Thanks to community for food pantry donations

To the community,

Tahoe Community Church Food Pantry would like to thank MontBleu Casino and the students of Whittell High School for their generous donations to our Food Pantry.

MontBleu Casino and its employees continued their tradition of the last several years, and generously donated 36 turkeys to our food pantry. This enabled us to feed 123 families in need this Thanksgiving, with a turkey and all the fixings.

Whittell High School students in Key Club and Leadership had their yearly canned food drive, and donated the items to our food pantry. The 2,732 canned food items arrived and filled our bare shelves. The Whittell student body also donated another 180 canned food items.

Thank you Harrah’s-Harveys casinos for the use of their freezer for turkeys storage.

Thank you to all for your support, which helps us to continue to feed those in need.

Kathy Pavich

South Tahoe police chief

looks to overhaul department

By Kathryn Reed

Honeymoons are supposed to last longer than eight days for department heads. No so for South Lake Tahoe's police chief.

Brian Uhler has been tasked with handling a reorganization of the department because Lt. Marty Hale has announced he is retiring Dec. 30.

"We're considering a restructure. It could possibly mean more boots on the ground at the line level," Uhler told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I'm not prepared to say we need more or less officers."



Brian Uhler

Hale said his retirement has nothing to do with not being given the chief's job. When he got the notice the city manager was going outside the department he looked at the two-year service credit as incentive for early retirement and filled out the paperwork.

Hale, who is in his 50s, has been with the department a little more than 24 years. He worked for 2½ years for the Utah County Sheriff's Department near Provo after graduating from Brigham Young University.

"It's been a great place to work and a good community," Hale said of South Tahoe.

He won't be leaving for good right away. He will work on a

part-time basis through June, but at retired stats. This gives Uhler, who has been on the job less than a month, time to figure out how to structure the department, as well as allows Hale to be on the job when Lt. David Stevenson attends the FBI Academy in April.

But Hale doesn't know what he will do when summer comes along.

"I can pick and choose what my next career will be," Hale said. He isn't committed to staying a resident of the Carson Valley either.

Learning the ropes

Uhler has been busy meeting with groups in the department and scheduling one-on-one sessions with sworn and non-sworn personnel. He's asking what they want.

Officers are saying they want more training. The current City Council has wiped most training off the books for financial reasons without much analysis to know what the training might have been for.

El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury has told Uhler he needs officers who are trained to be expert witnesses in gang cases in order for suspects to be put behind bars.

Uhler is contemplating an officer exchange with a department well versed in this regard.

He was able to get in on the last part of a meeting Thursday with the South Lake El Dorado Narcotics Enforcement Team members.

The police associations will meet Dec. 6, with the reorg on the agenda.

On Dec. 8 a department-wide meeting is scheduled to discuss ideas everyone has for what the future of the department looks

like.

“I hope we come to some consensus with what to do in the future, or at least a clear understanding of where we are going,” Uhler said.

Staffing issues

With Hale’s departure, it leaves one lieutenant and one captain right under Uhler. That would be an unusual hierarchy if it were left that way.

“I don’t like administrative duties to fall on the sergeants,” Uhler said. “They oversee the officers in the field. If we take the sergeants out of the field, we undermine ourselves.”

Capt. Martin Hewlett, who was interim chief after Terry Daniels left nearly a year ago, never wanted to be top cop. But he has said retirement isn’t that far off. That prospect allows Uhler to envision longer term at what the department may look like.

Uhler is quick to say he has made no decisions about what changes are forthcoming. He knows officers are interested in working four 10-hour shifts, some want to work 12-hour stints.

In the department’s 45-year history there have been a dozen reorganizations. There are those who remember when the department was more flush with personnel. Today three sworn and one non-sworn positions are frozen.

On the community survey City Manager Tony O’Rourke is developing will be questions about what the residents want from the police department. Uhler believes too many programs are in place because the resources to carry them out don’t exist. He wants citizens to help prioritize what the department should be doing besides the expected patrol.

As Uhler examines how the department operates he is also analyzing patrolling patterns that create a dead zone in the

middle of town while the bulk of activity is near the state line and Y.

Then there is the issue of the workload tripling on a Friday from 8pm to 2am, but not triple the staff to handle it.

It might be possible to utilize reserves more often to handle things like traffic, where guns and handcuffs aren't warranted.

Other concerns

Uhler's signature is already on the bid documents to acquire five patrol cars. He said the fleet of 28 vehicles is in sorry shape. He called it "eye-opening" to find out the percentage that need replacing – 17 of those 28.

Instead of continuing to buy vehicles outright, he wants to investigate a lease option.

To deal with the sketchy technology, Uhler met Wednesday with Lt. Les Lovell of the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department to talk about sharing a system. He is meeting with Sheriff-elect John D'Agostini today.

The radio system the police use was implemented in 1985. Now it is costing the city more than $100,000 a year to keep putting Band-Aids on it, is how Uhler describes it. He said how reports are done via the antiquated computer system means officers are in the station and off the street for longer periods than seem reasonable.

Combining resources with the county would mean each could tap into the system to know if the other had had an encounter with a suspect. It's also possible SLTPD could handle the sheriff's dispatch instead of it being routed through Placerville.

While Uhler sorts through what needs to be done at the station, he still hasn't unpacked his house and is living among boxes.

Caps for Kids donation deadline is Friday

The deadline to turn in handmade goodies – booties, hats, scarves and mittens – for the Caps for Kids program is Dec. 3.

The South Lake Tahoe Parks and Recreation Department is in its 23rd year of collecting items that will be given to local children this holiday season through Christmas Cheer.

The Recreation Complex is at 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe. Include a note with your name and address.

For more information, call (530) 542.6056.

Judge appoints expert to study Garrido's mental state

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

The judge in the Phillip Garrido case today appointed an expert on "malingering" to assess the accused kidnapper and rapist's mental state, and his lawyer revealed she may seek a change of venue for at least part of the case.

Garrido, accused of kidnapping Jaycee Lee Dugard in 1991 when she was 11, already is the subject of a mental evaluation requested by his public defender and El Dorado Superior Court Judge Douglas Phimister.

But the judge said he wanted another expert to also examine Garrido, but didn’t elaborate why.

District Attorney Vern Pierson said after the hearing that he believes Garrido will be found competent to stand trial along with his wife, Nancy.

Read the whole story

Heavenly Ski Foundation, Warren Miller team up

The Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation is selling Warren Miller “Wintervention” tickets, as well as raffle tickets for the movie on Dec. 3 and 4 at the MontBleu showroom in Stateline.

Raffle proceeds will benefit the foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides skiing and snowboarding programs for regional youth, local middle school students, and the S.O.S. program.

Doors open both nights at 6, the movie shows at 7pm. Advance tickets are available through the Heavenly Ski and Snowboard Foundation for $13. Movie tickets with five raffle tickets are $20. Raffle tickets only are available at the foundation or at both shows for $2 each or 10 for $10. You don’t have to be present to win. Limited reserved V.I.P. table seating and preferred entry is available for $40 and includes 20 raffle tickets.

Movie and raffle tickets are available at the Heavenly Foundation building, located in the California Lodge parking

lot across from the Heavenly Tram at the base of World Cup chair, Monday through Thursday from noon to 5pm, with a last-chance sale Friday from 8-10am.

Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation party

The Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation will host a cocktail party in honor of the launch of its exclusive new donor benefit program – Friends of the Foundation – on Dec. 16 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Alpine Club in The Village at Northstar.

The Friends of the Foundation offers a $10,000 and a $5,000 giving level and membership is open to 30 donors at each level. Donor benefits include skiing, golfing, dining and cultural event privileges.

The donor club was created to help supplement the foundation's current grant giving.

The mission of Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation is to serve as a catalyst for community enhancement by providing leadership and funding which will enrich the quality of life in the Truckee – North Tahoe region through cultural, environmental, educational and charitable pursuits.

For more information about the Friends of the Foundation launch party, call (530) 550.2700 or email llessman@TMRFoundation.com. RSVPs are required to this event.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• One-time San Francisco Giants first baseman J.T. Snow will be the keynote speaker at the 27th annual Bobby Dolan Baseball Dinner on Jan. 26 at the Silver Legacy in Reno. For details, call Elise Bozsik at (775) 682-6902 or register online.

• Mammoth Mountain will be even more accessible to the Bay Area starting in December when United flies direct from SFO to Mammoth Lakes airport.

• No need to pay for adventure flicks. Check this footage out.

• Expedition Kirkwood is going to offer tours of The Cirque this season. This area is usually off-limits to skiers.

• The Lake Tahoe Museum in South Lake Tahoe will be open Dec. 3 from 10am-7pm – the same day as the community tree lighting. The annual holiday in history is Dec. 4 from 10am-4pm.

Search suspended for missing Reno hiker

By Reno Gazette-Journal

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office has suspended the search for a man who called in to dispatch Nov. 21 and reported he was lost in the Galena Creek area.

They will resume search and recovery for Rick Gentry, 55, when weather allows, the sheriff's office said. The RAVEN

helicopter will continue to search the Galena, Thomas and Whites creek areas as part of their routine duties.

Gentry used his cell phone to report he was lost and was wearing only jeans and a windbreaker.

Read the whole story

Ex-pro boxer with ties to Carson City, El Dorado County dies

By Robert D. Dávila, Sacramento Bee

Danny Nardico, a former professional boxer who was the only fighter to deck Jake “Raging Bull” LaMotta in the ring, died Nov. 22 of congestive heart failure, his family said. He was 85.

Fighting out of Tampa, Fla., Mr. Nardico was a challenger in three divisions: middleweight, light heavyweight and heavyweight. He was set to fight Rocky Graziano for the title but was upset by Charley Norkus. He had ended his professional career by 1955 with a record of 50 wins – including 35 knockouts – 13 losses and four draws.

His record included a historic match on New Year’s Eve in 1952 against LaMotta in Coral Gables, Fla. In the seventh round, Mr. Nardico landed a hard right that caused his opponent to fall into the ropes and go down. LaMotta got back on his feet at the count of nine but declined to answer the bell for the next round. Mr. Nardico’s feat was recorded on film, including clips available on YouTube. But there was no mention in the

1980 LaMotta biographical film “Raging Bull.”

Read the whole story

Ski report: Wind may be factor on the mountain



The National Weather Service has issued a wind advisory for Lake Tahoe for Dec. 2 from 10am to 10pm.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.