

## EDITORIAL

# National spotlight shines on Plumas

## Dateline NBC segment showcases law enforcement

It's probably safe to assume that more residents in Plumas County tuned in to watch NBC Dateline on Oct. 18 than normally watch the two-hour news show that airs on Friday night. And, if they were anything like District Attorney David Hollister and Detective Sgt. Steve Peay, they might have been a little nervous wondering about how the county would be portrayed on a national stage.

But any worry was for naught. Those who turned on the television fearing that the county might be portrayed as a bastion for lawlessness or backwoods hicks would have been pleasantly surprised.

The segment began with the to-be-expected theatrics — eerie shots of isolated mountain vistas and the dramatic intonation of the narrator — setting the tone for the July 2011 killing of a 20-year-old who, along with a carload of friends, stole solar lights from Gregory Chad Wallin-Reed and, in the process, scared his family.

Wallin-Reed told the interviewers his version of what happened that night and what led him to open fire on the vehicle carrying the victims on a dead-end dirt road near Antelope Lake.

But then it was law enforcement's turn, and the cameras rolled and the audience watched as Sgt. Peay methodically investigated the event, calmly asking questions and sequentially punching holes in Wallin-Reed's story.

It wasn't just that he asked the right questions, it was his controlled and carefully measured manner, both as he recounted the events and when he was taped interviewing Wallin-Reed, that left an impression.

District Attorney Hollister was just as impressive as he worked with the detectives, brought the charges and then argued his case in court. Both the investigation and the prosecution were first rate.

And even though the footage focused on the Wallin-Reed cabin and the area surrounding the scene of the shooting, it also captured the small town charm of Quincy, with its historic courthouse and quintessential Main Street, as well as the beauty of the entire county.

It's unfortunate that a murder led to a national spotlight being focused on Plumas County, but we can't help but be proud that the light illuminated our first-rate criminal justice system and our picturesque setting.