Kindertown decision expected in 2 months



By Kathryn Reed

A final decision is expected in April as to whether Kindertown will remain open as a day care facility in South Lake Tahoe.

El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Steve Bailey met in his chambers on Wednesday with Kindertown owner Maria Barrows-Crist, her attorney Mike McLaughlin, and Brenda Ray with the state Attorney General's Office. Ray spoke by telephone.

The judge finally has the transcripts of last summer's three-day hearing that led the Department of Social Services to want to close the local center. The $3,300 for the documents came out of Barrows-Crist's pocket.

A slew of allegations are in the final 28-page report. Bailey told Ray he expects her to be able to provide evidence to the charges.

In the mean time, Kindertown is slowly increasing the number of children it cares for. Before the trouble began there were 120 kids, it dropped to 35 and is now at 83.

"-Some are coming back, but I have a lot of new kids and a lot of new staff. It is so great," Barrows-Crist told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Hight savors Olympic experience

By Elena Hight

VANCOVER – My Vancouver Olympic experience has been absolutely amazing. Since I got off the plane in Vancouver I have not stopped. We were just thrown straight into the craziness that is the Olympics.

Processing where you get all of your gear, media conferences, Opening Ceremonies filled the first two days here. After that we had three days of practice and of course our competition.



South Tahoe's Elena Hight, second from left, is surrounded by U.S. teammates. Photo/Provided

Straight after that it was time to enjoy. Three hockey games, cat boarding, the women's aerials event, the Vancouver aquarium, amazing dinners around Vancouver, and a trip up to Whistler to hangout with friends filled the next six days

after my contest.

Sleep has not been a priority … jamming everything into the short amount of time we have here has been. So I have been fueling the days with coffee and tons of smiles.

While I have already been in Vancouver for two weeks, I feel like it has flown by. There really is nothing like the Olympics, the energy around the village is unprecedented and there really is no way to describe it.

While my competition didn't go the way I had hoped, I have brought away so much from this experience. New friends, an epic pin collection, amazing photos, the feeling of representing my country, and cheering like I have never cheered before.

I am more than happy with what I have experienced here, and it is a couple of weeks of my life that I will never forget.

Elena Hight lives in South Lake Tahoe, rides at Northstar-at-Tahoe and competed in the halfpipe in the Vancouver Winter Olympics.

Tahoe National Forest extends comment period on roads

A Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Tahoe National Forest Travel Management process will be available for review and comment beginning today through April 12. This SDEIS builds on and updates the previous Draft EIS released

for public comment in 2008.

Based on public comment which questioned the status of some of the roads and trails in the 2008 DEIS, the Forest Service reviewed older project decision documents for the past 15 years and the Rights-of-Way Atlas to verify road and trail status information. This review corrected some errors found in the various data bases including the number of miles of roads and trails in the existing National Forest Transportation System (NFTS) for the Forest. Because of this new data the Forest Service decided to issue a Supplemental DEIS so the public could review it as well as some additional changes made to the preferred alternative based on public suggestions.

Three open houses will be conducted to explain the data changes and how that affects the alternatives. These open houses will be drop-in style meetings with the opportunity to view displays and maps and talk individually to members of the interdisciplinary team. The open houses are scheduled from 3:30-7:30 pm at the following locations:

March 2 â€“ Sierraville Ranger Station, Sierraville â€“ in the conference room

March 4 â€“ The Ridge Golf Club â€“ 2020 Golf Course Road, Auburn

March 10 â€“ Tahoe National Forest Headquarters â€“ 631 Coyote St., Nevada City â€“ use upper parking lot.

The SDEIS will address the following decisions:

â€¢ The prohibition of cross country travel off designated NFTS roads, trails and open areas

â€¢ The addition of unauthorized motorized routes to the National Forest Transportation System

â€¢ The establishment of motorized â€œOpen Areasâ€

â€¢ Changes to the National Forest Transportation System of roads and trails

â€¢ Changes to the class of vehicle allowed on NFTS roads and/or trails

â€¢ Seasons of use to minimize wet weather erosion and water quality concerns

â€¢ Reopening of Maintenance Level 1 roads (those that had been closed) for public use.

Public comments need to be postmarked by April 12. Comments can be sent to the: Tahoe National Forest, Travel Management Team, 631 Coyote St., Nevada City, CA 95959 or via email to tnf_rte_desig@fs.fed.us .

For more information, the full DEIS is available here. For additional information, all (530) 265.4531.

USFS supervisor embraces work – indoors and out

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Sometimes the line between work and play is hard to delineate for Terri Marceron.

As supervisor of the 153,000 acres that encompass the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit of the U.S. Forest Service, she is responsible for more acreage than any other entity in the basin. As an avid hiker, equestrian and boater, she likes to experience the area beyond reading report after report at her desk in South Lake Tahoe.

Marceron wove a tale of her experience packing into the wilderness with friends for more than a week last year and how that relates to life on the job. The hard work, the hours involved, the beauty, compromise, overcoming challenges, setting goals and sense of accomplishment at the end of the day are part of life on the job and in the outdoors.



Terri Marceron

â€œI have a spiritual connection to the land,â€ Marceron said.

She started working for the Forest Service in 1988, coming to Tahoe in 2005.

On Wednesday she was the guest speaker at Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe's lunch meeting at Harrahâ€™s Lake Tahoe.

â€œOne challenge in the basin is to get consensus. It doesnâ€™t happen here in a lot of cases,â€ Marceron said.

She believes the process is as important as the product, but she also believes being decisive is a critical component of her job.

â€œI love change. A lot of people in my agency donâ€™t,â€ she said.

Policies often change within the U.S. Forest Service each time a new president takes office.

With all of the regulatory bodies in the basin, Marceronâ€™s

job is not just about the land.

â€œMy world is more political than any other forest,â€ she said.

When a U.S. senator calls, she picks up the phone. She is also held accountable to the regional office in Vallejo and the folks in Washington.

Questions from the audience were about the old Meyers Landfill and Angora Fire restoration.

To the former, she said the cap for old El Dorado County dump will be in place this summer or in 2011. She added Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care will not move there because the use is not compatible.

In regards to work on the 3,000 acres that burned in 2007, most of which was Forest Service land, Marceron said public comment will be sought soon on the next stage of restoration.

Part of the plan deals with tree removal around urban lots, trail work, restoration to Angora Creek, work on Seneca Pond, removing noxious weeks and improving aspen stands. Not all sections of the burn area will be touched.

â€œI love the work we do. I believe in my agencyâ€™s mission," Marceron said.

TRTA sponsors interpretive writing workshop

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association, in partnership with the National Association for Interpretation, is offering a

professional one day Interpretive Writing Workshop on April 9.

This workshop introduces people to the techniques for written interpretation. It will focus on strategies that make non-personal interpretation come close to the impact of compelling front-line interpretation. These techniques apply to brochures, websites, exhibits, public service announcements, books, magazine articles and other interpretive projects. You will leave the workshop with a 42-page workbook and ideally energized to complete your current writing projects. The cost for this workshop is $250.

The instructor by Alan Leftridge. Since 2002, Leftridge has conducted 100 interpretive writing workshops, interpretive guide training, and visitor services seminars in North America.

Leftidge became a certified interpretive trainer in 2001. He is credited with 80 articles and editorials in interpretive magazines, as well as numerous texts for interpretive panels and brochures. He was the executive editor of “Interpreter” magazine and “Legacy” magazine, from 1989 to 2008. He has authored four books in interpretation.

To register, contact Emily Williams at the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, (775) 298.0231 or emilyw@tahoerimtrail.org.

Cost to rent space at LTCC expected to go up



By Kathryn Reed

Itâ€™s likely to cost a bit more for agencies and nonprofits to use various rooms at Lake Tahoe Community College.

The idea is to have the cost better reflect the time and expense of college employees who are involved in getting rooms ready, cleanup, and wear and tear on equipment. Itâ€™s not about making money.

The board didnâ€™t take any action Tuesday night. The College Council still needs to review the matter.

Philosophical issues were brought up â€“ such as should a fee be charged when the South Lake Tahoe institution is used by for-profit entities like insurance companies did during the 2007 Angora Fire.

If service clubs give scholarships to the college or money in some other form, should they be given a discount? It was one of a few questions board members discussed without any definitive resolution.

Board members also mentioned how the same amount of work is involved by staff if itâ€™s a for-profit or nonprofit renting space and equipment.

The proposal calls for hourly rates, which is already on the books, though most rooms (except for the theater) have come with a flat fee. Charging a fee if an organization wants to change things after a certain date is likely to be implemented.

Some of the ideas are to charge $40/hour for the board room

instead of $10; $30 per day for a section of the parking lot instead of $15; and doubling the commons fee to $50/hour.

â€œThese numbers are so low I canâ€™t figure out where someone would go for this price and this kind of place,â€ board member Karen Borges said.

The education foundation handles the garden-amphitheater when it comes to renting that area.

In other action:

â€¢ Cynthea Preston, dean of instruction, gave the board an update on the Nursing Assistant Training Program. This is a feeder program for jobs at Barton Memorial Hospital. Often more than 50 people apply for the 10 instructional spots.

5th-graders working to restore fish to Tahoe streams

â€œItâ€™s a Small Fish After Allâ€ aims to enhance populations of native Mountain Whitefish and Speckled dace in Lake Tahoe streams by rearing them in the classroom, improving their stream habitat prior to release and educating legislators and the community about the importance of these small fish.

Bob Comlossyâ€™s fifth-grade students in Meyers interviewed numerous organizations and agencies about ways to protect Lake Tahoe and its surrounding ecosystem before selecting a proposal from the U.S. Forest Service and local nonprofit California Trout.

Stepping up to the Disney Planet Challenge, students at the

Lake Tahoe Environmental Magnet School have partnered with a local nonprofit and government agencies on a project in hopes of restoring Tahoeâ€™s native fish, while winning the students a trip to Disneyland.

In addition to California Trout and the Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, California Department of Fish & Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are assisting the students in reaching their goal.

Fight ends with arrest, hospitalization, school lockdown

By Kathryn Reed

A parolee is in custody without bail and another South Lake Tahoe man is being treated for serious injuries at Renown Medical Center in Reno after he was beaten Thursday afternoon.

The chaos on Reno Avenue in the Sierra Tract spilled over to Tahoe Valley Elementary School, which resulted in the school being locked down for about 20 minutes at 3:15pm as students were being let out for the day.

Adrian Gannion, 32, of South Lake Tahoe was being held without

bail at the local jail on parole violations. Further charges are likely after police wrap up their investigation.

â€œGannion is alleged to have picked up a tree branch about 3- to 4-inches in diameter and 5-feet long and smacked the guy in the head with it,â€ Sgt. Brian Williams with the South Lake Tahoe Police Department told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Blood was everywhere.

Mark Ross, who is in his mid-40s and from South Lake Tahoe, was airlifted to Reno. The helicopter landed in the snow dump area at the end of Sierra Boulevard. However, Ross had made it to the 7-Eleven at Highway 50 before officers located him.

Ross is expected to live, but the injuries are described as significant.

Witnesses told officers Gannion was fighting three men at the home of his girlfriend on Reno Avenue. Ronald Kato, in his mid-20s and from South Lake, wasÂ taken to Barton Memorial Hospital with minor injuries.

The name of the other man involved in the fight was not disclosed.

Officers said there is no indication this was gang related. They are not sure what led to the fight, but drugs and a love triangle will be roads theyâ€™ll pursue.

Gannion has a long criminal history, with some of it being violent.

â€œThe suspect is a known white supremacist and is in custody,â€ Capt. Martin Hewlett, wrote in an email to City Manager Dave Jinkens.

The school became a component of the fight when Gannionâ€™s girlfriend went to pick her daughter up at the school and Gannion was in the front seat with a bloody nose. Witnesses

had a description of the vehicle and the two occupants.

Someone at the school called police after recognizing the vehicle. Thatâ€™s when officers called for a lockdown. The two were taken into custody; with the woman subsequently let go. Her child left campus with other relatives.

DCSD coach accused of lewd acts with a child

A basketball coach with Douglas County School District was arrested Thursday night on charges involving inappropriate behavior with children under the age of 14.

Benjamin Thomas Schuler, 24, of Gardnerville is accused of trying to lure a child under 14 years of age with the intent to persuade the child away from home, according to a press release.



Benjamin Schuler

Schuler was arrested after it was discovered he had communicated with two 13-year-old girls via sexually explicit emails, investigators said.

Schuler attempted to get one of the girls to leave her home and go to his house, authorities said. The investigation

revealed Schuler had previously inappropriately touched one of the girls, authorities said.

The email was discovered by family members of one of the victims.

Schuler had met the girls through his employment as a basketball coach for the school district.

Schuler was booked into Douglas County Jail with bail set at $25,000 cash only.

Harrah’s posts fourth quarter profit

By Steve Green, Las Vegas Sun

Harrah’s Entertainment Inc. today reported a profit of $295.6 million in the fourth quarter, even as the recession contributed to a 10 percent decline in net revenue for its big hotel-casinos on the Las Vegas Strip.

The profit compares to a loss of $4.782 billion in 2008’s fourth quarter, when the Las Vegas company booked special costs of $5.49 billion to write down the value of goodwill and other intangible assets.

Read the whole story