

A book all about Tahoe that goes beyond the ordinary

By Kathryn Reed

Say “Lake Tahoe” and people will have a story to tell. It’s just that captivating. But it’s not always the lake that is the story.

A sampling of what *the lake* means to people came to life Friday night during the launch of “Tahoe Blues” – a collection of 60 short essays about this spot on a map that divides California and Nevada. But what rang out from the nine authors who read June 8 is that the lake is a unifier.

With essay titles like “Powder Day”, “A Hike to Scott’s Lake”, and “Chain Monkey”, these stories will resonate with the people who call Lake Tahoe home or come here to sample what others devour year-round.

But it’s not all about the outdoors. It’s about life. The good, the bad, the sad, the real – sometimes all of the above.



Bona Fide Books Publisher Kim Wyatt on June 8 launches the company's latest book -- "Tahoe Blues" -- at Lake

Tahoe Community College.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

“So Close to Home” by Sherry Sellars encompasses so many emotions. It’s about a woman working with babies all day who is having a hard time conceiving her own child and how she is unconsciously transformed from despair to joy just by looking around at the place she calls home.

“Tahoe Blues” is the third book published by Bona Fide Books in Meyers. Kim Wyatt, owner of the publishing house, received more than 200 submissions for this “short lit on life at the lake” and picked 60 to print.

“I expected skiing and bears, but I did not expect such depth. But if we are talking in metaphors, the lake is deep,” Wyatt told *Lake Tahoe News* before the June 8 event at Lake Tahoe Community College.

The writers chosen to read Friday night had a connection to Lake Tahoe Community College – either by being a student (current or past) or an instructor. The event was the final one of the school year for the Writers Series that is run by Suzanne Roberts.

Most of the writers who complete the collection live in the greater Lake Tahoe area or have some connection to the region.

Wyatt came up with the idea of “Tahoe Blues” from a colleague in Alaska who published a book of flash fiction, micro essays.

“I thought, Tahoe needs one,” Wyatt said.

The range of writers and stories comes through in the selection that was read on this opening night. What also came through so clearly is the quality of writers Tahoe has.

The subject of Krista Lukas’ essay perhaps captured it best – “You Don’t Seem Like You’re From Tahoe”. She delves into how

people can't believe she was born and raised here. She knows it's a backhanded compliment.

"Reading and writing may be what turned me into someone who surprises people by being from Tahoe," she writes.

Wyatt liked the idea of providing the opportunity to expose readers to a slew of writers instead of just one, as is the case with most books.

"The biggest challenge to this book was the organization, creating a table of contents," Wyatt said. "The obvious way to organize it was by shades of blue." That is reflected in the nine title chapters – all shades of blue.

The only thing that disappoints Wyatt is not receiving one submission about mountain biking. But maybe that will be for the second edition.

"I would love to do another collection. I have to see if people like this one," Wyatt said.

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Notes:

- "Tahoe Blues" may be purchased online, or at Gaia-Licious in South Lake Tahoe, Angora Lakes Resort, and Bespoke in Truckee. Books are \$15.

Future readings:

- June 20, 6:30pm: Sundance Books, Reno
- July 2, 3pm: Explore Tahoe, South Lake Tahoe
- July 28, 7pm: EDAC ArtSpace, Placerville
- Sept. 7, 7pm: Sierra Nevada College Literary Lollapalooza, Incline Village

- Sept. 14, 7pm: Celebration of Writers, Valhalla, South Shore.