Father Grace taking a swing at more free time



Father Grace stays active playing golf three times a week. Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Father Grace is finally slowing down.

He told Barton Memorial Hospital this month to no longer call him in an emergency. For decades the staff would call him at all hours of the night if a patient requested to see him or someone had a taken a turn for the worse.

But he's not done with the South Lake Tahoe medical facility. He plans to keep popping in to see if there are patients who might want his counsel – even if they aren't Catholic.

John Grace will be 93 years old on Sept. 18. Most of those

years have been spent in the basin. He moved here in 1956. This was when about 100 people lived in town during the winter.

He moved from Ireland to Sacramento in 1948 at a time when the United States needed Catholic priests and it was near impossible to get a job in his native country.

And while he is in a serious business, he seldom doesn't have a smile and he knows how to have fun.

Not long after he arrived in Tahoe he was driving down Echo Summit into the basin when two elephants came running toward his vehicle. Not knowing what to do he drove between them. He told parishioners about this and they apparently worried Grace might have gotten into the communal wine.

Then word got out there had been a circus in Nevada that was using the elephants to pull a truck and the chains broke loose. So, there really were elephants roaming in the Sierra Nevada.

Grace has always been about doing what's right for the community. It didn't take him long to realize South Lake Tahoe needed a hospital. It was 50 years ago this year that the hospital's doors opened.

Grace signed the paperwork establishing Barton as a nonprofit organization. He was also part of the committee that applied for the federal grant that provided matching funds for the construction of the hospital.

"When the hospital opened I started visiting the patients and have been doing so ever since," Grace told *Lake Tahoe News*. "That is a calling of a priest; to take care of the sick. They are the people who need you. As a priest that is one of your callings. If don't do that, you are not doing your duty."

He used to be on the hospital's board of directors. But when

they started meeting on Sunday mornings he had to resign. He joked it was their way to get him off the board. At that time his Sunday mornings were reserved for delivering Mass at St. Theresa Catholic Church.

It was in 1997 that he stopped being the full time clergy at the local church.

“I wanted to get away from administration work. I retired as pastor, which meant I didn’t do any administration. I assisted with Masses on Sunday,” Grace said.

But to this day he is not fully retired. The people won’t let him. He continues to perform weddings, funerals and baptisms when families ask him to. He is now on the third generation for some families when it comes to baptisms.

Grace, still with a bit of an Irish accent, jokes that he fell through the cracks and that’s why the bishop left him in South Lake Tahoe.

Part of the truth is he didn’t mind the snow and others did. He would be the one firing up the old Dodge to plow the parking lot before services.

Grace is responsible for the church, Grace Hall and the K-6 school getting built.

Doug Morris has known Grace since moving here in 1962 as a high school sophomore. His dad was the minister at the Presbyterian Church. This was during the time of Vatican II and students from various religious backgrounds were brought together to discuss the changes in the Catholic Church.

After getting married, Morris converted to Catholicism. Now he sees Grace on a regular basis – at the hospital where he is a volunteer for the auxiliary and on the golf course each week.

Golfing is how Grace would spend his one day off from the church.

“It was relaxing. It got me out, away from the desk, and meeting people,” Grace said.

Today he is on the course three days a week. It might be Lake Tahoe Golf Course or Edgewood Tahoe, and usually Genoa in the winter.

“He’s a little competitive. He likes to have a good score,” Morris said.

It’s not unusual for Grace to be playing and for people to come up to him and reflect on a time he helped them.

Golf is such a part of who he is that St. Theresa School named a tournament after him. Sept. 12 was the second annual Father Grace Golf Tournament, which is a fundraiser for the school.

Letter: S. Tahoe should run its own bus service

To the community,

On Labor Day, I tuned in the Giants game. Giants vs. Padres. A Giants commentator said he liked San Diego because it was easy to get around town. You didn’t need a car, he said.

The commentator’s remark caused me to think about the city of South Lake Tahoe’s priorities. The city fathers and mothers spend time and energy talking about transportation and parking. They claim they want tourists and others out of their cars. They want the city to be a bicycle and walker friendly place. So far so good. But it stops there.



Bill Crawford

What has happened is the city has turned over the transportation puzzle to a regional organization that because of its bankruptcy has disbanded. Thus, because of its failure, the Tahoe Transportation District, TTD, has stepped in. For the Tahoe basin it is a regional organization that's an arm of the TRPA.

The TTD has the community fussing over the loop road. The city should quit the TTD and return to a city bus system that works. In the past the city had such a program. Then there was bus service in the Tahoe Keys. My wife, who at that time was the hostess of the headliners in the South Shore Room, caught the bus on Keys Boulevard to get to work. She still has bus tokens for the bus. As I have said, the city should quit the TTD and return to a city bus system.

Public transportation in the city is a city responsibility. It should be a high city priority. The city is almost 50 years old. It is time to grow up and stop stumbling in the dark on critical subjects such as public transportation.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

Study: Vacation can lead to resume updating

By Ryan Grenoble, Huffington Post

A study confirms what we've long suspected: Vacations are great for mental health and bad for jobs you hate.

The survey, conducted by Monster.com, found 70 percent of people are more likely to look for another job after they return from vacation. The results are based on a poll of more than 1,200 people who visited Monster's website in the U.S. between July and August of this year.

"Vacations are a great time for self assessment. They offer free time, relaxation and detachment from your day-to-day routine," explained Mary Ellen Slayter, Career Advice Expert for Monster.com, in a press release.

Read the whole story

Nevada bear hunting season to begin

Bear hunting season in Nevada begins Sunday and goes through Dec. 31.

Twenty bears can be killed in that time period per state regulations.

This is the third year Nevada has allowed bear hunting. When the season is over the Nevada Wildlife Commission plans to

analyze how the hunts have gone.

Fourteen bears were killed in 2011 and 11 in 2012.

California and other Western states have allowed bear hunting for years.

Federal land managers not well liked in Nev.

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review Journal

STATELINE – Representatives of Nevada's diverse collection of cities and counties don't always find common ground, but the federal government's control of so much of the state's public lands struck a nerve at a summit here Friday.



Much of Nevada is owned by the federal government. Photo/LTN file

Officials representing rural counties, small cities and the biggest jurisdictions took the opportunity to vent on the federal land control issue at the Local Government Summit sponsored by the Nevada Association of Counties and the Nevada

League of Cities at Lake Tahoe.

“Run the BLM out of Nevada?” asked Las Vegas City Councilman Steve Ross. “I’m in favor of that. Do I hear a second?”

He got more than a few nods and vocal signs of support from the approximately 100 attendees, a demonstration of just how unhappy many local officials are with the federal agency.

Read the whole story

‘Les Mis’ coming to Carson City

A cast of nearly 60 performers has been selected for Western Nevada Musical Theatre Company’s production of “Les Misérables” in November.

WNMTC will present 10 performances of the famed international hit on weekends, Nov. 8-24, at the Carson City Community Center.

Nick Favero has been cast in the lead role Jean Valjean, whose dark life as a convict is transformed by a saintly bishop after he nearly returns to prison for stealing.

Other cast members include Mark D. Williams as the diligent police inspector Javert, Melody Ricketts as the suffering Fantine, Kirk Gardner and Dianne Hale as the unscrupulous Thenardiers, Andie Anderson as the wistful Eponine, Maria Arrigotti and Andrew Collins as the lovers Cosette and Marius. Cosette Chamberlin and Grace McCully are double-cast as young Cosette.

The production is complemented by a professional orchestra. It is produced and directed by Stephanie Arrigotti, choreographed by Gina Kaskie Davis and conducted by Kevin Murphy.

“Les Mis” is the longest running musical in the world.

Friday and Saturday performances are at 7:30pm, with Sunday matinees at 2pm, plus a 2pm matinee on Nov. 23. Tickets are $25 or $28 and are available online or by calling 775-445-4249.

Learn how to self-publish

Bona Fide Books is offering a session for writers on how to correctly self-publish.

This presentation will include the top five mistakes common to self-publishers, and tips on sales and distribution, e-books, printing, and which corners not to cut.

Successful Self-Publishing is designed to save authors months of research and expensive errors.

A Q&A will follow the two-hour presentation.

The Oct. 14 6-8pm workshop costs $35. It will be at Bona Fide HQ, 1069 Magua St., No. 4., Meyers.

For more information, call (530) 573.1513 or e-mail editor@bonafidebooks.com.

Enrollment increasing at Calif. community colleges

By Carla Rivera, Los Angeles Times

California community colleges are starting the fall term on an upbeat note, with most boosting enrollment and the number of classes offered, according to a survey of the state's two-year schools released Wednesday.

About 90 percent of the campuses reported higher enrollment than last fall and 84 percent are increasing course sections.

Of the state's 112 community colleges, 95 responded to the survey from the chancellor's office. Overall, enrollment is expected to increase by 2.5 percent and course sections by 5 percent.

The colleges represented a broad cross-section of the state, including Sierra College in Rocklin, which is increasing enrollment by about 5% and course sections by nearly 8 percent. About 254 course sections are being restored, opening 6,500 seats for students, said Sierra President William H.Duncan.

Read the whole story

Feds not leaving medical marijuana alone

By Liz Halloran, NPR

When the Obama administration recently announced it wouldn't challenge the decision by Colorado and Washington voters to fully legalize marijuana, criticism rained down.

The administration's position, complained one Colorado congressman, was tantamount to allowing states to opt out of the federal law banning pot possession, cultivation and sale.

Other anti-legalization activists predicted that the administration was waving the white flag in the war on drugs.

The first claim is essentially true: The states will be creating their own regulatory regimes.

As for the idea of a surrender in the war on drugs, the reality is a little more complicated.

Read the whole story

Blue Ribbon Award nominations being sought

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations for the 6th annual Blue Ribbon Awards.

Categories include: Tourism, Geotourism, Entrepreneur, Experience, Large Green Business, Small Green Business Customer Service for Business, and Customer Service Public

Agency.

Go online to fill out the nomination form.

The nomination period closes Oct. 18 at noon. The 2013 winners will be announced Nov. 14 at MontBleu.