Audit: Parole Board failed in Garrido case

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

State parole agents failed completely to properly supervise accused rapist and kidnapper Phillip Garrido for 10 years, and after his alleged victim, Jaycee Lee Dugard, was discovered alive in August top corrections officials praised parole despite the fact that agents missed numerous opportunities to discover her presence, a new state audit has found.



Phillip Garrido

A four-page executive summary of the audit by Calfornia Inspector General David R. Shaw, posted online at 11 a.m., lists numerous failings by corrections officials and suggests needed improvements in the system. A detailed report on Shaw's two-month investigation is expected to be released after a news conference this afternoon, but Shaw found "systemic problems that transcend parolee Garrido's case and jeopardize public safety."

Read the whole story

Veterans Day ceremony

Veterans Day ceremony at the American Legion in South Lake Tahoe starts at 11am.

Pints and Paddles

Pints and Paddles cruise on Nov. 19 on the Tahoe Queen out of South Lake Tahoe; cruising from 6:30-9:30pm.

This cruise features the band Truckee Tribe and Sierra Nevada Brewing Company.

Tickets are $30 with $5 off with local ID or coupon. Ticket price includes a souvenir pint glass and your first beer.

Call for reservations, (530) 543.6191.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

Italian Night is the flavor of the winter season at Zephyr Cove Restaurant every Thursday (except Thanksgiving) beginning Nov. 5. Call (775) 589.4968 for reservations or additional information.

Porters Lake Tahoe, with stores in Tahoe City-Truckee-Incline, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2010.

Tahoe Grille is open in South Tahoe.

Renoâ€™s Rink on the River is on the featured ice rinks in the November-December issue of *Via* magazine. Itâ€™s open Nov. 25-Feb. 15 – (775) 334.6268. The publication all calls Genoa Square on of the best town squares.

Resort at Squaw Creek is the only Tahoe area ski destination to make *Parents* magazineâ€™s top 10 list of snowy destinations catering to families.

Do It Center coming to South Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Do It Center is ready to begin a remodel on the old South Shore Motors building in anticipation of opening the general merchandise store in 2010.



Do It Center will be moving into the South Shore Motors building.

The Southern California-based chain had expected to be open in South Lake for a few months by now. Appeals by hardware stores

in town delayed the process.

On Tuesday, the City Council voted 3-2 to deny the latest appeal, therefore allowing the store to move in. Councilmembers Bill Crawford and Bruce Grego were on the losing end of the vote.

Both of their wives, Jonnie Crawford and Geraldine Grego, are on the Planning Commission, which heard the appeal in October. This Crawford-Grego team also voted to uphold the appeal.

Mike Mauck, vice president of DIY, told *Lake Tahoe News* he did not know when the store would open, but knows winter could interfere with the start of construction.

What has kept people coming out to protest the Do It Center is the belief it will compete with stores in South Lake Tahoe and throughout the South Shore that carry similar products.

General merchandise is an allowed use along this section of Lake Tahoe Boulevard and encompasses a broad array of goods. Ace Hardware, which is nearby, is considered a general merchandise store.

A key element that allows the Do It Center to conform and not need a special use permit as it had originally requested is that it won't sell lumber. Unintentionally the city gave Meeks Lumber a monopoly on that product when it denied the special use permit.

Councilman Bruce Grego sounded like he wanted to ignore the rules on the books when he said, "I think we need to look at the meaning of the language."

Earlier, Councilman Hal Cole had said, "(The) spirit of the zoning laws need to be upheld." He further stated zoning regulations have nothing to do with competition and how many of the same number of businesses are next to one another.

Councilwoman Kathay Lovell said survival of any business is

going to be dependent on service and price.

Scotty's and Nel's hardware stores have the service components locked in. Do It Center says it will be competing with the big box stores off the hill when it comes to price and product.

Sheriff's candidates won't be appointed in EDC

By Kathryn Reed

El Dorado County's next sheriff is still unknown, but the Board of Supervisors did decide Tuesday not to appointment one of the seven people running for the position.

Sheriff Jeff Neves late last month tendered his resignation effective Dec. 26 – a year before his term expires.

Supervisors said by not picking a candidate – as Neves had wanted – it keeps the election on the up and up. The primary is not until June.

Supervisors said they will make their decision in January.

Undersheriff Fred Kollar has said he is willing to do the job in the interim. He had planned to retire when Neves' term ended.

Incumbents retain LTCC seats



By Susan Wood

The three incumbents on the Lake Tahoe Community College board pulled off a decisive win over a challenger in the quest for three seats in the El Dorado County election Tuesday.

Molly Blann, Roberta Mason and Kerry David, respectively, took 1,926 votes or 28.1 percent, 1,904 or 27.8 percent, and 1,891 or 27.6 percent with all 10 precincts reporting as of 11pm. A little more than a fifth of registered voters turned out for the election punctuated by only local races.

Mary Jane Sanchez, a relative newcomer to town and the collegeâ€™s inner workings, raked in 15.8 percent. Official results are expected to be tabulated in the next few weeks.

The incumbent trio has more than a half century of experience with South Lake Tahoeâ€™s academic hub, a fact that resonated with all three when asked what the voters were seeking.

â€œIt looks to me from the results that people were voting for incumbents, and theyâ€™re happy with whatâ€™s happening. Of course, we have challenges and that experience helps,â€ Blann said, relaxing quietly with her family at home.

Blann, a real estate agent who has served as the South Shoreâ€™s original Chamber of Commerce president among other activities, excels at building relationships and pulled no punches on what she planned to do this morning given the favorable news. She had prepared to thank her supporters.

Despite the nod for experience from voters, Mason admitted she was a little surprised at Sanchezâ€™s loss when she was out in the community so much.

â€œItâ€™s because I know she was out there campaigning and put a lot of effort into it. I thought she might unseat me. It was interesting to see her style of campaigning,â€ said Mason, while gathered Tuesday night at the home of David. He and wife Wendy won their respective races â€“ she for the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board.

Having served since the boardâ€™s inception in 1974, Mason was modest, but certain on what lay before the board during â€œthe worst economic stateâ€ the community college has faced. State funding is in such a state of flux itâ€™s hard to plan for budget cuts because the amount fluctuates in the millions as the Legislature struggles with plunging tax revenue.

Difficult cutbacks have already been made including the closure of food service in the main cafeteria kitchen, leaving students to hit the vending machines, coffee cart, bookstore or go off campus.

Itâ€™s this kind of creative challenge that has David, a certified public accountant, ready to roll up his sleeves for another term.

â€œWith the economic situation, the strength of experience on the board has been key in this election. (The results) tell me the voters want to see the continuation of the board. Weâ€™ve had to cut courses, but thatâ€™s just been the reality,â€ he said.

Along with the fiscal constraints the college is dealing with now, David hopes the worst of these troubling financial times is over and wonders if the state figures the college banks on will be accurate from one month to another. He also hopes Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger stands by his commitment to keep higher education strong.

A planning session has been slated by the board for Friday.

Susan Wood is a freelance writer based in South Lake Tahoe.

David secure; Cefalu tops Wallace by 5 votes

By Kathryn Reed

Wendy David is the clear winner of one of the two Lake Tahoe Unified School District board of education seats, while five votes separate newcomer Judy Cefalu and incumbent Duane Wallace.



Wendy David

This will be Davidâ€™s fourth term on the five-member board.

â€œI look forward to creating things instead of eliminating things,â€ David said as she watched the returns come in Tuesday night. As a board member for the last 12 years she knows about eliminating jobs, programs and schools.

With construction well under way at South Tahoe High School, she knows these next four years will be about building facilities and programs.

She admitted she was more relaxed this go-round.

â€œI feel really good about where the school district is so I feel good about running as an incumbent,â€ David said.

It was like night and day the difference between the David and Cefalu residences on Election Night.

The Davids, Wendy and Kerry, are both veterans of nights like this; with a computer logging results and friends in attendance watching anxiously.

Judy Cefalu didnâ€™t know the results until *Lake Tahoe News* called just after 11pm. Her husband, John, who spearheaded Measure B was already in bed. Son Chris, a South Tahoe Public Utility District candidate, couldnâ€™t be reached.

With 100 percent of the precincts counted, David had 40.12 percent of the vote or 1,967 votes; Cefalu had 29.66 percent or 1,454 votes; and Wallace had 29.55 percent or 1,449 votes.

Having not been aware the votes were in, Cefalu did not have much to say beyond â€œmy goodness.â€

Wallace was off to bed knowing a handful of votes separated him from Cefalu.

â€œEither way I will be OK. I have enjoyed being on it so far,â€ Wallace said. â€œIf Judy wins, I think she will do a good job.â€ Wallace was appointed this summer to fill the rest of Angela Swansonâ€™s term.

The outcome of close elections like these has been known to change after provisional votes are counted. Those are the ballots where something about the voter has been questioned â€“ signature, identification, the name isnâ€™t on the electoral roll, that sort of thing.

Jones, Schafer, Cefalu on STPUD board

By Kathryn Reed

Two of the incumbents for South Tahoe Public Utility District soundly won re-election, while one fell to a challenger.

Jim Jones and Eric Schafer are returning to the board. Chris Cefalu is replacing Ernie Claudio.

The utility district race was the most heated of all the issues before South Shore voters on Tuesday. Water is a hot topic in most of California, but the local race had nothing to do with bigger picture facing the state.

Instead, the issues that kept being brought up were accountability, transparency, water meters, rates, and relations between the board and the union.

Jim Jones, a civil engineer, served for 12 years beginning in 1977, was off for four years and has been on since 1993. He garnered 42.65 percent of the votes. Jones was unavailable for comment.

The closest challenger was perennial candidate John Runnels with 24.82 percent; Kenny Curtzwiler with 21.2 percent; and Tod Williamson with 11.08 percent.

One of the more bitter races pitted Schafer against longtime local businesswoman Peggy Cocores. Ironically, it was Scott Swift, a Lake Valley firefighter who was working more than

campaigning, who came in second.

Schafer was out collecting his signs about 9pm when the preliminary results came in. At that time he was encouraged by the numbers.

“I’m certainly looking forward to doing another four years,” Schafer said. He said he has a lot of passion for the district.

Cocores called it “a great learning experience. I have no regrets.”

With all the votes in, Schafer had 38.76 percent, Swift 32.53 percent and Cocores 28.37 percent.

Claudio, who was elected in 2007 to fill out a term, came in last for his seat.

Cefalu unseated Claudio with 33.23 percent of the vote; next was John Adamski at 27.46 percent; Jimmy Martin (who had pulled out of the race for health reasons) at 19.78 percent; and Claudio with 19.12 percent.

Cefalu and Claudio were unavailable for comment.

Measure B defeated

B apparently is not for baseball, as advocates of the measure put before El Dorado County voters on the South Shore had lobbied.

Measure B was designed to alter the 2000-voter approved Measure S. It would have taken money designated for maintaining bike trails and put it toward renovating ball

fields.

Two-thirds of the voters needed to say yes for it to pass. It garnered 62.12 percent. There were 1,925 who voted for Measure B, while 1,174 (37.88 percent) said no.

No matter how people voted, the $18 assessment was going to stay in place.