Fallen Leaf Lake marina operation negotiations fall apart



Packed meetings, like the one earlier this month, are the norm these days at Fallen Leaf Lake. Photo/Susan Wood

By Susan Wood

At this point, Fallen Leaf Landing has no place to land given the current quagmire its manager and the community board overseeing the concessionaire operation are in.

No agreement was reached on a contract between the Fallen Leaf Lake Community Services District and John Rich, who has run the South Lake Tahoe area marina and general store for 14 years. The two sides gave each other until Sept. 19 to clear up differences that range from accounting practices to rent the CSD takes in to boat-washing activities to the occupation

of a second room above the store.

Negotiations fell apart when Mike Kraft, the board's vice president and one of two subcommittee members scheduled to meet with Rich, said he was approached and threatened in the last few weeks.

"Based on this threat and comments I received (at the picnic), I removed myself from the negotiations," Kraft said Tuesday. No one took his place.

"We didn't even get to the terms," Rich said Tuesday of the quasi contract.

Kraft has his share of critics because he wants to find the funding to have the district board run the dual marina-store operation with the help of an employed manager. Some in the usually tight-knit community who support the fourth-generation Rich accuse Kraft of operating behind closed doors.

Tempers have flared since the debate began in April, packing the Fallen Leaf Lake firehouse where the CSD board hosts its meetings. Some have suggested a recall may be in order if the popular Rich family is kicked out.

Rich added he still wants to run the store and marina because of the "phenomenal community support," but believes he's close to being ousted as a result of personal differences with the board.

Board President Dana Clark sent an email Tuesday declaring no changes to the last version of the Aug. 15 contract, which requires Rich to pay $103,000 in rent.

"Without having an agreement in principle at this time, we will proceed with the steps necessary to execute the decision to have the CSD operate the store and marina for the 2010 season," the letter reads.

Clark admitted Tuesday it's unfortunate discussions didn't

resume between the board and Rich, especially since he “still has reservations” about the district taking over the operation. Nonetheless, the board is seeking a general manager and no other option has been placed on the table.

Rich cannot be dismissed without board approval. That could happen at the next meeting.

The district board will host a meeting in the coming weeks. Clark indicated the meeting should be scheduled between Oct. 10 and Nov. 7.

Susan Wood is a freelance writer based in South Lake Tahoe. She may be reached at copysue1@yahoo.com.

Ordinance for pot clubs extinguished



Ordinance for pot clubs goes up in smoke.

By Kathryn Reed

A meeting set for yesterday at 10am never occurred. Apparently South Lake Tahoe Police Chief Terry Daniels took it upon

himself to schedule the meeting with the three pot dispensaries in town without the knowledge or consent of the City Council.

Daniels said the meeting was like any other when an ordinance or revision to one is being drafted â€“ get the people who will be affected by the rules involved early on.

The problem is higher ups never gave him the direction to draft such legislation.

The police department has oversight over a few types of businesses in town. Massage is one of them. Every therapist working in the city must be fingerprinted and carry a SLTPD issued card. But no one has said medicinal marijuana should come under the departmentâ€™s prevue.

Most occupations donâ€™t have this added layer of oversight.

When City Manager Dave Jinkens was asked by LTN about the pot club meeting, he knew nothing of it. Jinkens and Finance Director Christine Vuletich were copied on the letter from Daniels to the pot clubs.

Jinkens had been out of town on city business when the letter was written.

â€œWhen the chief of police realized that no direction to proceed with an ordinance had been given by the City Council, he decided to cancel the meeting,â€ Jinkens said in an email to Lake Tahoe News after getting up-to-speed on the matter. â€œThe decision not to move forward with the meeting and discussion is prudent and proper under these circumstances. No further action will be taken on this matter until specific direction to do so is given by the City Council and the matter is not on the calendar to be brought back.â€

The meeting was canceled less than 24 hours before it was set to begin.

The council last took up the legal cannabis issue on July 7. No action was taken, though a slew of supporters of the medicinal pot clubs spoke that day.

Several issues remain unresolved because federal and state laws contradict each other regarding medicinal marijuana. The city has opted to not issue business licenses to the dispensaries in town. This means they are not paying their share of taxes.

â€œThe federal and state governments need to get their act together to make our job easier on these sensitive matters at the local level,â€ Jinkens said.

LTCC full-time students increase

With the creative parking job by many Lake Tahoe Community College students, it’s obvious there’s a lot of them this quarter.

The South Lake Tahoe campus began the fall quarter Monday. At Tuesday night’s board of trustee meeting it was revealed that only seven more students are on campus compared to a year ago, but they are there more of them.

This is because the number of full-time students is up by 19 percent, while part-timers are slightly down.

It was pointed out that in this economy if people don’t have a job, they take more classes. Even the students who were already full time are taking additional units.

Sand Harbor victim from Fallon

The woman who died at Sand Harbor State Park has been identified as Marie Wolf of Fallon.

The 67-year-old Nevada resident collapsed Saturday on the shore of Lake Tahoe after completing a dive with an instructor and complaining of abdominal pain.

An autopsy was conducted Monday by the Washoe County coroner. Results could take months. No cause of death has been released.

Garrido's behavior once praised by authorities



Phillip Garrido

By Sam Stanton and Denny Walsh, Sacramento Bee

Nearly eight years after Jaycee Lee Dugard was kidnapped, Phillip Garrido received a certificate from the U.S. Parole Commission lauding him for his behavior since his release from prison in 1988.

“You are hereby discharged from parole,” the March 9, 1999, certificate read.

Read the whole story

North Tahoe has money to give away

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association in collaboration with the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce has $30,000 in grants to give away – three times what it had in 2008. The grants are to help organizations market and promote their events. New events will be given priority. For more information, go to www.northlaketahoechamber.com.

National public lands need help Saturday

Organizers of the largest cleanup and fix up of Americaâ€™s public lands expect to see a historic turnout of volunteers when National Public Lands Day begins Sept. 26.

Nearly 2,000 service projects have been registered at sites

across the country, from Washington, D.C.â€™s Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens to San Franciscoâ€™s Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Hawaiiâ€™s Pu’ukoholÄ Heiau National Historic Site.

â€œWe attribute this new surge in volunteers to the United We Serve initiative,â€ said Robb Hampton, program director of National Public Lands Day, in a press release. â€œJudging from the number of people who have already signed up for our event, I think enthusiasm for volunteering will carry on well beyond the summer.â€

National Public Lands Day carries on the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a program established to revive communities and create opportunities for employment following the Great Depression.

On National Public Lands Day, the National Park Service and the National Park Foundation will host a day of volunteering and a sneak preview of the Ken Burns film, “The National Parks: Americaâ€™s Best Idea”, which will premiere the following night on PBS television stations.

Free entrance will be granted to all 391 national parks on Sept. 26.

Nationwide, National Public Lands Day will offer a wide range of projects and activities, including litter removal, planting trees, testing water quality, restoring campgrounds and educating the general public about the history of well-known national and community public lands.

For more information about National Public Lands Day and to locate a site, please visit www.publiclandsday.org.

Weight Watchers leaves South Shore

By Kathryn Reed

Weight Watchers is scaling back.

The national weight loss machine has stopped operating on the South Shore even though dozens of people regularly attended meetings at South Lake Tahoe Rec Center.

â€œIt gave me my life back,â€ Pam Wheeler said of Weight Watchers. She joined a handful of years ago. Over time she lost 65 pounds. â€œIt was the beginning of getting myself back, putting myself first.â€

Wheeler and Virginia Boyar had been running the meetings the last few years. Both needed to move on because of other commitments. The national organization has chosen to stop offering sessions here.

Barton University had offered a Weight Watchers program to its staff twice a week. When Bartonâ€™s Amber Tanaka learned the community would be without Weight Watchers she tried to resurrect the class. She said the national organization said no.

When Boyar inherited the group more than four years ago about dozen people attended meetings. She more than quadrupled attendance.

â€œFor me, the weekly weigh-in was important,â€ said Boyar, who lost more than 40 pounds. â€œWe talk a lot about the comfort zone. You have to think about what food means to you.â€

Men, women, kids, middle age, seniors, all ethnicities attended the meetings. Some wanted to lose a few pounds, while others set a goal of 100 pounds.

â€œWeight Watchers is a judgment-free zone,â€ Boyar said.

People have excess pounds for a variety of reasons â€“ all of which were addressed during the meetings.

Weight Watchers is about eating what you want, but keeping track. The emphasis is on healthy food. Exercise is called activity.

For those left behind, online programs are at www.weightwatchers.com.

Sierra-at-Tahoe set to rid slopes of trash

Sierra Resort's annual Keep Sierra Clean day is Oct. 11. The goal is to collect 2,000 pounds of trash from the slopes. Last year's clean up effort yielded more than 1,820 pounds of trash including three snowboards, an iPod, a digital camera and a Blackberry.

Members of the community are invited to join Sierra Resort employees as they spread out to clean up the mountain. This year's collection effort will cover a broader area than the inaugural year, with some teams heading up one of the chairlifts, some covering the base area, and some focusing on critical stream zones. All of the trash will be weighed and collected, with prizes given in a variety of categories. There will be a BBQ at the end of the day to celebrate KeepÃn Sierra

Clean.

Participants should come prepared to navigate steep and sometimes rocky terrain with sturdy footwear. Work gloves are recommended. To help keep the event low-impact, participants should also bring their own water bottles.

At the conclusion of the event, there will be a tailgate ski swap in “B” Lot, where participants are invited to buy and sell ski and snowboard gear. There is no fee to participate in the swap, which will end at 3pm.

Event schedule:

10am registration begins

10:30am ride to the top of Sierra Resort

12:30pm gather by the main lodge to weigh and collect trash

1pm BBQ begins

1:30pm prizes distributed

2pm ski swap begins

3pm event concludes

For more information, visit www.SierraAtTahoe.com or call (530) 659.7453.

Lake Tahoe Marathon week begins today

The Lake Tahoe Marathon is more than running 26.2 miles. The

multi-day event includes a 5K through historic Lake Tahoe estates of yesteryear and an all-downhill 10K that kicks off at Emerald Bayâ€™s Inspiration Point â€“ both scheduled for marathon race day, Sept. 27.

For those not ready to swim, bike and run back-to-back, they can take part in the marathonâ€™s Three-Day Triathlon, which plays out over the course of three consecutive days (Sept. 25-27).

Water and biking enthusiasts are also covered with kayak races, and 20, 35 and 72-mile rides (Sept. 25-26), and everyone can see Lake Tahoe aboard the regionâ€™s best vantage point â€“ on board a Mississippi paddle-wheeler at the Sunset Pasta Cruise to Emerald Bay the evening of Sept. 26.

Runners and walkers have a host of events to choose from during the Lake Tahoe Marathon Race Week (Sept. 23-27), including the Marathon, coined â€œa Sunday morning run youâ€™ll never forget,â€ that winds down the West Shore from Tahoe City to South Lake Tahoe for a post-run bash; Tahoe Triple (three marathons in three consecutive days); Marathon Relays; Half Marathon; Three-Day Triathlon; 20-Mile Run, Jog and Walk; Biking events; Kayaking events; free Kids Fun Run and Speed Golf.

For more information or to register (fees vary for events), call (530) 544-7095 or visitÂ www.laketahoemarathon.com.