

Tahoe area authors share works with receptive audience

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – Words danced off the tongues of writers as if they were lyrics. Words lingered in the air heavy with emotion. Words fell flat.

Mostly, though, the listener was left wanting more.



Jeremy Evans of South Lake Tahoe reads to a full house Sept. 17. Photo/Kathryn Reed

More words can easily be found, but it won't be the author reading aloud.

Twelve authors delivered a rousing portrayal of literary brilliance Sept. 17 during the second annual Celebration of Writers Around the Lake at the Valhalla Grand Hall. Each read a segment of their work – all of which was on display. Many of the nearly 70 in attendance were snatching up autographed copies of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

Krista Benjamin took something so ordinary and turned it into

a whimsical poem of sorts.

"One thing about being a writer is you can be a shameless eavesdropper," she said.

She was at an anthropology conference her husband, Scott Lukas, (who also read Friday night) was attending and started writing down what she heard in the hallway. It made for a fun transcript of sorts.

As with most poetry, it always sounds so much better spoken than read in silence. And with the authors' speaking the words, the inflection is precise and delivered as intended.

Karen Terrey brought some regional lore into her work with references to Donner Party cannibalism with lines like: "Would you have to be dying to eat me?"

Scott Lankford and Jeremy Evans saw their published works for the first time that night. Lankford's is titled "Tahoe Beneath the Surface: The Hidden Stories of America's Largest Mountain Lake." It didn't capture me, but Sue had high praise for the reading.

Evans' book is "In Search of Powder: A Story of America's Disappearing Ski Bum." The segment he read about a Mammoth ski bum, turned family man made me wonder if Evans saw a bit of himself in this vignette. I'm looking forward to the copy of his book arriving in my post office box.

Gailmarie Pahmeier, a poet who was at last year's event, captivates an audience not only with what is being said, but how it is said.

Sue's response when Pahmeier was done was, "Wow! She's brilliant." I concur.

Ann Ronald read the most disturbing piece. Her fictional book called "Friendly Fallout 1953" borders on nonfiction. The people aren't real, but most of the circumstances involving

the atomic testing in Southern Nevada and the subsequent fallout are very real.

I want to know more. But at the same time I don't.

The writers featured on Sept. 17 were:

- Jeremy Evans, nonfiction, "In Search of Powder: A Story of America's Disappearing Ski Bum"
- Scott Lankford, nonfiction, "Tahoe Beneath the Surface"
- Ann Ronald, fiction, "Friendly Fallout 1953"
- Janet Smith, poet, "All of a Sudden Nothing Happened"
- Michael J. Makley, nonfiction, "Cave Rock: Climbers, Courts, and a Washoe Indian Sacred Place"
- Suzanne Roberts, poet, "Shameless, Nothing to You"
- Gailmarie Pahmeier, poet, "New Poets of the American West"
- Karen Terrey, "Tangled Roots Writing"
- Jeanine Stevens, poet, "Caught in the Clouds"
- June Saraceno, poet, "Altars of Ordinary Light"
- Krista Benjamin, poet, "New Poets of the American West"
- Scott Lukas, nonfiction, "Fear, Cultural Anxiety, and Transformation: Horror, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Films Remade"

The event is put on by Tahoe Writers Works.