# SLT unemployment at 15%

South Lake Tahoe's City Council had a budget meeting Sept. 8. One of the more alarming things to come out of it is that unemployment stands at 15 percent in the city – which is more than the state and federal numbers.

With the Lake Tahoe Basin entering the shoulder season – when layoffs from summer are the norm before ski season begins – that figure is likely to escalate.

The city's fiscal year begins Oct. 1. In the last budget the city had revenue for hotel taxes going up. The reality is the reverse happened.

Even though other city's and the state have furlough days in place, South Lake Tahoe has been reticent to implement such a policy.

Public hearings on the budget will be scheduled soon.

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# El Dorado County Health and Human Services struggles to maintain services



**By Kathryn Reed**

Nineteen out of 33 people who work in South Lake Tahoe for El Dorado County Department of Human Services were told that by the end of September they will be working in the Placerville office.

Most work out of the two buildings on Silver Dollar Avenue the county leases. The county gave the landlord notice it would be severing the agreement at the end of this month.

“We are trying to keep as many people in Tahoe as we possibly can,” county Supervisor Norma Santiago said.

She said the continued budget crunch is forcing consolidation of offices. The county could save a half million a year with these changes.

Santiago also stressed that the goal is to keep people employed even if it means on the West Slope. A commuter bus, possibly BlueGo, is being talked about as a way to lessen the burden of commuting over the hill. Some Tahoe-based employees are already driving from the Carson Valley and farther.

The county owns the building at Takela Drive and Highway 50, which is in the process of being revamped so it can accommodate more people. One of the problems is the basement is not ADA accessible, so it is wasted space.

Another issue the county must contend with is deciphering what the governor’s pen stroke to slash CalWorks means. When Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the state budget he wiped out $80 million from Human Services that legislators had wanted.

The county is talking with partner agencies to see if office space if available.

The county’s Mental Health Commission has a public hearing this month to gather input on the El Dorado County Mental Health, 2009-10 Community Services and Support portion of its Mental Health Services Act Plan. Copies of the draft plan are

at www.edcgov.us/mentalhealth.

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# TRPA cracking down on buoy owners

**By TRPA staff**

Orange notice tags have been showing up on buoys around Lake Tahoe and will continue all month as the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency gets the word out that a permitting and registration deadline is approaching for all Lake Tahoe moorings such as buoys and boatlifts.

TRPA's Watercraft Enforcement Team started attaching the notices to buoys and other moorings such as boatlifts and boathouses at the end of August. Buoy and mooring owners have until Oct. 15 to begin the permitting and registration process required under the agency's shorezone ordinances.

The permitting and registration program will help fund enforcement on the lake to address the proliferation of unauthorized buoys in Tahoe. The agency's rules on boat mooring were updated in December 2008 in part to create an effective, locally operated buoy enforcement program.

Those who fail to meet the deadline risk penalties that could include buoy removal.

The orange tags being attached to buoys are a follow-up notification to buoy owners. Notifications were mailed to lakefront property owners in November and July.

Permitting and registration may be completed over-the-counter and applicants with minimum requirements are usually issued

TRPA registration tags the same day. Latitude and longitude coordinates for buoys are one requirement of the application which TRPA customer service staff can help property owners gather.

There are approximately 4,400 mooring buoys in Lake Tahoe.

New registration and mitigation fees for buoys will help fund the watercraft enforcement program, buoy enforcement as well as scientific monitoring programs.

Owners of buoys and other moorings such as boatlifts and boathouses can access electronic forms at www.trpa.org and may submit the appropriate forms by mail or in person at the TRPA office at 128 Market Street in Stateline.

For additional information, call Dennis Oliver at (775) 589.5235 or email doliver@trpa.org.

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# Jaycee Lee Dugard and rape trauma syndrome



**By Anna K. Richter**

South Lake Tahoe Women's Center's board, staff and volunteers were thrilled to hear the news that Jaycee Lee Dugard was alive, and our hearts went out to her the instant we learned she had young girls, ages 15 and 11. Doing the math, we

recognized instantly that Jaycee Lee had been sexually assaulted. We spoke together as a staff about what she and her daughters and family are likely to go through along the road to healing.

The Department of Justice reports that a woman is raped in our country every 2 minutes. Since rape is one of the crimes least likely to be reported to law enforcement, it is likely happening more often.

We can only speculate on the details of what happened to Jaycee Lee over the past 18 years, but survivors of sexual assault often experience what is called Rape Trauma Syndrome. The progression from the first stage, the acute stage, to the adjustment and normalization stages can take years.

Considering the unique circumstances of Jaycee Lee's isolation and the extremely high level of mental manipulation that may have been used as a tool by her alleged abuser, it is likely she may have only just begun to understand the level of emotional, physical, sexual and psychological abuse she has endured. It may be a while until she can grasp the depth of what she has been through.

The trial will expose the details, and the trial itself is likely to be extremely emotionally and physically taxing, draining and painful for Jaycee, her daughters, and their support system. On top of the trauma of the past 18 years, Jaycee will face the horror of having these experiences as a part of public record – deeply personal accounts of the abuse are likely to reach the public, and the shame, guilt and self-blame she may feel will likely be amplified by this public exposure.

Every survivor's experience is different, but just after the assault, the acute stage of Rape Trauma Syndrome can last from a few days to several weeks or more. Survivors often experience emotional shock, wonder how the assault could have

happened, and express things like, “I feel so numb, why can’t I cry” or feel shame, self-blame and guilt. They may experience paralyzing anxiety, anger, and even dulled sensory and memory functioning. They may also react with hysteria, or even hypervigilance and experience exhaustion that often accompanies it.

After the initial shock and numbness, victims often move to what is called the adjustment stage, which can last for years. In this stage, victims face many challenges because the outside world expects them to resume their normal lives, but they suffer from a host of emotional and even physiological responses to the abuse they suffered. They may experience depression, feelings of powerlessness, anxiety, mood swings, flashbacks, insomnia, headaches, pain, suppressed or ravenous appetite, and extreme distrust. They may sometimes also withdraw from friends and family and have a difficult time resuming daily life activities, or may actively work to suppress any and all thoughts of the assault from consciousness, trying to blot it out completely.

Phobias sometimes develop, such as a fear of being alone or fears related to the characteristics of the assailant like curly hair, the smell of alcohol or cigarettes, a type of car, paranoia about strangers, or even a global fear of others.

It may seem counterintuitive, but some survivors will try to push others away. Survivors will need unwavering support, flexibility and understanding from friends and family at this time.

In Jaycee Lee’s case, her support system will be invaluable as she works to integrate her history into her life and begins to move on to a new life, one that she has the power to define for herself.

The final stage of Rape Trauma Syndrome, the normalization stage, can take many years for a survivor to reach. At this

time, the victim integrates the event into his or her life history; the physical and physiological reactions to the assault no longer control daily experiences.

Survivors acknowledge the guilt and shame they feel but let go of feelings of self-blame – they have learned the tools they need to regain a sense of control and power over their lives.

It is our hope at South Lake Tahoe Women's Center that Jaycee Lee Dugard will have access to the very best support from friends, family, and professional counselors and programs to find ways to begin to heal from this experience. While it may seem like healing from such trauma is impossible, we must remember the incredible strength and courage that it took for her to survive the past 18 years.

Jaycee Lee Dugard is a survivor, and with time, and the support of her loved ones and her community, she will heal from what she has endured.

*Anna K. Richter is development director at South Lake Tahoe Women's Center.*

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# SLT city attorney being paid not to work

**By Kathryn Reed**

Even though Jacqueline Mittelstadt is still listed on South Lake Tahoe's website as the city's attorney, she is not doing the job.

She said she received a call Sept. 8 from special counsel for the city who told her, "I am not allowed to return to work.'

Access to her computer has been turned off. The locks on her door have been changed.

Patrick Enright, assistant city attorney-redevelopment counsel, has been appointed interim city attorney.

All of this happened behind closed doors Tuesday. When contacted the next day, Enright was not forthcoming with information about what happened at the meeting, though he said he was in the meeting for part of the discussion.

City Council members are not talking either.

The question remains whether the council's actions are a violation of the Brown Act, which says action taken in closed session must be reported in open session. Clearly, action was taken.

Mittelstadt said she was not told how long she will be on paid leave of absence.

Sources told Lake Tahoe News it is non-disciplinary leave.

In order to terminate Mittelstadt the council must do so at a regularly scheduled meeting. A council member could seek consensus from his peers at the Sept. 15 meeting to have the item placed on the Oct. 6 agenda.

If that were to happen, she would be given 30 days notice that in another 90 days she is off the payroll and out of a job. This means Mittelstadt, who has only been working since June, would be paid almost five months at more than $10,000 a month to not work.

Why the council is ready to ax Mittelstadt has not been revealed. Before she was hired on a 5-0 vote the council members were enthusiastic to have her on board.

Earlier this week she told LTN, "The City Attorney's Office noted some internal irregularities in the city and reports of

which were not necessarily well received.”

Any grievances that may have been filed against Mittelstadt or Enright or by them must be resolved before the council could terminate their employment.

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# El Dorado County strives to be geotourism destination; workshop Sept. 9

**By Kathryn Reed**

What does El Dorado County have that no place else has?

The answers to that question are being assembled by a coalition charged with the job of turning the entire county into geo-tourism destination.

“Some of you might see marketing for Lake Tahoe and it does not reflect what you like. We know skiing and gambling, but what else can we market?” asked Peter Brumis.

Brumis, founder of Ecomentum.com and international ecotourism expert, along with Jacquie Chandler (messaging specialist and local liaison to National Geographic) and Penelope Curtis (California arts and heritage tourism expert) make up GeoSierra.

The threesome was hired by the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce to develop a geo-tourism plan. One-third of the $90,000 grant El Dorado County awarded the chamber is being spent on the consultants.

About $18,000 will go toward the website, while the remaining $42,000 is the “capture component” which could be a video or short trailer so people understand the asset and what it connects to.

In July and August, GeoSierra led meetings throughout the county to gather public input. The idea is for locals to weigh-in on the assets they believe represent the uniqueness of the county.

The four county maps laid out on tables at the U.S. Forest Service were covered with reference points – some natural, some not – by the more than 20 people in attendance. Things like the Tahoe Rim Trail, Alpen Sierra Coffee, Desolation Wilderness, star gazing, wineries, wildflower hikes, Explore Tahoe – and hundreds of others were written down.

“With gaming, construction and the tourism economy in decline, what can a destination do to sustain itself? Change the menu – change the result,” Chandler said before the July meeting. “National Geographic has found that when a destination focuses on what is authentic about the place, visitors are more likely to become engaged in our historical, cultural and national treasure story. When you feel connected to something, you care more about it, and caring leads to appreciation that builds stewardship.”

County Supervisor Norma Santiago said the goal is to have National Geographic, whose website she said gets 3 million hits a day, list El Dorado County as a sustainable destination.

Forty-five destinations in the world are at some level of geo-tourism through National Geographic.

Identifying assets is the first phase. People can continue to suggest resources that should be included by going to www.geosierra.org. A steering panel consisting of people on both sides of the county will make the ultimate decision about

what is included.

A big part of geo-tourism is linking the assets so people stay in the county longer and spend more money. It’s visiting a county winery and then ordering a bottle at a local restaurant. It’s having local businesses refer tourists to other destinations in the county. It could be an alpaca farm in Placerville providing wool to a Tahoe business.

Through the Sierra Business Council, geo-tourism may become a basin-wide endeavor in the future.

The last workshop in South Lake Tahoe is Sept. 9, 3:30-5:30pm, South Lake Tahoe Public Library Meeting Room, 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

The last El Dorado Hills workshop is Sept. 11, 4-6pn, El Dorado Hills Holiday Inn at the Town Center, 4360 Town Center Blvd., El Dorado Hills.

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# Bijou Bash returns

Bijou Bash is back.

Organizers say the Sept. 12 free event at Bijou Community Park will have something for every age.

This event at the city-owned park went on for a few years before it petered. With the park growing in the subsequent years, some said it was time to bring back the Bash. A dog agility course, performances by local youth groups, food vendors and more are scheduled from 11am-4pm.

There will be a Kidz Fun Zone that includes an obstacle course, dual racing slide, bungee run, Velcro wall and bounce

house. Skateboard contests and BMX bike demonstrations are scheduled.

Parking is free at Lake Tahoe Community College. The shuttle from LTCC to the Bijou Bash is also free. Or, use the free bicycle coral at the Bash. LTCC and the park are on Al Tahoe Boulevard off Highway 50 in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 542.6056.

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# Fallen Leaf woman questions legalities of account

**Publisher's Note:** ***The following is an excerpt from a communication to the El Dorado Community Foundation from a Fallen Leaf Lake resident.***

I am very concerned about a fund you recently started for Fallen Leaf Lake Community Services District. It is my understanding that the fund has $30,000 deposited and another $52,000 pledged.

I want to inform you of the role of this fund in the politics of the Fallen Leaf Lake Community Services District (CSD) and the extent to which the fund is being used for purely political purposes. At the September 5th meeting of our CSD, Director Mike Kraft was very clear that it was money coming from your foundation that would enable the CSD to directly manage its store and marina facilities, replacing the current concessionaires who have been in place for 14 years and who have the overwhelming support of the Fallen Leaf Lake community.

In fact, the entire purpose of the recently set-up fund was to influence the outcome of the CSD vote on September 5th, a vote which was to determine whether to move forward with a renegotiated contract with the current concessionaires, or to implement a CSD-run operation. Director Mike Kraft referenced a letter from your foundation and clearly stated to the community that without the funds from your foundation, he could not vote for a CSD-run operation because the financial risks would be too great; however, with the money from your foundation, anonymously donated and only to be released if the CSD voted to for a CSD-run operation of the store and marina, he could vote for what he and a small minority (donors?) of the community wanted. The money coming from your foundation most definitely influenced the political process of the meeting and the outcome of the final motion made, seconded, and voted upon.

This fund which you have established was set up for the purpose of manipulating the political process at the September 5th meeting of the CSD. As you know, California and Federal law prohibits 501C non-profits from actively participating in political activities unless they are specifically incorporated as a political action committee.

The activities at the September 5th CSD meeting were serious enough to potentially jeopardize the non-profit status of your foundation. I know your foundation does incredible work, and I have absolutely no desire to put your foundation at risk. I do request that the particular Fallen Leaf Fund be closed, and its funds returned to the anonymous donors.

Thank you for understanding the seriousness of this situation. Please inform me of the action you will take on this matter.

Sincerely,

**Elizabeth Spurlock, Fallen Leaf Lake resident**

# Dugard’s classmates, others reflect on June 10, 1991

Memories of Jaycee Lee Dugard came pouring out at the Sept. 6 parade in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/Lisa J. Tolda

**By Kathryn Reed**

Phones started ringing at 6am – Jaycee Lee Dugard was found alive.

Facebook posts have been rampant – some from those who went to school with her, others from people in the Lake Tahoe area, others from strangers touched by this 18-year ordeal.

Dugard being found alive after being kidnapped June 10, 1991, is an incredible tale. Although she and her 11- and 15-year-old children who were fathered by the accused abductor are the victims, the effects of that day have stayed with so many who lived in South Lake Tahoe at the time.

Her high school graduating class didn’t forget. The 1998 yearbook has a picture of Dugard.

“It feels personal in a way. It happened in our elementary school,” said Taryn (Huber) Sharpe, who was a fifth-grader in the classroom next to Dugard’s. “It was hard to grasp. It didn’t seem real. We thought we would see her again.”

She said the initial call from a friend the morning of Aug. 27 made her excited, but wary – false sightings had gotten their hopes up in the past.

Now living in Bakersfield, Sharpe said some of her classmates feel guilty – the lives they’ve been able to lead while Dugard was holed up in a ramshackle compound without freedom and giving birth to her first child at age 14.

“It’s overwhelming what people have to say on Facebook, what feelings, how they remember it, where people were, what they were doing,” Sharpe said. “A lot of us are lost for words and don’t know what to say.”

Her church is talking about making a quilt for Dugard.

Stephanie Spees, who lives in Sacramento, was reminded of Dugard every time she saw a pink ribbon. Pink was Dugard’s favorite color. Dugard was wearing a pink windbreaker and pink stretch pants the day she disappeared. Pink ribbons were tied all over town – especially at the school. It was her favorite color.

“I remember the day it happened. The news crews were coming up to the school. Counselors were coming and talking to us” Spees said. “It was intense for being so little. I wasn’t allowed to go to the bus stop anymore. My mom drove me to school.”

That was a common reaction throughout the area.

“I grew up here as a kid and I let my kids take bikes to the store, go to the bus stop. We were always parents who felt very safe here,” said Kathay Lovell, who has four grandchildren growing up in South Lake Tahoe. “That day

changed how we viewed safety for our children.”

At baseball games for her grandsons, ages 10 and 13, they aren’t allowed to go to the bathroom alone. All adults keep a lookout for strangers.

A generation later it’s common to see parents when the bus picks kids up and drops them off. Some were children when Dugard went missing.

Duane Wallace’s kids regularly had parental accompaniment at the bus stop because he was nearly abducted as a fourth-grader when he lived in Modesto. That incident has stayed with him.

“I can tell you with our own kids we were very careful. We were very protective,” Wallace said.

Karen Tinlin had the dual role of being a parent and principal of the school where Dugard was a fifth-grader.

“I used to let my kids play in the yard and never gave it a second thought. That summer I kept an eye on them like there was no tomorrow,” Tinlin said.

At the school in Meyers, which had just a few days left before summer break, it was a bit surreal. Pink ribbons were tied on the kindergarten fence. A plaque in honor of Dugard is still at the school.

Sue (Louis) Bush remembers everyone at the school being upset. She was Dugard’s teacher.

“None of the kids could believe this happened. It was a life experience for everybody involved,” Bush said.

# Fallen Leaf homeowner tells his side

**Open Letter,**

The Mumford family has owned 440 Fallen Leaf Lake Road for 25 years. In the early years, we participated with a handful of folks to buy one of the first fire trucks and the initial gas tank at the landing. Since that time many safety and services improvements have been made for residents by the hard work of volunteers like yourself.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for volunteering to serve and, more importantly, to lead the CSD. The current actions on the store and marina management contract are the most heated and divisive we have ever experienced at Fallen Leaf Lake. It was pointed out at Saturday's (Sept. 5) meeting that recent questionnaires and surveys of the community made an almost unanimous directive that the Board should not get involved in the management of the fire station, store, or marina activities, but should hire professionals for those services. Betsy Spurlock, in addition to those in attendance at the recent meetings, showed that there was a clear majority support for the continuation of the Fallen Leaf Landing contract. The minutes show that 71% of recent emails sent to the Board on this matter were in support of renewal of the Fallen Leaf Landing contract as well. I was personally moved by the number of former Board members who made thoughtful comments of support.

When we came up at the end of June, we were sadly surprised to hear of this controversy. As an entrepreneur, I have viewed the store and marina start-up, development, and profitable operation as an American success story, only to be improved through community collaboration. Instead, it appears that we are witnessing a government committee run takeover. In July I

applauded (silently) your leadership to respond to the majority of residents and, with the help of Steve Malley, to make changes in the Management Contract that both parties could live with. It seemed like that process was working, until Mike Kraft came back late and introduced a whole new set of conditions, which Fallen Leaf Landing had not received in time to review for Saturday's meeting. I appreciate Steve Malley reading his letter into the minutes on Saturday, so that we could all understand his frustration with the process and Mike Kraft's actions to undermine a resolution.

The Board and attending residents then got to hear Mike Kraft enumerate his efforts to develop a viable CSD run scenario that he would be personally responsible for. He stated that an "anonymous" committee had been identified to be responsible for researching and accomplishing all tasks, reporting to him, that he felt were necessary to perform the start-up and operation of the store and marina next year. Because this group was "anonymous," neither the Board nor the residents were able to feel comfortable that anyone in this group had the required start-up or ongoing management experience to make this CSD/Kraft-run proposal successful. Next, Kraft read a letter from a Foundation of "anonymous"donors with a potential $30-80,000 donation commitment to support Kraft's proposal. The record, hopefully, shows that the amounts of these donations were highly questionable and some felt that this "anonymous donation offers" amounted to a bribe.

We then watched something I still cannot believe happened. The CSD Board approved your motion, as amended, to have Kraft and another Board member negotiate Kraft's version of the Management Contract modifications and demands with Fallen Leaf Landing. If in two weeks an agreement is not reached, then the Kraft CSD run proposal will go forward. Fallen Leaf Landing had apparently received the Kraft revision just prior to the meeting, and had no time to review them. No one except certain of the Board members and possibly Steve Malley had read the

Kraft revision. I admittedly do not know the Brown Act, which was referred to, but do have over 40 years of corporate law and governance experience in well over 100 companies (ranging from seed start-ups to NYSE), and this takes the conflict of interest and breach of fiduciary duty Gold Medal!

The CSD Board appointed Mike Kraft, who is a member of the Board, and has a fiduciary responsibility to the Board and the residents of Fallen Leaf Lake, to negotiate the Mike Kraft version of the Management Contract with Fallen Leaf Landing. If an agreement (which Mike Kraft has to agree to) cannot be reached in two weeks, then the Mike Kraft Proposal, which he stated he favors and has developed with the â€œanonymous committee and funding, would be the CSD run approved plan.

This violates every conflict of interest and fiduciary principal I know of, and probably leaves the Board very exposed. As importantly, a CSD-run structure is not consistent with resident member questionnaires, surveys, the advice of prior Board members, and clearly the majority will of the residents in attendance, on petitions and emails.

Respectfully,

**John B. Mumford, Fallen Leaf Lake resident**