Kindertown counting hours to closure



Maria Barrows-Crist and Assemblyman Ted Gaines meet Wednesday.

By Kathryn Reed

Kindertown day care-preschool is slated to be closed at 5 today by the state of California.

Maria Barrows-Crist, who has run the South Lake Tahoe facility for more than 30 years, took her cause to Assemblyman Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, when he was in town Wednesday.

He told the nearly 50 people gathered in the soda fountain of the Red Hut that he would call the Department of Social Services (DSS). But he cautioned, “I don’t want to make a promise I can’t satisfy.”

Barrows-Crist and her center have been charged with a slew of allegations – some brought by former employees – that run the gamut. An administrative law judge in a 28-page document said the facility must close and that Barrows-Crist is to not work with children for two years.

Of the 130 students who had been going to the center before the ruling was handed down a month ago, about 40 remain.

Some of their parents on Wednesday said they will not take their child elsewhere even if it means school and work will be affected.

“We parole and give probation to people convicted of crimes in courtrooms. You would think there should be middle ground here,” said Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe city councilman.

Gaines replied, “That’s what I’ll be searching for – middle ground.”

Barrows-Crist mentioned the more than $300,000 in funding she has from the state to assist families in need. El Dorado County will be the recipient of that money if Kindertown closes.

“I called our local county supervisor five times and she didn’t return the calls,” Barrows-Crist said.

Barrows-Crist’s attorney has filed a stay, but time is ticking.

Patrick Enright, South Lake Tahoe city attorney, at the direction of the council wrote a letter dated Oct. 10 to the attorney for DSS.

The letter in part says, “The City Council requests that Judge (Rebecca) Westmore consider other disciplinary actions short of revocation, including probation, monitoring, training and penalties.”

Barrows-Crist said having her sister take over Kindertown is not possible because the state won’t give her a license.

“I have no idea what I am going to do if I don’t have a stay by 5pm on the 15th,” Barrows-Crist said before the meeting. “I’ll probably lose everything. If I can’t have kids, I don’t

have a business.”

Free business boot camps

Business Boot Camps are being offered throughout the region —Â South Lake Tahoe Oct. 20-22, North Lake Tahoe Nov. 17-19, Auburn Jan. 26-28, and Placerville Feb. 23-25. They are from 8am-8pm the first two days and until 5pm the third day. Lunch, dinner and homework included.

The three-day course covers market analysis, marketing strategies, finances, business law, pitfalls of small business and more. The free Business Boot Camps are provided by Golden Sierra Job Training Agency.

Call (530) 823-4703 or email info@sedcorp.biz to register.

Commission on Aging needs member

The El Dorado County Commission on Aging has a vacancy. The preference is for someone at least 60 years old.

The deadline to submit an application is Oct. 30. Call (530) 642.4833 for an application.

Commissioners act in an advisory role to the Area Agency on Aging and the county Board of Supervisors.

Free ski day when Mammoth opens Friday

Free skiing â€“ itâ€™s all about the price tag, not the style on Friday when Mammoth Mountain opens.

The storm that just blew through Lake Tahoe brought substantial white stuff to the resort south of the basin off Highway 395. Six feet is what the mountain has up top.

Oct. 16 is the second earliest opening on record, with 1994â€™s date being Oct. 8.

As with most early resort operations, a limited number of lifts will be operational.

For all the details, go to www.mammothmountain.com.

South Tahoe’s Knight excels on college volleyball team

By DeAnna Briton, Hofstra Chronicle

Before every game, Monica Knight, the senior captain of the volleyball team, closes her eyes and visualizes the game for five minutes. Then, she leads her team onto the court and works her hardest to make sure those visions come true.

There was no question as to whether Knight would play

volleyball in college or not, â€œit was a childhood dream,â€ she said. And one that came true.

Knight has been playing volleyball since 6th grade. She is from South Lake Tahoe, California and attended Douglas High School in Nevada. During her junior and senior year, she led Douglas to back-to-back Sierra League championships. Knight is a three-time first team All-Sierra selection in volleyball and was named to the All-Northern Nevada volleyball first team when she was a senior. She also played basketball for all four years of high school. She chose to remain faithful to volleyball because â€œI just enjoy playing volleyball a lot more. I thought I was better at it,â€ Knight said.

Read the whole story

Towed out of service



Photo/Kathryn Reed

No appropriate code exists for when an emergency vehicle arrives at its destination not under its own power.

Such was the case Wednesday as Scott DeChambeau of South Tahoe Towing brought a South Lake Tahoe firetruck to the city’s maintenance yard on D Street.

Phil Harwood, a city mechanic, said the turbo will have to be pulled and things cleaned out.

“This happens with aging vehicles. It’s just wear,” Harwood said. He expects the truck to be offline for a couple days.

World Water Issues Film Fest starts Oct. 14

World Water Issues Film Festival – Oct. 14, Oct. 28 and Nov. 11, 6:30-8:30pm, Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, Rooms 139 & 141

The Earth has vast amounts of water, yet less than one percent of the worldâ€™s fresh water (estimated 0.007 percent of all water on earth) is accessible for direct human uses. This is the water found in lakes, rivers, reservoirs and those underground sources that are shallow enough to be tapped at an affordable cost. Only this amount is regularly renewed by rain and snowfall, and is therefore available on a sustainable basis.

How is this precious resource being co-opted by the bottled water industry? Is our tap water safe or tainted with rocket fuel and pharmaceuticals? How should we manage our water supply in light of increasing scarcity and pollution?

Sierra Nevada College and the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center are excited to screen three award-winning, thought-provoking pieces exploring these and other questions. Preview the new local film Charting the Course to Clarity and talk with local experts about your own drinking water and water quality. The festival will conclude on Nov. 11 with

presentations and panel discussion led by University of Nevada Renoâ€™s Student Association for International Water Issues (SAIWI) to discuss what actions we can take today to help solve some of these problems in real and lasting ways.

Oct. 14th: Blue Gold: World Water Wars

http://www.bluegold-worldwaterwars.com/

Hosted by Professor Kate Berry, UNR

According to Blue Gold, winner of numerous film festival awards, future wars will be fought over water, not oil. As we pollute, divert, pump, and waste our limited supply of fresh water we are causing desertification of the earth. And as our population increases and industry expands, the demand for fresh water only grows.

Meanwhile, corporate giants and governments are using water for economic and political gain, setting the stage for battles over water. Blue Gold follows numerous examples of people fighting for their basic right to water, from violent revolutions to local protests at grade schools. A line is crossed as water becomes a commodity. Will we survive?

Oct. 28th: Poisoned Waters (PBS special)

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/poisonedwaters/

Hosted by Michael Rosen, research hydrologist, USGS and Madonna Dunbar, Tahoe Water Suppliers Association.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and Emmy Award-winning producer Hedrick Smith dives headfirst into the contamination of Americaâ€™s great waterways, in particular Puget Sound and Chesapeake Bay. A new wave of pollution is killing fish, causing mutations in frogs, and threatening human health. Diffuse sources of pollution are introducing chemical compounds into our water, from urban runoff to poultry farm byproducts to pharmaceuticals. These chemicals are endocrine

disruptors, affecting metabolism and reproductive systems in both humans and animals. Poisoned Waters forces viewers to take a closer look at the state of our ecosystems and drinking water.

Join staff from the Tahoe Water Suppliers Association to discuss local issues related to our own drinking water. How safe is our drinking water? What are the issues and actions you can take to protect our local drinking water source? Michael Rosen, research hydrologist with USGS, has been studying endocrine disruptors in Lake Mead, organic contaminants in tributary streams to Lake Tahoe, and the Truckee River to determine their effect on the aquatic ecosystem.

Nov. 11th: Student Association for International Water Issues Presentations

http://www.unr.nevada.edu/~saiwi/

Hosted by Heather Segale, UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center.

The Student Association for International Water Issues or SAIWI (pronounced Say-wee") is a student organization at the University of Nevada, Reno, working to develop an understanding of global water issues and promote community empowerment through education and water resource development.

This culminating event will include presentations by students and community members that have participated in water development projects around the world. Hear about these amazing project successes that make a huge difference in villages around the world. Find out how you can get involved locally and globally.

* World Water Issues with Margaret Shanafield

* Addressing Water Issues on a Community Level with Jacquie

Brownstein

* Logistics and Benefits of Well-drilling with Cathy Fitzgerald

* Cameroon Past Project with Annie Lassaline

* Guatemala Future Project with Miles Becker

* How to Get Involved with Miles Becker

* Question/Answer Panel Discussion

Dugard exclusive in People, with photos



People will be on newsstands Friday.

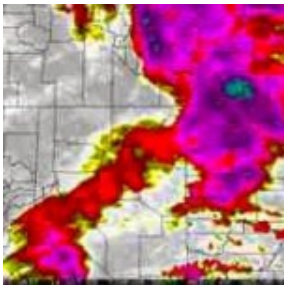
People Magazine

After being held against her will for 18 years, much of it in a backyard hell straight out of a horror film, Jaycee Dugard wants the world to know:

“I’m so happy to be back with my family,” she tells People.

Read whole story

Storm wallops Sierra



Satellite image of Sierra storm.

By Kathryn Reed and Susan Wood

Pelting rain pummeled Lake Tahoe for more than 24 hours, making Tuesday one of the wettest days on record, which in turn is likely to make this a record month if storms keep rolling in.

National Weather Service officials were a bit harried all day and didn't have previous water accumulations at hand, but said, "This is one of our better winter storms." And winter is still more than two months away.

"It's a very strong jet stream that sucked up moisture of remnants of a typhoon that created excellent ingredients to bring rainfall in a winter-like storm to California and Nevada," explained Chris Jordan of the National Weather Service in Reno.

The storm that walloped all of California and much of Northern Nevada was being called one of the strongest October events in a half century. Some localities were reporting three times the amount of typical rainfall for this time of year.

Even though the wet stuff started coming down about midnight Tuesday in the greater Lake Tahoe area, the Weather Service said since 1pm about 1 inch was falling every three hours.

Jordan said more than 3 inches had fallen throughout the basin as of 10pm, with 3.8 inches recorded at the base of Alpine Meadows at 7pm.

“Usually we don’t see storms of this magnitude until November or December,” Jordan said. “This will be one of wettest days on record in October and probably one of top 10 wettest Octobers on record.”

Jim Cantore, one of the Weather Channel’s main meteorologists, made a rare appearance on the West Coast as he gave his report from Placerville.

Hazardous conditions

On the West Slope, the storm couldn’t keep former El Dorado County Office of Emergency Services Director Marty Hackett from being close to the action. His new job with the El Dorado County Ambulance Authority – which handles services for 10 fire districts – prompted him to respond to a tree hitting the authority’s office in Diamond Springs.

“All I know is we’ve been really, really busy,” Hackett said, answering his cell phone at 9:30pm. Accidents filled his call sheet. “Anytime you get the first winter storm, the roads are really slick.”

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger had state emergency crews on alert, especially in areas prone to landslides because of recent fire activity.

Early in the day South Lake Tahoe officials set up sandbag distributions at 1160 Rufus Allen Blvd. and near the intersection of David and Ruby lanes.

Oct. 15 is the deadline the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has for moving dirt, but no one told Mother Nature.

A small landslide sent Douglas County crews scurrying on Highway 50 east of Spooner Summit about 6pm. Crews heaved debris off the road, sheriff's Sgt. Anthony Field said.

It's too early to know what the storm will do to construction sites. Steve Morales, facilities director for Lake Tahoe Unified School District, arrived at last night's meeting soaked. He and the construction gurus were at South Tahoe High School ensuring everything was in place to keep the dirt in place.

The Angora Fire burn area of 2007 has held up for two winters without any earth movement, but this is the most significant storm to hit since that June inferno burned more than 3,000 acres on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.

Pine needles along highways and city-county streets were plugging drainage routes and sending water into the road. Standing water on roads made driving conditions a little squirrelly and hydroplaning common.

A tree that fell about 10pm onto Highway 50 one-quarter mile north of Cave Rock near Warrior Way sent one motorist to Barton Memorial Hospital with minor injuries and closed down the major artery between Carson City and South Lake Tahoe for a half hour, Tahoe Douglas Fire Battalion Chief Ben Sharit said.

Earlier in the evening the Douglas County School District board of education was meeting at the county library. The wind was not robust at 6pm.

Like Lake Valley Fire, the California Highway Patrol watch commander reported a relatively quiet day. But its counterpart in Nevada cited 14 accidents in the Reno area in the morning.

Power outages were reported in several parts of the Bay Area. Locally, reports of no electricity came from the Hopi Road area of Meyers. Sierra Pacific Power offices did not return calls.

Flickering lights were the norm Tuesday.

Snow on mountaintops

The Mount Rose Highway – which may see 2 feet of snow as morning dawns – saw its share of spinouts Tuesday, NHP Trooper Chuck Allen added.

Caltrans had chain controls in place on Highway 88 near Kirkwood Tuesday night. Be sure to check with Caltrans and NDOT (or click on their icons on the Home page of *LTN*) to be current with road conditions.

“Snowfall was limited to above 8,500 feet. What happened was a few inches of snow fell (Tuesday) morning as the storm came in,” Jordan said. “Then it was rain on snow. As the storm winds down and the cold comes in, the snow levels will be back down probably not much below 8,000 feet.”

Having an initial wet storm like this is just what ski resorts like for a base.

Kirkwood Mountain Resort was reporting 2-6 inches Tuesday night, while Mount Rose Ski Resort had 6-8 inches.

Although high wind activity produced up to 6-foot waves on the lake, the U.S. Coast Guard reported no activity.

A high wind warning has been issued until 8am for the entire Lake Tahoe area. Today will be breezy.

Temperatures are expected to be in the upper 60s by Friday, before cooling off to about 60 on Sunday when a cold front moves through.

STHS baseball coach speaks out



Matt Tillson

By Kathryn Reed

Matt Tillson doesn't understand why he won't be coaching the South Tahoe High School baseball team in the spring.

After five years as the varsity coach and another five with the junior varsity team, he was let go at the end of last May.

He went before the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board Tuesday night asking for answers, but unable to receive any because the board is not allowed to comment on items not on the agenda.

"I feel I was unjustly relieved of my job. I feel I was fired," Tillson told the board. "I want to talk about the condition of the sports programs at the high school."

Tillson asked the board to have an agenda item at a future meeting relating to his specific situation as well as sports in general.

Board President Wendy David suggested Tillson speak with Human Resources Director Jim Watson.

That evening the board hired Don Amaral to be the Viking baseball coach.

After the meeting, Watson said when a coach receives an evaluation that is not proficient or better, the job is opened up. Tillson applied, but was not rehired. Watson would not say how many people applied for the position or how many were interviewed.

Several parents and some players filled the board room Tuesday night in support of Tillson, though none spoke.

Some parents have voiced concerns about Athletic Director Donny Borges, and question his job performance.

Watson would not comment on Borges.