Report: Parole agents spoke to Dugard while in captivity

Publisher's note: ***Click on claim to read the attorney general's report.***

By Robert J. Lopez, Los Angeles Times

Authorities spoke to a woman who had been kidnapped and held captive for 18 years by a paroled rapist who fathered her two girls, but failed to determine her identity, according to a state report released Wednesday.

State parole agents spoke to Jaycee Lee Dugard and her eldest daughter during a supervised visit of Phillip Garrido, who was living in Antioch at the time and kept Dugard and the children in a backyard shed, according to the report by the state Department of Justice.

"Agents spoke to Ms. Dugard and her eldest daughter but failed to investigate their identities or their relationship to Garrido," the report said.

Read the whole story

Smokey Bear talks about fire in Tahoe

Nearly all wildfires in the Tahoe Basin are human caused.

With a little help from Smokey Bear, locals and visitors learned about fire safety and prevention during Wildfire

Awareness Week at Explore Tahoe in South Lake Tahoe this week.



Smokey Bear makes a visit to South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Jose Gomez/USFS

North Tahoe Chamber business seminar

As part of it ChamberEDucation workshop series, the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, along with the Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation, is hosting an "Establishing Your Business' Value" seminar July 14 from 4-5pm at the Donald W. Reynolds Community Non-Profit Center, Meiling Room, 948 Incline Way in Incline Village.

The seminar will focus on an overview of the key principals associated with determining a business' value. It will identify what buyers are looking for as well as an explanation of the mysterious term known as a "Business Multiple." The presentation will be based on anecdotal experiences, empirical data and real life examples.

Broker and owner Brad Bottoset of the Liberty Group of Nevada LLC will be speaking.

This seminar is open to the public at no cost. To reserve your space and for more information, call (775) 298.0184 or email leannek@parasol.org.

Nevada gaming revenue continues slump

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Gaming revenues tumbled nearly 8 percent in Washoe County in May from a year earlier, the state reported today, as a key source of state revenue continued a 2 1/2-year slump.

Casinos within Reno saw gross revenues fall 6.6 percent from May 2009 while Sparks properties saw a 14.4 percent decline, according to the Nevada Gaming Control Board report.

Casinos at the north end of Lake Tahoe reported a 10.1 percent drop, helping make May the 33rd monthly decline out of the past 35 in Washoe County.

Elsewhere in Northern Nevada, gaming properties at the south end of Tahoe reported a 12.5 percent fall from a year earlier, and in the Carson City-Carson Valley corridor, casinos saw a 1.1 percent decline.

Read the whole story

Sierra Club’s annual food-wine-art event

The Tahoe Area Sierra Club is having a celebration of regional wine, food and art at the Tahoe Stonehenge House (1082 Mt. Canary Drive, South Lake Tahoe) on July 22 from 5-9pm.

Tickets are $35 in advance and $40 at the door. The evening’s events include a raffle and silent auction. This year’s featured artist is Stateline photgrapher Dirk Yuricich, the featured winery is Wente Vineyards and beer is being provided by Mt. Tallac Brewing Company. Dory Smith wlll perform during the evening. Gourmet treats are by Two Sisters Catering.

Contact Jeanne at (530) 577.4945 for ticket information, or email stonehengerocks2010@hotmail.com. Click here for more information.

Wildfire summit at Harveys on July 9

Firefighting agencies, Nevada Fire Safe Council, University of Nevada and University of California Cooperative Extensions’ Living with Fire program and others are hosting the inaugural Lake Tahoe Basin Wildfire Summit from 9am-5pm July 9 at Harvey’s Casino in Stateline.

The goal of the summit is to motivate and empower residents to take action now to protect homes and communities from embers that can attack during a wildfire.

The summit will provide information and tools to assist

residents to reduce wildfire risks to their homes and communities in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Speakers will provide an overview of fire issues in the Tahoe basin three years after the Angora Fire of 2007 destroyed 254 homes in Lake Tahoe.

Topics include Tahoe basin rules and resources for creating defensible space around homes, how to improve the structural components of homes to better withstand wildfire embers, and how insurance companies rate homes for their fire hazards. Break out sessions will be held with staff from each Tahoe basin fire agency about specific concerns in their district in order to develop recommendations for reducing wild-fire risk in each basin community.

All residents and homeowners in the Lake Tahoe Basin are invited to attend. There is no cost, but registration is required. To register, go to www.livingwithfire.info/tahoe.

This summit is part of the Lake Tahoe Basin inaugural Wildfire Awareness Week July 3-11.

Lightning poses potential danger to Tahoe region

Tahoe National Forest received 74 lightning strikes last evening with some scattered rain on the east side of the forest.

Weather forecasts show the potential for lightning and some rain throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin through Friday. The dry conditions and threat of lightning have prompted the National Weather Service to issue a fire warning for today.

Click on lightning to see where the strikes were in the Tahoe National Forest. Click on strikes to see where they were throughout California.

Defendant’s intent key in trial of killed CHP officer

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Defense lawyer Mark D. Millard opened the capital murder defense of David Zanon on Tuesday by telling a jury in Placerville he couldn’t deny his client had run over and killed CHP Officer Scott Russell in 2007.

“This case, as (District Attorney Vern) Pierson said, is a terrible tragedy and there is no question that David Zanon is responsible for that tragedy,” Millard told jurors, as the defendant sat quietly at the defense table.

Zanon’s trial in El Dorado Superior Court, however, is not about whether his actions led to Russell’s death, his attorney argued.

Read the whole story

Gaines to host forum on

Angora Fire

Assemblyman Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, is hosting a forum titled Angora: Three Years later on July 14 from 6:30-8pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

He is scheduled to give a legislative update on the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission.

Gaines will take questions from the audience.

For more information, call (916) 774.4430.

Developer sets record straight about Homewood

Publisher's note: ***The Sacramento Bee article was reprinted in Lake Tahoe News on July 7, 2010.***

Dear Publisher,

On July 4th, the *Sac Bee* published an opinion piece written by Mr. Tom Rosenberg entitled "Mega-resort could harm Tahoe". The viewpoint was unfortunately filled with factual error. Please note that on April 6, 2010, JMA Ventures [owner of Homewood Mountain Resort] met at length with Mr. Rosenberg at Homewood as Mr. Rosenberg had made it clear that he wanted to get his facts straight.

The article states that Tahoe's West Shore consists of single-family homes and extends from about 15 miles south of Tahoe city to Rubicon Bay. The article fails to mention that the West Shore is also home to a number of commercial businesses,

hotels, restaurants, marinas, two ski resorts [Granlibakken & Homewood Mountain Resort] and other resort properties, grocers, a museum, a post office, a community center, etc. all served from a major state highway. Also worth noting is that the majority of single family homes on the West Shore are second, vacation homes.

Mr. Rosenberg's column references a 700-acre planned development at Chambers Landing on the West Shore in the 1960s by the Perini Corporation and attempts to draw a direct parallel between the Perini plan and the Homewood ski area master plan. A critical, key difference that Mr. Rosenberg neglected to note was that the Perini development was planned on raw, previously undeveloped land.

The Homewood plan is primarily a redevelopment of the two existing base areas, which are currently covered with asphalt parking and existing ski related facilities.

Mr. Rosenberg labels the Homewood ski lodge a "high rise". The Homewood master plan includes a total of six mixed use buildings at the existing north base area and three residential buildings at the south base. Four of the six north base buildings are two stories in height while the other two, which include the lodge/hotel and day skier facility, are four stories tall. The two-story structures are located along the state highway whereas the four story buildings are set back over 250 feet from the highway. The south base buildings are all two and three story in height. The day lodge at the mid-mountain is predominantly a single story structure.

The article incorrectly states that there will be 405 condos and transient accommodations. In fact, the Homewood master plan includes 241 residential units plus a 75-room hotel to be built in phases over time. In addition, the master plan provides for 13 workforce housing apartments. The article cites a "commercial center", leading one to believe that some kind of mall or shopping center is planned. The proposed

Homewood plan includes 15,000 square feet of retail space designed for three or four neighborhood oriented retail shops including a grocer, an ice cream parlor, and a hardware store.

The article goes on to state that the “developer proposes a clubhouse for condo owners and hotel guests and a 14,000 square foot restaurant on mountain” leading the reader to believe that there will be a private club plus a 14,000 square foot restaurant. In fact, the master plan proposal includes one public day-use lodge with public restroom facilities at a mid-mountain location. Existing mid-mountain shacks and structures will be replaced by the new public day lodge. The proposed facility also includes a public, community swimming pool for use during the summer months.

The article erroneously states that in the future, families will “ski down to an asphalt base, with a proposed lodge far above existing height limits, and 28 acres of condominiums”. The proposed master plan removes the existing base area asphalt parking lots and relocates the majority of parking underground. The existing asphalt parking areas will be replaced by a landscaped pedestrian village with a winter ice skating pond and overnight accommodations. The proposed north base project area consists of 16.4 acres of mixed uses including pedestrian walkways, landscaping, lodging, workforce housing, and the neighborhood retail shops. The south base proposal includes 6.6 acres of land restoration, residential, and the removal of all asphalt parking.

The article also states that the “project threatens water runoff from the Mount Ellis watershed”. The Homewood watershed consists of three streams, none of which intersect the proposed north base area or mid-mountain. Only one of the three streams is located within the redevelopment area at the south base. This stream, known as “Homewood” or “Ellis” creek, will have its stream bank restored at the south base as a part of an ongoing land restoration project, which to-date has included over 240,000 square feet of restoration since 2006.

Beyond the restoration work completed to-date, the proposed master plan includes an additional 250,000-500,000 square feet of restoration work on mountain and at the base areas; a fact notably missing from the article. Also missing was mention of the $650K matching grant from the California State Department of Water Resources to Homewood in 2009 to study and implement land restoration methodology designed to help further minimize sediment runoff into the Lake Tahoe watershed.

Mr. Rosenberg claims that the proposed Homewood redevelopment "contradicts sound planning and accepted policy that mandates environmental protection".

Tell that to the U.S. Green Building Council, a leader in the promotion of sustainable building and planning, who officially notified Homewood that the proposed master plan submittal is on course for a Gold Level certification in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development program; a program with emphasis on sound planning principles, environmental protection, and transit/pedestrian oriented master planning.

While it is fully expected and in fact healthy for there to be a divergence of viewpoint about the proposed Homewood master plan, it is highly unfortunate that some, such as Mr. Rosenberg and certain members of the Friends of the West Shore, are resorting to misinformation and distortion of fact to further their agenda.

David Tirman, executive vice president JMA Ventures