

Driver takes out hydrant, SLT streets flood

South Tahoe Public Utility District crews are in the state streets area of South Lake Tahoe dealing with water flooding multiple streets.

The call came in at 6:15pm Jan. 8. The leak was isolated 20 minutes later.

A hit and run driver took out a fire hydrant on Colorado Street that caused unknown gallons of water to flood local streets and yards. Water flowed across Tahoe Keys Boulevard to Jeffery Street.

Water was turned off briefly for some customers.

The water lines in this area, including the mains, are all new. They were put in either in 2013 or 2014, as were the hydrants.

Richard Solbrig, STPUD general manager, told *Lake Tahoe News* barricades will be put up Friday and the hydrant repaired on Jan. 10.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Brown's budget calls for

record \$113 bil. in spending

By Josh Richman and Jessica Calefati, San Jose Mercury News

SACRAMENTO – Gov. Jerry Brown rolled out a \$113 billion budget Friday morning that boosts K-12 schools but doesn't add more money for the University of California, which has threatened tuition hikes.

Although the proposed budget shows income and corporate taxes fueling the state's second consecutive surplus after years of red ink, Brown said his plan signifies "self-discipline and real prudence" – even as advocacy groups say it's high time to shore up the universities and mend the social safety net shredded by bone-deep cuts in past years.

"It's a question of priorities," Brown said. "There's only so much money here."

Still, the plan represents a 5 percent increase in general-fund spending over this current year. It would put another \$1.2 billion into the state's "rainy day" budget reserve fund, bringing its balance to about \$2.8 billion, and would pay down about \$1.2 billion in debt.

K-12 schools and community colleges get \$65.7 billion in fiscal year 2015-16 under Brown's plan – a 39 percent increase over four years ago – with much of the growth going to the Local Control Funding Formula that Brown and lawmakers enacted in 2013. Past K-12 budget deferrals will be all paid off.

Read the whole story

Student art contest focuses on Calif. drought

California students may participate in the Conservation Creativity Challenge Poster Contest. The contest aims to educate students about California's drought, and to help raise awareness of everyday water conservation practices through the arts and creativity.

All California students in fourth and fifth grade are eligible to participate and win prizes, and the opportunity for their artwork to be displayed in the state Capitol.

Complete contest details and teacher curriculum and lesson planning resources are available online. The deadline is March 31.

This is the first time the California Arts Council and Department of Water Resources have partnered on an initiative.

Father-daughter dance tickets on sale

The annual Father Daughter Dance is Feb. 6 at Harrah's Convention Center in Stateline from 7-9:30pm.

This is an evening for fathers and their daughters to dance and visit with friends.

Refreshments will be served and a photo keepsake is available for an additional fee. Tickets are \$10 a person. The event often sells out.

For more information, call 775.586.7271.

2014 hottest year on record in Calif., Nev.

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Driven by climate change and a persistent ridge of high pressure over the Pacific Ocean that caused California's drought, 2014 was the state's hottest year ever recorded.

Temperatures last year averaged 61.5 degrees Fahrenheit in California – 4.1 degrees hotter than the 20th century average, according to a report Thursday by federal scientists.

Three other Western states – Alaska, Arizona and Nevada – also experienced their hottest years since 1895, when modern instruments were first used. And Anchorage, Alaska, didn't have a single day in 2014 in which the temperature dropped below zero, the first time in 101 years of record keeping.

"We do have a long-term warming trend across the globe, across the U.S. and in California," said Jake Crouch, a climate scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which released the data. "This really warm year is just an exclamation point on top of a warming trend for that part of the country."

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Tahoe South Restaurant Week is Jan. 9-16. For more details, go online.

- High Fives Foundation gave Truckee resident Jeff Andrews a grant for \$10,830. Andrews was snowboarding at Sugar Bowl in March 2014 when he overshot a jump in the terrain park. The crash burst fractured his C-5 vertebrae into his spinal cord at the C-5/C-7 level causing paralysis from the chest down.

- Andrea Drew of Drew Consulting will be teaching people how to be a visionary at work. The Jan. 21, 5:30-6:30pm workshop is put on by Tahoe Regional Young Professionals. It's free to members, \$5 for others. It will be in the boardroom of Nichols Consulting, 155 Highway 50, No. 204, Stateline.

- *USA Today* named Carson City the best state capital to visit.

- Eighth-grader Brandon Koyama of Carson Valley Middle School in Gardnerville placed in the top 10 in the National Radon Poster Contest after his entry took first place in the Nevada Radon Poster Contest.

Placer County looking for academy participants

Placer County is looking for people to participate in the next

Sheriff Office's Community Awareness Academy.

There are eight classes, each covering a different topic.

Classes are Monday-Wednesday 6-8:30pm beginning March 2 and ending March 25. Classes are in the Community Room at the Placer County Sheriff's Office headquarters in the Auburn Justice Center, 2929 Richardson Drive, Auburn.

The academy is intended to provide the citizens of Placer County with an overview of the sheriff office's functions, policies and procedures, as well as getting them involved in their community. The goal of the academy is to provide a greater awareness and understanding of law enforcement's role in the community.

Attendees must be at least 18, work or reside in Placer County and agree to submit to a minor background check.

To reserve a spot, call Kim Rivera at 530.889.6922 or email krivera@placer.ca.gov.

Boxer not seeking re-election in 2016

By Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

California Sen. Barbara Boxer, a standard-bearer of liberal politics who has served in Congress for more than three decades, announced Thursday she will not run for another term.

Boxer made her announcement during an interview with her grandson, which she posted on her political website. She said she was not leaving the Senate because of the rancorous tone

on Capitol Hill or because of her age.

“Some people are old at 40 and some people are young at 80,” Boxer said. “I feel as young as I did when I got elected.” But she said she wants to return to California and continue her political work through her political action committee.

“I am never going to retire,” she said. “The work is too important. But I will not be running for the Senate in 2016.”

The departure of the 74-year-old progressive is expected to set off a scramble among the state’s most prominent politicians, several of whom are expected to run for her seat.

Boxer has been among the Senate’s most unyielding advocates for environmentalists, women’s rights groups and organized labor. A feisty crusader with a taste for confrontation, Boxer’s combative style was not always conducive to the nuances of legislative deal-making, leaving the senator with few landmark laws bearing her name.

Read the whole story

LTCC eager to spend \$55 mil. on improvements

By Kathryn Reed

While it could take 18 to 24 months before Lake Tahoe Community College begins construction on a new building, that doesn’t mean there won’t be more immediate changes to the South Lake Tahoe campus.

The passage of the \$55 million facilities bond in November

means plenty of improvements are coming. Remodeling the commons area – the main building – could occur this summer and be ready when students arrive fall quarter.

Technology improvements will also be noticeable.

“The goal is from everyplace on campus you will be able to quickly get on the Internet without delay,” President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Technology – or the lack thereof – has been a consternation at the college for years. Until recently people could not get cell service throughout most of the campus. It’s still sketchy. The same goes for connecting to the Internet.

This also means classrooms are lacking what is now a basic teaching tool – Internet.

“They should be able to connect to the Internet like that. It should be easy for them and not frustrating,” Murillo said.

A big piece of the tech improvements will come in the science labs, which are sorely outdated.

Students and staff also have to deal with rooms that are frigid or unbearably hot. While heating and air conditioning systems aren’t sexy, they are a necessity. A temperate room is also more conducive to learning.

The big-ticket items are going to require an environmental impact statement and an environmental impact report. The college expects by the end of the month to release the request for proposal for an environmental consultant.

While it’s likely to take 10 to 12 years for the college to complete the project list that the bond will fund, there is a facility’s master plan that encompasses 20 to 25 years. The desire is to have the EIS/EIR look at the bigger picture as much as possible. The environmental process could take 18 to 24 months.

The college is getting appointments on the book with Tahoe Regional Planning Agency officials as well. The Division of State Architect office will also play an integral role when it comes to the integrity of the facilities that are built.

"We are making sure everything we do is well thought out. We make up time by making sure we plan well," Murillo said.

LTCC officials are in the process of prioritizing what gets done when. This in turn dictates how much the college will seek with each bond issuance. Murillo said likely there will be three issuances, four at the most. Financial advisors and attorneys help with those decisions.

Another consideration when deciding what to focus on is the fact the state has not issued a facilities bond and likely won't in 2016. That means no shared costs as had been hoped.

"The governor's budget will be critical. It will come out (today)," Murillo said.

She said what Gov. Jerry Brown proposes for community college funding will play a key role in how LTCC structures its priority list.

"We get the sense Gov. Brown will not do any statewide facilities bond. He has made it clear if communities want to make an investment in K-12 or a community college, it will be the responsibility of the local community," Murillo said. "Part of the reason we did the bond is because we thought the facilities would continue to deteriorate while we waited for the state to do something."

Not having the state matching dollars may mean some of the original plans are scaled back. But the college also has an additional \$825,000 to spend that was going toward the university center. Lisa Maloff has agreed to donate the entire nearly \$6 million needed for that facility. She wants to be at the ribbon cutting, so that project will be accelerated in any

way possible.

Letter: Community welcomes first baby of 2015

To the community,

A host of local businesses provided gifts to welcome the first baby born in 2015 at Barton Family Birthing Center. Brianda Torres, Daniel Molina, and big brother Noe Torres of South Lake Tahoe welcomed Jayden Daniel Molina Torres on Jan. 1 at 3:06pm.

Every year, the community celebrates this milestone by donating gifts and gift certificates for the first baby's family. We wish to thank the following local businesses for their partnership and contributions.

To kick off the celebration, Thran's Flowers delivered a "Baby Bouquet" and SouthTahoeNow.com created a personalized baby announcement. Hard Rock Café Lake Tahoe, Tahoe Valley Pharmacy, and Toy Maniacs generously donated a mix of toys and baby products. El Dorado Savings Bank started a savings account for Jayden and Earth Smart Diaper Service and Raley's provided the family with everyday items to help during the transition.

Other local businesses gave gifts for the whole family. For a special time out on the town, Happy Hearts Childcare Services provided babysitting hours and Beach Hut Deli, Beach Retreat & Lodge Tahoe, Ernie's Coffee Shop, Hard Rock Café Lake Tahoe, Harrah's/Harveys Lake Tahoe, and Roundtable Pizza offered dining and entertainment gift certificates. The city of South

Lake Tahoe Rec Center, Elevated Fitness, and Kahle Community Center all gave unique fitness opportunities. In addition, Linda LaFavor Coyle of Beauticontrol, Paradise Beauty, and Tahoe Nails & Spa supplied pampering gifts for mom.

Staff from Barton Health also joined in on the donation fun. The Auxiliary Gift Shop, Hospital Foundation, Human Resources, and Public Relations contributed an assortment of goodies. Cathy Vogelgesang, one of Barton's Auxiliary volunteers, captured the winter spirit and knit an infant-sized beanie.

On behalf of Jayden and his family, we wish to thank all contributors. The total value of this year's donations equaled \$1,950.

Molly Hucklebridge and Sue McLaughlin, Barton Health public relations