lake Tahoe. Table games are no longer offered and big-name performers are no longer booked there.

When the property opened in 1965 it was called Del Webb's Sahara Tahoe, and Elvis Presley played there.

Park isn't worried about the decline of gaming, saying Lake

Tahoe is still a draw from gamblers.

MontBleu, which is across the street from the Horizon, is an Edgewood Companies property. The lease with Tropicana Entertainment out of Las Vegas expires in 2028.

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*Lake Tahoe News* in June 2011 did a three-part series on the Park family. Here are links to part one, part two and part three.

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## Assault victim remembers what suspect looked like

The South Lake Tahoe woman who at first believed she was attacked near Woodfords earlier this month is now determined the assault occurred closer to Meyers.



Alleged  
assailant

As *Lake Tahoe News* reported Oct. 13, head injuries can create

jumbled memories.

The suspect is described as a white male, late 40s to 55 years old, 6-feet-1 or 6-feet-2, with a stocky build. Hair color is unknown, though he had a shaggy moustache, brown with some silver coloring. Facial skin has deep pores, pitted, with reddish hue. See attached composite of the suspect.

Lake Tahoe Secret Witness is offering a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest of the suspect – call (530) 541.6800. Information may also be directed to Detective Paul Kuhn at (530) 573.3022.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## **Brown's actions define a less liberal Calif.**

**By Jessica Calefati, Josh Richman and Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News**

SACRAMENTO – At first glance, it might seem that California lived up to its reputation for unmitigated liberalism in 2013.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed bills to let illegal immigrants get driver's licenses and practice law; raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour, the highest of any state; and make California the only state this year to increase access to abortions.

But look a little closer, and the year wasn't as far to the

left as many think – or as it might've been had the Democrat-dominated Legislature and governor not reined themselves in.

Brown gave the National Rifle Association seven of the 11 vetoes it wanted, including a controversial bill to ban all semi-automatic rifles with detachable magazines. He angered many environmentalists by signing a bill to regulate, not ban, oil and natural gas fracking. And of 38 bills deemed “job killers” by the California Chamber of Commerce, only one – that minimum wage hike – made it to Brown’s desk and became law.

“We saw Jerry Brown this year weave a very cautious path, carefully picking and choosing his battles,” said Bruce Cain, a political science professor at Stanford University. “Any concern he has about an issue now will only intensify next year when he most likely runs for reelection.”

**Read the whole story**