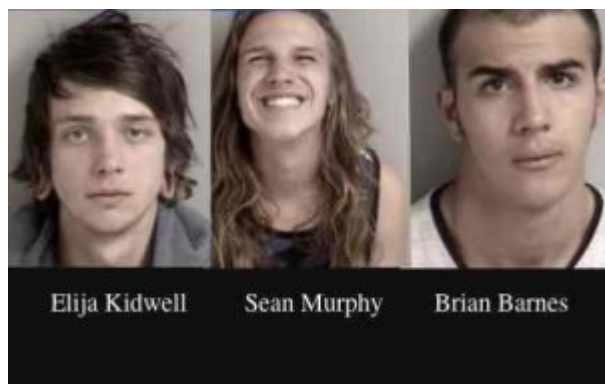


3 men arrested in rash of vehicle thefts



Three people are in custody after allegedly going on a spree to steal vehicles in South Lake Tahoe.

In the 16-hour period between 7pm March 31 and 11am April 1 three vehicles were stolen and several unlocked cars within the city had property stolen from the interiors. In each auto theft case, the vehicle had been left unlocked with the keys inside. Only one of the three stolen vehicles has been recovered.

Three 18-year-olds from Placerville were arrested – Elija Kidwell, Sean Murphy and Brian Barnes – on felony charges of auto theft, possession of stolen property and conspiracy as it relates to at least one of these three auto thefts and to some of the thefts of property from inside unlocked and unattended vehicles.

Officers said the thefts began Monday evening when a white 1991 Jeep Cherokee was stolen from a residence on Bowers Avenue. This vehicle has not been located. At about 10:40 the same night, less than a mile away, a 1991 Subaru Outback was stolen from the parking lot of Inn by the Lake.

On Tuesday about 9am a victim discovered at least three men stealing items out of his unlocked vehicle in front of his house on Lodi Avenue. When he went to investigate the suspects

fled in the stolen Subaru Outback. The Subaru abandoned in the parking lot of the Nickelodeon Motel.

The suspects were located at the Grocery Outlet store; where at least one other victim had already discovered a theft from their unlocked vehicle in the parking lot.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report