

Prosecutors link murderer to Tahoe woman

By Gary Klien, Marin Independent Journal

Joseph Naso, the 79-year-old man convicted last week of murdering and dumping four women in the 1970s and '90s, is also the prime suspect in the murder of a former Lake Tahoe woman who was found in Tiburon in 1981, prosecutors disclosed in court Wednesday.

Sharileea Patton was 56 when her body washed ashore near the former Tiburon Naval Net Depot off Paradise Drive. She had been strangled and placed inside two plastic garbage bags.



Joseph Naso

The reason the case is surfacing now is because prosecutors want to include Patton's murder as even more evidence why Naso should receive the death penalty. Prosecutors are asking Judge Andrew Sweet to let them present evidence about other alleged Naso sex crimes that were excluded from the trial, including the Patton case.

The jury that convicted Naso returns to court next week to decide on his sentence. Naso argued that the jury should not be allowed to hear about the Patton investigation because the allegations cannot be proved.

Investigators found a Naso diary that mentioned a woman with

references to Leavenworth, Lake Tahoe and the Los Angeles area.

Patton – who also used the last names Heckert, Duvalle and Withrow – was a former resident of the Los Angeles area and worked for the county sheriff's department. She later moved to Lake Tahoe, but a few weeks before her death, she relocated to the Bay Area in search of work.

Naso was arrested in South Lake Tahoe in April 2011 on the murder charges out of Marin County. He had been in custody on unrelated charges.

In 2010 Naso spent a year in El Dorado County jail for a probation violation. In 2008 he had been convicted of committing a burglary in South Lake Tahoe.

Lake Tahoe News contributed to this report.

‘Don’t Fence Me In’ working for Nevada

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada's "A world within, a state apart" slogan may have bombed publicly, but some tourism commissioners think the Killers killed it with the Las Vegas band's rendition of "Don't Fence Me In" in a television ad, and now the state may look to expand use of the song.

A marketing committee meeting of the Tourism Commission today recommended broadening the use of the 1934 Cole Porter-Robert Fletcher western song that is performed by the Killers in an up-tempo rock style.

“‘Don’t Fence Me In,’ to me, is a lot more powerful than ‘A world within, a state apart,’” said Commissioner Christopher Baum, the president and CEO of the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority. “We need to make it more prominent.”

The Tourism Commission unveiled the six-word state slogan in April.

Read the whole story

Gas likely to cost more over Labor Day holiday

By Shan Li and Andrew Khouri, Los Angeles Times

Motorists hitting the road over the Labor Day weekend may find themselves paying more at the pump as the Syrian conflict fans tensions in the Middle East and roils gas markets.

Experts speculate that prices could shoot up 10 cents a gallon or more in the coming days, a reversal of the lower prices road-trippers have enjoyed this summer thanks to increased U.S. production and higher inventories. A gallon of regular gasoline might again vault past \$4.

Prices “are definitely going up,” said Amy Myers Jaffe, executive director of energy and sustainability at UC Davis. “The situation in the Middle East is very volatile, and it goes beyond the Syrian conflict.”

The question is: How much will prices rise, and for how long?

Read the whole story

Stateline casinos do well in July

Stateline casinos brought in more money in July compared to the previous year, which is the opposite of what happened overall in Nevada.

Statewide gaming revenue dropped 8 percent, according to the Gaming Control Board. Nevada brought in \$925.7 million this July, whereas in 2012 the figure was \$1.005 billion.

On the South Shore the casinos' take of \$32 million was an increase of 9 percent. July is often a good month for Stateline because of the Fourth of July holiday and American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Smoke advisory for Tahoe region on Friday

The National Weather Service in Reno has issued a dense smoke advisory for the greater Lake Tahoe area, Alpine County, and northern Mono County through 8 tonight.

Expect smoke from the Rim Fire to continue to affect the Reno, Carson City and Carson Valley areas, too. While blue sky has been prominent on the South Shore for the last two days, east of the basin has been more socked-in by smoke.

Visibility is expected to improve as the day goes on.

“Winds are favorable for smoke to persist through the Labor Day weekend,” according to the Weather Service.

Because prolonged outdoor activity is discouraged in these conditions the athletic council overseeing area high school sports has canceled games for today and Saturday unless they can be played outside the eight affected counties.

The fireworks on the South Shore are set to go off Sept. 1 at 8:30pm.

The Rim Fire has burned 201,894 acres and is the fifth largest in California’s history. It is 32 percent contained; full containment expected Sept. 20.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Park City told to leave; calls Vail ‘bully’

By Christopher Smart and Mike Gorrell, Salt Lake Tribune

Park City Mountain Resort (PCMR) took a broadside Wednesday in its legal dispute over ski terrain and is pointing at Vail Resorts as the “bully.”

Toronto-based Talisker Land Holdings LLC, which recently leased Canyons Resort near Park City to Vail, served an eviction notice to PCMR, giving it until Monday to vacate 2,800 acres of ski terrain.

Salt Lake City-based attorney Alan Sullivan, who represents

PCMR, said his client will respond aggressively to the eviction notice. "We aren't leaving the property."

Park City, like all ski resorts, is now selling season passes and vows to continue operations throughout the upcoming ski season.

"Vail's eviction notice is nothing more than a bald-faced attempt to circumvent the litigation already in process and interfere with our business," Jenni Smith, president and general manager, said in a statement. "We will not give in to Vail's bullying."

John Lund, Talisker's attorney, downplayed the eviction notice and its timing. He called it a procedural matter and said Vail has no interest in disrupting PCMR's business.

Read the whole story

Minimum wage an ongoing issue

By Eleazar David Melendez, Huffington Post

Even as he'd confidently promised before television cameras in January that he would deliver an astounding increase in the minimum wage, the president knew it would be a difficult fight. Unprecedented federal debt and thorny unemployment weighed heavily on Washington, both cautioning against forcing businesses to give low-paid workers a raise.

The president's own top economic expert had told him the government shouldn't further distort the dynamics of the free market. Big business was adamantly against the plan.

And Congress? That lot of obstructionist conservatives and

their “do nothing” attitude would relish any chance to get in the administration’s way, especially if its members could call him a “socialist” and once again bring up his controversial universal health care plan.

So it was in 1949, when President Harry Truman declared the federal minimum wage ought to be nearly doubled, from 40 cents an hour to 75 cents. Using a measure of what minimum-wage earners could purchase with that amount compared with the rest of society, the 1949 increase is roughly the equivalent of a wage today jumping to \$10.70 from \$5.70.

As labor activists across the U.S. begin a round of Labor Day strikes this week in a bid to increase the wages of low-paid workers, raising the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 has become a rallying cry of the boldest proposals. With most political forecasters declaring President Obama’s more modest call for a minimum wage raise to \$9 dead in the water, the idea of more than doubling the minimum wage is generally dismissed as fanciful.

Read the whole story

Tahoe National Forest closures remain; 1 road to open

The Tahoe National Forest intends to reopen the entire Mosquito Ridge Road to all traffic at 8am Aug. 30.

A portion of the road has been closed for public and firefighter safety as a result of the American Fire burning in

Placer County northeast of Foresthill.

To ensure continued public and firefighter safety during wildfire suppression and rehabilitation activities, the entire fire area, including all roads and trails within the following described area, remains closed: west of Deadwood Ridge Road, south of Foresthill Divide Road, east of Flat Ravine Road, and north of Mosquito Ridge Road.

The following Forest Service Roads on the American Fire area perimeter are still closed until further notice:

- Deadwood Ridge Road (FSR 6149) from Foresthill Divide Road (FSR 0088) to the road's end.
- Foresthill Divide Road (FSR 0088) from the intersection of Humbug Canyon Road (FSR 66) to Robinson Flat.
- Flat Ravine Road (FSR 43) from Robinson Flat Campground to Mosquito Ridge Road (FSR 96).

Popular recreation sites within the fire area that remain closed are:

- The Western States Trail (Forest Trail 16E10) from the Michigan Bluff trailhead to Robinson Flat.
- Trail Loop 6 (FSR 11-44, the Codfish Loop) at its intersection with Tie 5-6 (FSR 11-38) on Mitchell Mine Road (FSR 88-11).
- Robinson Flat Campground.

For more info, call (530) 367.2224.

Ex-El Dorado resident going to prison for 4+ years

Former El Dorado County resident Daniel Chartraw, 40, was sentenced today to four years and nine months in prison and was ordered to pay \$2.8 million in restitution.

Chartraw pleaded guilty to wire fraud charges in January.

According to court documents, between Jan. 1, 2007, and Nov. 31, 2011, Chartraw defrauded investors through false representations regarding a variety of investments, including investments in mines, mining and refinery equipment, oil commodities, precious metals concentrate, and multimillion-dollar certificates of deposit.

In one instance, Chartraw stole \$1 million by fraudulently posing as an owner and manager of a company selling “dore” bars, which Chartraw claimed contained precious metals. Chartraw arranged for an investor to tour the company and managed to limit the investor’s interaction with the company’s true owners and prevent discovery of the scheme. When the investor placed \$1 million into an escrow account for the purchase of the dore bars, Chartraw used a forged letter to get the escrow company to send the money to accounts he and others controlled.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Economy shrinking Nev. brothel business

By Alison Vekshin, Bloomberg

In a dim parlor furnished with red velvet couches and a stripper pole, Brooke Taylor is having a sale on herself.

“I offer a lot more specials and discounts and incentives for people to come in to see me,” said Taylor, 32, a brunette prostitute in a short, green dress at the Moonlite Bunny Ranch outside Carson City. “People are looking for deals.”

Nevada’s legal brothels, which took root in the mid-1800s silver-mining boom, are dwindling, down to about 19 from roughly 36 in 1985, according to George Flint, an industry lobbyist. Many have been the highest-profile businesses in their sparsely populated regions, and their decline hurts already-stretched county budgets and marks the end to local institutions – though not the universally beloved sort.

The state’s flagging economy, decreased patronage by truckers squeezed by fuel costs and growing use of the Internet to arrange liaisons are to blame, managers say.

“A lot of our clients don’t have the discretionary income they had six years ago, five years ago,” said Susan Austin, 63, the madam of the Mustang Ranch in Sparks. “The ones that can come in, they aren’t spending quite what they were spending before.”

Read the whole story