



Five college football coaches on the hot seat

SPORTS, 1B

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Rodriguez arrested on DUI charge

Siobhan McAndrew
Reno Gazette Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Joe Rodriguez, a top official in Nevada's Office of Public Safety and a Sparks city councilman, was arrested early Saturday, Feb. 21 on misdemeanor DUI charges.



Rodriguez was named state fire marshal in September 2025 after joining the agency in 2016. The Washoe County Sheriff's Office arrested Rodriguez and he was booked into jail at 6:42 a.m. Jail records show he was no longer being held Sunday morning.

Rodriguez was elected to the Sparks City Council in November 2024. He previously served as a Washoe County School Board trustee from 2021 through November 2024.

According to the state's website, the fire marshal oversees fire prevention education, fire service training and investigates and enforces issues related to protecting life and property.

Las Vegas TV station 8 News Now reported that Rodriguez was arrested after crashing a state vehicle and has been suspended from his state job pending an investigation. The Reno Gazette Journal has reached out to the Nevada Department of Public Safety for comment.

Truckee grieves avalanche deaths

Siobhan McAndrew Reno Gazette Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

A name was neatly stamped in the center of each blue wooden heart nailed to a white post, the first public memorial to the nine people killed in the Feb. 17 Sierra Nevada avalanche. • At a candlelight vigil Sunday night in downtown Truckee, exactly one week after the group of 15 set out on a backcountry ski trip, hundreds gathered to mourn another tragedy in a community already reeling from loss. • "These past weeks have broken our hearts more than once," Truckee Vice Mayor Courtney Henderson told the crowd.

She talked about the eight people, including four children with the local Tahoe Titans baseball team, who were injured when a vehicle drove into their group outside a grocery store on Feb. 7. Law enforcement believe the act was intentional, and one man was arrested.

Days later, shots were fired at another store. No one was hurt, but the town remained shaken, she said.

"Before we had even begun to process that pain, the mountains brought us more," Henderson said.

Among those killed in what officials have called the deadliest avalanche in modern California history were six women remembered as mothers, wives and close friends. The six — Carrie Atkin, Liz Clabaugh, Danielle Keatley, Kate Morse, Caroline Sekar and Kate Vitt — all were accomplished skiers with ties to Truckee.

Three professional guides with Blackbird Mountain Guides also died: Andrew Alissandratos of Verdi, Nicole Choo of South Lake Tahoe and Michael Henry of Florida.

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"Before we had even begun to process that pain, the mountains brought us more."

Courtney Henderson
Truckee Vice Mayor



Media from across the country were in Truckee for the vigil. AT LEFT: Mourners signed a blue wooden heart for each of the nine victims. AT TOP: A vigil in downtown Truckee was held Feb. 22 for nine backcountry skiers who died in an avalanche Feb. 17 on Castle Peak. PHOTOS BY SIOBHAN MCANDREW/RGJ

Cartel leader's death leads to violence

Lauren Villagran, Kathryn Palmer and Zac Anderson
USA TODAY

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said Feb. 23 that normal activity had resumed following a day of violence in several regions of the country.

"Today, there is tranquility," she said, adding that peace had been secured and blockades largely cleared.

The U.S. State Department partially relaxed its security alert for Americans in several Mexican states, which had initially included the international

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