Cost to fight Poland not fully disclosed

By Kathryn Reed

A complete accounting of how much money has been spent by the taxpayers of South Lake Tahoe per City Council direction to keep Johnny Poland from being on the police force has not been provided to *Lake Tahoe News*.

By the end of the business day Friday, the city provided attorney Cynthia O'Neill's bill regarding the recent litigation in El Dorado County Superior Court: her 159.1 hours equate to $34,101; plus an



Johnny Poland

additional $1,030.18 in costs.

In April, this reporter was told $75,000 had been spent by the city at that time on the Poland case. It was the understanding that was on legal fees paid to outside counsel.

However, the city has not provided any news outlet in town with the number of hours worked on the case by staff, what the dollar figure is for that time or how much money Poland was paid to not work for nearly 2.5 years, or the cost of benefits he received while on leave.

"The dollar cost of City staff time is not known at this time. (Police) Chief (Terry) Daniels is out of the office today and

he may have a staff time estimate," City Manager Dave Jinkens wrote in an Oct. 30 email.

Jinkens wants a plan in place next week for handling Poland's return to the department.

Superior Court Judge Steve Bailey ruled this week against the city's appeal of the arbitration panel's decision to reinstate Poland. Poland was fired by Daniels in June 2007 because of his actions during a lockdown at South Tahoe High School in November 2006.

Passport Weekends at El Dorado wineries

Join us for our annual Passport Weekends at a slew of El Dorado County wineries on April 10-11 and April 17-18. Passport tickets will be available online at www.eldoradowines.org beginning in January.

This event typically sells out by February each year, so you will want to line up your friends and make reservations to stay for the weekend now.

Bring out the Barrel

â€œBring out the Barrelâ€ at El Doradoâ€™s wineries on Jan. 30-31. Details at www.eldoradowines.org.

Burger night benefits CASA

CASA El Dorado is having a fund raiser on Nov. 18 from 5-7pm at Ernieâ€™s Coffee Shop.

Owners, Paul and Judy Bruso and their amazing Ernieâ€™s Coffee Shop staff have generously offered up their famous burger, soda and fries meals for the night.

Proceeds from the fundraiser go directly to your local Court Appointed Special Advocate program. CASA El Dorado, a nonprofit organization, recruits, trains, and matches volunteer advocates with abused or neglected children that are part of the court system through no fault of their own. CASA volunteers are appointed directly by a judge and attend each court hearing, advocating for the best interests of the child. CASA is a national organization serving in counties throughout the United States. CASA El Dorado has served more than 400 children in the last 12 months alone, speaking up as a voice for children.

Ernieâ€™s Burger Night tickets are $10 per person (gratuity not included) and can be purchased in advance by calling (530) 573.3072 or e-mail kelly@casaeldorado.org.

Harvest Fest to benefit LTCC

employee

Teo Yelle, a part-time classified employee at Lake Tahoe Community College Child Development Center who has worked for the past five years as a teacher in the infant room, recently became very critically ill and medical bills are mounting.

An account has been set up at Bank of the West to help the family. To donate, either go to Bank of the West or drop off a check at the Lake Tahoe Community College CDC.

CDC is having its annual Harvest Festival Oct. 31 from 10am to noon in the CDC parking lot. All proceeds will go directly to the family. Children welcome.

Learn how to save big bucks



What does green mean to you? To Embassy Suites South Lake Tahoe it means a whole lot of cash. Learn what the lodging property did to save hundreds of thousands of dollars, and what businesses and individuals can do to create a more sustainable work-home environment.

David Hansen, director of engineering at the hotel, will be on KTHO FM-96.1 and AM-590 (www.kthoradio.com) with *Lake Tahoe News* Publisher Kathryn Reed on Saturday at 10am and Monday at 6pm.

Finding the Keys



Some on the South Shore are wondering whose idea it was to put a sign up on Highway 89 alerting drivers that 15th Street is coming up on the right. Many motorists would prefer Caltrans had the sign on the other side of the road, heading into town from Camp Richardson because the street is hard to see – especially in the dark. Maybe it's the Tahoe Keys homeowners association that doesn't want the sign because 15th Street is a back way into that neighborhood.

Storm provides lessons for Forest Service

By Terri Marceron

A few weeks ago an unusually wet storm put Forest Service projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin to the test. We want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the lessons we learned and how we are using them to improve our management of the Forest and its resources.

The Blackwood Creek restoration project, which began construction last summer and continued this summer, proved a resounding success as the newly created channel absorbed the heavy rainfall and allowed it to deposit sediment along the floodplain rather than rushing it directly to Lake Tahoe. Since Blackwood Creek, disturbed by past mining, grazing and logging, has been a major source of sediment to the lake, we are very pleased to see that our restoration strategy is

having its intended effect.

At most of our project sites, some involving large scale construction, our best management practices (BMPs) implemented to prevent off-site erosion were in place and effective. In anticipation of the storm, our staff were checking on project sites to ensure these BMPs were installed and take any additional measures to mitigate the potential impacts of a 25-year storm.

However, on part of one project site, we learned that we did not prepare quickly enough or well enough for the storm. In the Angora Fire area, we failed to install sufficient BMPs on roads near Seneca Pond, where work to remove hazard trees was under way. With the storm forecast several days out, we should have used that time to prepare the site adequately. Our staff has developed recommendations to ensure that we arenâ€™t caught off guard by future storms. Forest leadership and project staff immediately gathered in the field to review the project area and reevaluate our procedures. We have stopped operations at the Angora Hazard Tree project and are working to ensure the site is prepared to ride out the winter.

The season for field work in the Lake Tahoe Basin is brief. Like all who work outside here, we are eager to complete our projects before the snow flies. In doing so, we must stay conscious of the need to minimize our impact on the land and on water quality. Our promise to you is that weâ€™ve learned from this experience, and weâ€™ll be putting the lessons to work.

Terri Marceron is forest supervisor for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

LTCC cancels Kids College



By Kathryn Reed

Kids College is no more.

The 11-year-old program that provided enrichment opportunities to thousands of South Shore youth through the years won't be back in 2010. Lake Tahoe Community College axed the program because of the cost and that it says the program doesn't fit the true mission of what a community college is about.

Program coordinator Lisa Huard gave a heart-felt thank you to the board on Tuesday night for its support in the past, with an eye toward the future in hopes the decision one day might be reversed.

Summer 2009 saw 203 kids participate. One summer there were 661 students.

At the end of Huard's presentation she showed a medley of photos depicting students enjoying themselves – rock climbing, decorating cakes, running, ice skating, learning a foreign language, kayaking and doing tons of other things.

Huard talked about how Brandi Ledbetter was once a student, and this year she taught a class.

Anthony Davis talked about his years of teaching track and field to Kids College students and the loss this will be. He and others are looking to see if Kids College could be resurrected, albeit not through the college.

Huard, in her presentation, acknowledged the financial expense

of running such a program, but also made the board aware of other costs associated with cutting Kids College.

“My purpose this evening is to thank LTCC and the board for their support and belief in this unique program. All things change, all things evolve. I believe that LTCC will also need to evolve in some of its program delivery,” Huard said. “Each year more and more of our high school students choose to stay home to complete their transfer units here. They know they have an excellent community college in their own back door. Many of them at one time or another took a Kids College class and the campus is familiar to them and their parents.

“But there is another facet to our community that has helped this campus to grow. The community of adults such as myself who enjoy physical education classes, special topics classes, and programs such as Kids College. As your mandates and budgets refocus, where will these programs be in the future other than gone? While some departments at the college may be hesitant in looking at the development of a community education section, we will either have to change and thrive or lose classes altogether.”

Tahoe National Forest extends wood cutting

Woodcutting season will be extended from Nov. 1-15 in the Sierraville, Truckee, and American River ranger districts in the Tahoe National Forest.

For the Yuba River Ranger District, however, the season will close on Nov. 1 as originally scheduled to protect the many hardwoods that have lost their leaves and may look dead.

Woodcutters are reminded to call the woodcutting hot line to verify that the season is still open, especially as winter storms hit.

Permits will be issued through Nov. 13 on all districts except for the Yuba River District. For additional information, the Truckee Ranger District at (530) 587.3558.