Opinion: Understanding the roots of labor in the U.S.

To the community,

When I heard of the general strike in Oakland, I thought of Harry Bridges who led the general strike that shutdown the city of Seattle.

The U.S.A. has a bloody history, maybe the bloodiest labor history among the Western nations. In May 1886, the Haymarket Massacre occurred in Chicago. Seven police died. Seventy were wounded. Seven labor leaders were sentenced to death.



Bill Crawford

In 1892, the Homestead Massacre occurred. It was a steel workers strike for the right to organize. The strike was broken by the company hiring 300 Pinkerton detectives. Seven died. Finally, the state militia (Pennsylvania) was brought in and stayed for four months. No effective steel union was organized until the 1930.

On July 14, 1892, martial law was declared in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Silver miners were on strike. Federal troops were dispatched to the area.

In 1894, the Pullman strike occurred. President Grover Cleveland sent federal troops in.

Much of the "unrest" centered around labor's attempt to

organize and bargain for a 40-hour work week and to get a national holiday, Labor Day.

May 30, 1937, the Memorial Day Massacre occurred. Steel workers were demonstrating in South Chicago. They were fired upon by the police. Four were killed, 84 injured.

Presently, organized labor's numbers are shrinking. There are right to work laws in some states. In an industrial economy, if labor isn't organized, who will represent the working man and woman? Who will speak for those on the bottom? And as the middle class continues to shrink and sink to the bottom, we are regressing to the day when working people will be reduced to chattel. And the too big to fail banks, etc., will be masters over a nation of Winston Smiths.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

State finally prevails – Kindertown day care closed

By Kathryn Reed

Kindertown Day Care and Preschool will not open Monday. It may never open again, at least not with Maria Barrows-Crist as owner-operator.

Officials from the California Department of Social Services showed up at the South Lake Tahoe center Friday about lunchtime with an order from a judge stating the center would be closed at the end of business Nov. 4.

"Thirty-nine kids over the weekend will have to find alternate care," Barrows-Crist told *Lake Tahoe News* through tears.



Community efforts to keep Kindertown open ultimately were not enough. Photo/LTN file

She looks at the pictures on the walls in the center, of the people who have supported her for the past 33 years – and especially in the past two years during her licensing struggles – and she feels she has let them down.

“I feel like such a failure,” Barrows-Crist. “I really did fight.”

When troubles first started, Kindertown received money from the state as well as private funding. She had 130 children and 20 employees in September 2009.

About 7,000 kids have come through the doors since Judy Kurtzman first opened Kindertown on July 1, 1973. Barrows-Crist is the third owner.

Her saga with the state began in September 2009 when the officials tried to close the facility based on a series of allegations. Each time Barrows-Crist wins in court the state comes up with more charges. This time, though, the state won. That hasn’t happened before during all of this back-and-forth legal maneuvering.

Officials from the state were not available for comment late Friday afternoon.

Barrows-Crist said she was caught off-guard because she didn't believe anything would happen until the Nov. 18 hearing before El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Warren Stracener in Placerville. In October he ruled there is no harm keeping Kindertown open until his decision is made later this month.

But the state took the case to the appellate court, which said the center should be closed until Stracener makes his ruling.

So, it's possible Kindertown could open again Nov. 21 if she were to win in two weeks. But by then parents will have found alternative care for their children and the five employees may have moved on as well.

Plus, Barrows-Crist is now representing herself in court because she can't pay what she owes attorney Mike McLaughlin and therefore has no money for any legal counsel. McLaughlin could not be reached Friday.

The state said they would notify the families by phone and provided Barrows-Crist with a letter to give families as well. The one thing she felt good about Friday was reaching most of the parents before the state did.

If this closure is permanent, Barrows-Crist hopes a buyer will come forward soon. The business has been on the market for a number of months.

Bankruptcy, Barrows-Crist said, may be her next experience with the courts.

Winter recreation lunch on North Shore

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce is hosting its annual Winter Recreation Lunch on Nov. 17 at noon, with an 11:30am registration check-in at the Olympic Village Lodge (formerly Olympic Village Inn), 1909 Chamonix Place in Olympic Valley.

This event is geared to provide insight about winter happenings, including events, festivals and activities, to frontline, front desk, cashier, wait staff and concierge employees, along with business owners and managers. Attendees may give a brief presentation at the lunch, as well as provide 80 brochures or other pieces of collateral to be distributed during the event. This luncheon sells out, so early sign ups are recommended. Deadline to register is Nov. 11.

Cost is $30/person for chamber members and $40/person for non-members and includes lunch.

For more information about the event, to register or provide collateral, call Kym Fabel, North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce manager, at (530) 581.8764 or kym@puretahoenorth.com. Go online to download a registration form, then go to Programs and Documents.

Chamber mixer at Heavenly Village

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce’s last Business After Hours Mixer of the year is Dec. 8 from 5:30-8:30pm

hosted by the Shops at Heavenly Village.

More than 15 chamber member businesses will be participating in the BAHM.

Begin at the Marriott Grand Residence with complimentary valet parking. Once inside, check in to receive your passport of participating businesses, wristband, raffle tickets, and free ice skating voucher to use for the entire night.

Cost is $10 for chamber members and $20 for non-members. Tickets are available at the door or they may be purchased in advance by calling Emily at (775) 588.1728, ext. 303.

Child safety seat inspection

On Nov. 12 from 9am-1pm, Douglas County sheriff’s deputies will inspect child passenger safety seats and install new ones at their Lake Tahoe station in Stateline.

Child passenger safety seats will be available to Nevada residents who cannot afford one. (Proof of residency required.)

For further information, contact the department at (775) 586.7251.

Start Smart teen driving class

Start Smart is aimed at helping newly licensed and future licensed teenage drivers become aware of the responsibilities that accompany the privilege of being a licensed California driver. The program was created in an effort to pre-emptively reduce the incidence of teen injuries and deaths resulting from motor vehicle collisions.

Teen drivers and their parents/guardians are invited to attend and participate in a Start Smart class Nov. 8 from 6-8pm at the South Tahoe High School library.

Recent statistics have shown that in California teenage drivers are injured and are dying in automobile accidents at an alarming rate. Through candid conversations, officers in attendance will address these facts and provide examples of driving tendencies that put young drivers at risk. This program will help you understand that driving is serious and a poor choice behind the wheel of a car can put your life and the lives of others in jeopardy.

To reserve a space in this Start Smart Class contact the California Highway Patrol at (530) 577.1001.

Lake Tahoe Federal Advisory Committee meeting

The Lake Tahoe Federal Advisory Committee will meet Nov. 18 from 10am-3pm at the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, 35

College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

LTFAC will address issues related to federal activities at Lake Tahoe.

Items on the agenda include a facilitated workshop to discuss a strategic work plan for fiscal year 2012, and a public comment period.

LTFAC consists of 20 members representing a broad array of constituencies.

All Lake Tahoe Federal Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public.

Biomass meeting

Placer County is having an open house Nov. 15 from 3-7pm to present information on biomass energy production.

The open house will be at the Squaw Valley Public Service District offices.

Private and public specialists in air emissions, biomass energy technology, sustainable biomass supply assessments, biomass logistics planning and forest management will be present at this informal open house to discuss the latest concepts of biomass energy production. While there will be no formal presentations, the meeting will feature displays and graphics and will provide opportunity for one-on-one or small group discussions with the specialists.

Placer County will release an environmental document that discusses a possible biomass energy facility at Placer County’s Cabin Creek property in 2012. The Notice of

Preparation is expected to be available by year’s end. Public comment for this proposed project will not be taken at the Squaw Valley meeting.

Pray for Snow Party

Fresh Ketch’s Pray for Snow Party is Nov. 16 at 7:30pm.

Cool Black Kettle and Headphone Union will be playing at the South Lake Tahoe restaurant.

Gingerbread house building contest in Stateline

The Ridge Tahoe is hosting the Northern Nevada Gingerbread House Competition in December.

Age groups are 8-12, 13-17, and 18 and older. The latter will be split into novice and professional.

The competition is Dec. 3-4 at the resort, 400 Ridge Club Drive, Stateline. Houses will be assembled Saturday, with judging on Sunday.

Prizes include cash, room stays at the resort, and Apple products.

Entry fee is $20 for children and $50 for the adults. Entry space is limited, so sign up by Nov. 28. Entry forms are

online, then click on the Meetings and Events page.

Net proceeds will be donated to the Boys & Girls Clubs in South Lake Tahoe and Gardnerville.

For questions, call Executive Chef Stephen Moise at (775) 588.3553, ext. 4195 or email smoise@ridge-resorts.com.