

## Meyers home gutted by fire

Elaine Goodman  
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**MEYERS** - A fast-moving blaze sparked by barbecue briquettes on the front deck of home here late Wednesday appeared to have destroyed the house, authorities said.

A man was home alone sleeping at 1650 Tionontati St. when the fire broke out a little before 11 p.m., officials said. "He woke up, smelled smoke, observed fire on the front deck," said Lake Valley Fire District Assistant Chief Curt Warren.

The man tried to douse the fire with a garden hose, but his efforts failed and he fled out a back window, Warren said. Authorities arrived at the home to find it fully engulfed in flames.



Firefighters battle a blaze at 1650 Tionontati St. in Meyers late Wednesday. Officials said the fire was started by barbecue briquettes on the front deck.

Elaine Goodman/Tahoe Daily Tribune

"This one really took off," said Sgt. Pete Van Arnum, one of several members of the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office who responded to the scene.

Surveying the home from the street on Wednesday night, Warren said it appeared to be a complete loss. Two vehicles in the driveway also were damaged by the blaze. In addition, three pet dogs were overcome by smoke and died in the fire, Warren said.

The resident was treated for smoke inhalation at the scene but declined hospitalization, Warren said. The man declined on Wednesday to comment on the fire.

The residents had been barbecuing earlier in the evening on the deck at the front of the two-story A-frame home, Warren said.

Barbecue briquettes dropped onto the deck, starting the blaze, which was further fueled by construction material and solvents at the front of the home, Warren said.

An explosion heard as authorities were arriving on scene was likely a propane tank for the barbecue, Warren said.

The fire burned through the connection of power lines to the home, causing the line to fall across Tionontati Street. Power company workers were called to switch off the current.

Lake Valley firefighters received assistance in battling the blaze from the South Lake Tahoe Fire Department; the sheriff's department and California Highway Patrol also responded.

### How to help

An account has been established for donations to longtime locals Paul Howell, his partner, Lisa Thomas, and their son, JP Howell, whose house burned March 9. They lost everything in the fire including pets, vehicles, clothing and work tools.

Howell and his son are musicians and are very involved with local youth. They often have friends over to play music and stay if they have nowhere to go. In addition to the family's personal loss, all their musical equipment as well as equipment belonging to the local youth including amps, guitars, drum sets, mixers and recorders was destroyed.

The Howells have no insurance and friends of the family have set up an account to help them recover from the devastation. Donations in any amount would be greatly appreciated. Donations may be made to U.S. Bank, account No. 253452321248.