El Dorado County massage therapist arrested on battery charges

An El Dorado Hills massage therapist has been arrested on charges of false imprisonment and sexual battery.

A woman reported she was receiving a massage from Patrick Lockard at Massage Envy in El Dorado Hills when he held her down and sexually battered her.

Detectives began an investigation to corroborate her statements and eventually arrested Lockard on Sept. 5.

Lockard, 46, lives in Shingle Springs. He has been a massage therapist for 16 years and has been working at Massage Envy in El Dorado Hills for the past two years.

Anyone with additional information, is asked to call (530) 642.4715.

Baby bobcat healing with help from LTWC

By Cheryl Millham

On Aug. 25, I received a call from a volunteer about a baby bobcat which was found in the Chips Fire burn area near Lake Almanor.

Ania Wrona, a new LTWC volunteer who lives in the area, took

the call and worked with California Fish and Game and the fire crew who found Chips. Ania finally got the OK to go to the fire camp and pick up the bobcat and begin the transportation to LTWC in South Lake Tahoe.

The story of Chips sounds very familiar. Remember four years ago when firefighter Adam Deem picked up a little bear cub – in the Redding area – with four burned paws, all with second and third degree burns from the Moon Fire?



Chips is recovering at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care so she can be returned to the wild. Photo/LTWC

In this case, a fire crew went back to a burn area and there they saw this baby bobcat going around in circles with its eyes white from ashes from the fire and tears caked. Her little nose was also encrusted with ash.

The fire crew superintendent, Tad Hair, of the Mad River Hand Crew, said they noticed the bobcat was walking in circles.

He said they looked around and did not find any other footprints in the ashes, thinking that a mom would be nearby. The kitten kept following the firefighter and, when they stopped walking, she climbed up on his boot.

The fire crew then took the baby bobcat back to the fire camp.

It was then that Fish and Game gave Ania permission to transport the kitten to LTWC.

Ania called and said she would be able to transport the bobcat as far as Sierraville (about 30 minutes north of Truckee). I looked in our transportation book to see who was willing and available to transport this bobcat down to LTWC. I saw a new LTWC volunteer, Sean Bailey, who lives in Truckee and called him to see if he was willing – and able – to help us out. In addition, Sean is a firefighter for Northstar Fire Department.

Sean said he would be happy to meet Ania in Sierraville. I then asked him what a firefighter would do for eyes, heat and ashes. He told me they would irrigate the eyes with sterile water. I asked him to take everything he would need and wash out the kittens eyes as soon as he saw her.

I asked Sean to call Tom when he left Sierraville so he could meet Tom at Spooner Summit for the last leg.

All went well and Tom and the baby kitten arrived at LTWC Saturday night at about 8:30pm. A call was then made to Dr. Kevin Willitts to examine Chips.

Dr. Willitts arrived about 10pm to give a thorough exam and determine what medical procedure we would begin.

The kitten was given subcutaneous fluids and Dr. Willitts cleaned the blistered pads by trimming away all of the burned tissue on all four feet, which had second degree burns. He then medicated her eyes with instructions to continue the ointment three times a day for four days.

Chips had about five burn spots on her fur, but, only one burned through to her skin.

Chips received her name by Tad Hair, so we have kept that same name.

When LTWC received Chips she was about 7 weeks old and weighed

just less than 1½ pounds. I would have liked to have given her a bath, but Dr Willitts said he didn't want her feet to get wet until they have healed.

So, Jolena Hearn, a senior volunteer with LTWC, who was at the center the next day, gave Chips a spit bath that really helped the burn smell on her fur.

Looking at Chips' teeth, I knew she was able to eat soft food. At this age, her mother would be regurgitating food for her. So, back to what I call Mush Mouse. Chips began eating it with relish.

She has been eating 12 mice a day (three mice per feeding, four times per day). The mice are (are you ready for this) skinned, pounded out and cut up into small bites, after they are chopped up with a cleaver.

Tom has fixed up one side of the aviary with dri-deck, covered with sheets so we can keep her paws dry and clean. This keeps her out of the dirt and on something soft, for her recovering pads. She will be spending a few hours a day outside.

And Chips is now on our webcam (when she is outside, usually in the afternoon).

We expect Chips to fully recover and be released back to the wild.

By the way, she has become quite a celebrity. We have been getting calls from newspapers, radio stations and television stations from as far away as New York City.

Cheryl Millham is executive director of Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care on the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe.

Tips for preventing and dealing with shoulder injuries

By Kyle Swanson

Shoulder pain is estimated to affect nearly 20 percent of people at some point in their lives. Causes of shoulder pain can range from trauma to overuse injuries or a combination of both.

Contact sports such as football or hockey can lead to traumatic injuries. Golf, racket sports, swimming and throwing sports can lead to overuse injuries. The type of injury usually determines the type of symptoms people have.



Kyle Swanson

The shoulder is complex is the most unstable joint in the body. It’s made up of a “sloppy” ball-and-socket joint, which allows for a wide range of motion. One of the most important structures for shoulder function is the rotator cuff complex. For the shoulder to work properly, it relies on the coordinated function between the muscles, ligaments and bony structures. An injury to any one of these can cause pain and a loss of function.

Shoulder injury signs and symptoms include:

• Loss of motion

• Weakness

• Pain with overhead activities/lifting

• Night pain

• Popping/clicking

• Feeling of instability

Common shoulder injuries

Rotator cuff tears. The rotator cuff is a group of four muscles and tendons that surround the shoulder and help with motion and stability. Tears to the rotator cuff are more common in aging athletes and can be a result of trauma, or overuse. Many people endure rotator cuff pain, especially at night.

Bursitis. The bursa is a thin, fluid-filled sack that allows for smooth motion between the tendon and bone. It can become inflamed and interfere with normal shoulder movement. This is usually the result of overuse – commonly seen in overhead sports, such as volleyball or baseball. The pain may arise when reaching for something overhead and at the end of the day.

Arthritis. Cartilage, the smooth covering on the end of bones, can become damaged from an injury or normal use. Cartilage has a poor capacity to heal and degenerates over time, which leads to arthritis. When there is significant loss of cartilage, the normal movement of the shoulder joint is lost. Shoulder arthritis typically causes loss of motion, morning stiffness and significant pain.

Your treatment options

Most shoulder injuries can be treated with rest, activity modification, ice and anti-inflammatories. If the pain does not improve after seven to 10 days, it’s important to see a physician who specializes in shoulder injuries.

Depending on the severity of the injury, X-rays or an MRI may be required. Upon diagnosis, physical therapy may be prescribed and/or a cortisone injection may be offered to decrease the inflammation. Surgery may be necessary if there is a tear. Today, with modern technology, most of the injuries requiring surgery can be treated arthroscopically, minimizing trauma and recovery time.

Injury prevention

Warming up before any activity requiring repetitive motion of the shoulder is crucial. Preseason conditioning and strengthening the rotator cuff and core muscles can help prevent injuries later in the season. Proper mechanics can take stress off the shoulder, decreasing the chance of injury. The key is to be consistent with your program.

Education and assessment are key factors in the treatment of shoulder pain. On Sept. 12, from 6-7pm at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village I will present the latest techniques and procedures in treating shoulder arthritis. This free wellness lecture will provide an in-depth look into the anatomy of the shoulder, signs and symptoms and treatment options.

Kyle Swanson is an orthopedic surgeon with Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine.

LTCC making ends meet by dipping into reserves

By Kathryn Reed

While the proposed 2012-13 budget for Lake Tahoe Community College is about $800,000 less than the previous year's budget, the institution continues to rely on reserves to balance the budget.

The $13.7 million budget, which is expected to be adopted at the Sept. 11 board meeting, includes about $732,000 from reserves. The board has advised staff to stick with the 10 percent contingency reserve, which for the next fiscal year would be about $1.376 million.

However, that pot is not one that can continually be tapped because at some point nothing will be left in it if the college keeps using it for everyday expenses.



Lake Tahoe Community College is expected to approve the 2012-13 budget on Sept. 11. Photo/LTN file

LTCC is putting forward a budget that assumes Proposition 30, the governor's tax initiative on the Nov. 6 ballot, will fail. If it does, it means a $632,000 loss to the college. If it passes, it means less money has to come out of reserves.

(The board on Aug. 28 had the first reading of a resolution supporting Proposition 30.)

Supplies and services have been cut to cope with the shortfall. Adjunct faculty hours have been reduced, which will mean changes in course selections for students. And the library will close at 7pm instead of 8pm.

Another issue the college is wrestling with is meeting the state education code rule that says at least 50 percent of the budget must go directly toward the classroom. LTCC has historically been on the cusp, but with the 12-13 budget may not meet that requirement.

"We are digging deep into those numbers. If we are going to be less than 50 percent, we have to file an exclusion with the board by Sept. 15," Jeff DeFranco, vice president of administrative services, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The faculty has been notified the 50 percent mandate is likely not going to be met. The issue is expected to be discussed at Tuesday's meeting. If the board approves a budget not meeting the 50 percent rule, the state chancellor's office must be notified by Dec. 1. DeFranco said the college will need to show the state it has a plan to get back into compliance.

He said part of the plan includes realizing in fiscal year 2013-14 the full benefit of the 11 early retirements. With only one of the positions being a faculty member (Steve Adams), this did nothing to help attain the compliance with the 50 percent rule. The other retirements include one administrator and nine classified employees.

Eighty percent of the budget is allocated for employee

salaries and benefits. In the 2011-12 budget $11,702,727 was budgeted for salaries-benefits, with the actual closer to $11,013,091. For fiscal year 2012-13, wages-benies come in a $10,954,505.

Net personnel savings come by not filling a dean position, but adding support staff. In 2013-14, the retirements will save the two-year college $430,000.

DeFranco, who has been at LTCC a matter of months, is working through the numbers to make them easier to discern, and looking long-term instead year-to-year.

A detailed report on how Connect Ed, the college's community education program that was launched a year ago, is expected at the Sept. 11 meeting.

But the college has some pressing capital expenses to think about, too. The phone system is failing. A facilities master plan is expected to be discussed at the Sept. 25 board meeting.

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Note: Public hearing on the proposed 2012-13 final budget will be Sept. 11, 6:20pm, at Lake Tahoe Community College board room.

Few environmental bills make

it out of California Legislature

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Environmental groups and their supporters hoping for a new wave of green laws from the Legislature this year ended up with barely a ripple.

From a statewide effort to ban plastic bags, to limits on foam food packaging, most of the top environmental bills of the 2012 session died.

Environmental groups did score a few wins. They beat back an effort by industry to rewrite the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, the landmark law that requires environmental studies of major projects. And lawmakers passed a bill over the furious objections of hunters to ban the use of dogs in bear and bobcat hunting.

But for the most part environmentalists came away disappointed when the Legislature adjourned for the year early Saturday morning.

“We had some modest success. But I felt like we were playing defense more than offense,” said Ann Notthoff, California advocacy director for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Considering that Democrats control both the Senate and Assembly, polls show the public generally supports tough environmental standards, and Gov. Jerry Brown has spent 40 years as an advocate for renewable energy and conservation rules, what happened?

Three things, experts say: the bad economy, the huge state budget deficit and newly drawn political districts.

Read the whole story

Annual toy run benefits Christmas Cheer

The 22nd annual Lake Tahoe Toy Run is Oct. 6. All proceeds benefit Christmas Cheer.

Line up at Horizon casino in Stateline at 10am that Saturday, with departure at noon to Brother's Bar & Grill at 888 Emerald Bay Road in South Lake Tahoe. Entry fee is one new toy.

Live music, food, drinks and a raffle will continue at Brother's until 6pm.

For more information, call Mary Luckel at (530) 416.4166.

Significant state grant will help S. Tahoe repair bike paths

South Lake Tahoe has been awarded $475,452 in grant funding from Caltrans through the Bicycle Transportation Account.

Several Class 1 bike paths in the city have exceeded their usable life span and are in desperate need of complete reconstruction, which is why the grant was awarded to South Tahoe.

The pathways identified provide key connectivity to various

neighborhoods and business districts within the city limits. The rehabilitation project includes full depth reclamation and replacement of approximately 1.97 miles of Class 1 bike trail and will include structural section, paving, striping and signage.

The areas that will receive repairs parallel Highway 50 on the west side from Los Angeles Avenue to Motel 6 and the Upper Truckee River (including bridges); one segment on the east side of Highway 50 from Helen Avenue to the South Y to include Harrison Avenue (Los Angeles to Tulare), Rubicon to Tulare, Eloise to Ponderosa, Silver Dollar to Rubicon, and Helen Avenue to South Avenue and Linear Park.

The total cost of the projects is estimated at $620,452. The city will provide a local match of in-kind engineering services in the amount of $45,000. The South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority has pledged a matching contribution of $100,000 through Measure R.

DiMatteo denied bail

Gino DiMatteo was denied bail at a hearing Sept. 7 in Placerville.

The South Lake Tahoe resident accused of bribing City Councilwoman Angela Swanson and being in possession of drugs for sale is next scheduled to be in court on Sept. 10.

DiMatteo’s bail is $27,500 for each of the four counts. However, there is an addendum that allows a judge to deny bail if it is believed the money that would be used to post bail would come from felonious activities.

Deputy District Attorney Jame Clinchard, who is prosecuting the case, was not available for comment.

Charges against Swanson have not been filed, nor will the DA's Office say if any are likely to be.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Opinion: South Lake Tahoe can endure any scrutiny

By Claire Fortier

Let's start with the elephant in the room: A councilmember has been linked to a bribery investigation.

If anything is amiss, the repercussions will be significant. If nothing is amiss, the devastation to this councilmember, her reputation and her family is immeasurable and horrific.

But no matter the outcome, the damage has already been done. Trust and confidence in the city's leadership has been shaken. A big question mark – "what now?" – hangs in the air.



Claire Fortier

Which brings us back to the room: The city of South Lake

Tahoe.

The city is doing a stellar job despite significantly reduced staffing and enormous cost cuts. The operation of the city of South Lake Tahoe rests with competent and hard-working staff and excellent management. While still under the pressure of budget shortfalls, the city is in far better financial shape than most other California cities.

Efficient and responsive government is what the city of South Lake Tahoe is doing every day at every level.

This didn’t happen in a vacuum. Over the past few years, it has taken real work to focus our mission, fix our budget crisis and finish major projects, despite limited funding and staff.

The city has done that and so much more. It has been a key player in collaborating on regional planning and projects. It has created a community core in its community parks. It has managed events and projects beyond a scope ever considered before.

The work of the city is a constant process. Council set policy, city management puts policy into practice and city employees make that practice work every day, day in and day out.

When all aspects of the process work, city government works. And the city of South Lake Tahoe is working well.

Now it’s up to City Council to make sure it stays that way. We must focus on goals we adopted. We must hold the city’s best interests as our only objective. We must consider the future of our city, and not stay mired in the past.

As a council, we understand the significant challenges we face in coming days. We also understand that the investigation must work through the proper channels and not in the council

chambers. We will cooperate with the district attorney in every way. And we will wait for all the conclusions to be drawn by his office, not by us.

We will stay focused the ability to deliver good government every day, day after day. That's what our residents rely on and what we have vowed to deliver.

So, in answer to the question "what now?" – we have a great city that is doing an excellent job. We plan to keep it that way.

Claire Fortier is mayor of South Lake Tahoe.

Life-work balance – a constant struggle

By Hannah Seligson, New York Times

Kelly Azevedo used to work upward of 70 hours a week.

It wasn't really for the extra money. It's just that she doesn't have children. When colleagues were on kid duty, she had to pick up the slack.

"Parents are a special class, and they get special treatment," says Azevedo, 27, who left her job at an Internet marketing firm to start She's Got Systems, a website for entrepreneurs based in Sacramento. While she was covering for her former colleagues, she says, she sometimes sacrificed her own obligation to take care of her ailing grandparents.

On this Labor Day weekend, when we celebrate the American worker, or at least the last unofficial days of summer,

Azevedo is giving voice to what many people feel in their bones: the pursuit of “work-life balance,” which sounds so wholesome and reasonable, can be a zero-sum game in the office.

In theory, flextime seems like an everyone-wins proposition. But one person’s work-life balance can be another’s work-life overload. Someone, after all, has to make that meeting or hit that deadline.

As a result, many Americans who work for companies that embrace flexible hours are confronting a sort of office class warfare. Some employees have come to expect that the demands of their children, in particular, will be accommodated – and not all of their colleagues are happy about it.

These tensions are hardly new. But at a time when many Americans are struggling to find or keep jobs – and when many of us are being asked to do more with less – the issue has come to the fore.

Child care has long been the third rail in this conversation, and it is receiving renewed attention in no small part because of a recent article in The Atlantic by Anne-Marie Slaughter. She discussed the moment she realized that she was unable to hold down a high-level State Department job and attend to her two adolescent boys. While advocating workplace flexibility for everyone, Slaughter stressed the special problems that women face balancing their careers with children.

Slaughter, 53, says both mothers and fathers should be “open and indeed proud” to leave early for the sake of their children and deplores the notion that spending more hours in the office automatically translates into getting more work done. But sometimes there is no substitute for office face time.

It’s not just the moms who are juggling.

“My kids have swim classes that start at 5pm,” says Aziz Gilani, 32, a director at DFJ Mercury, a Houston-based venture capital firm. “The net result is that I’m sure there are times when my partners are expecting me to be in the office and my office is empty because I’m doing one of these parental commitments. I’m sure it creates a burden for them.”

Gilani says it helps that two of his four partners also have young children, but that also means he’s often on the other side. “Sometimes I need an answer immediately, because what we work on is often time-sensitive, but my partner is at soccer practice with his daughter and that has created a decent amount of inconvenience.”

“It’s rough,” he says, but office technology enables them to work around the problem.

Gilani says there has never been a major spat at his firm over the issue. But Deborah Epstein Henry, founder of Flex-Time Lawyers, has found that colleague resentment is very common. “It’s the reason that a lot of work-life balance programs fail,” says Henry, whose firm, based in Ardmore, Pa., advises law firms and other organizations on flexibility policies. “In an ideal world, no one else is saddled with more work if their colleague works a reduced schedule.”

However, reality often strays far from the ideal.

Megan, 31, an associate at a large law firm in Washington who asked that her last name not be used because of the delicacy of the issue, says that when she worked on a case with a more senior lawyer who had a part-time schedule because she had several children, Megan ran the whole case. “She swooped in at the last minute and took all the credit,” says Megan, who is married but does not have children. “Getting the experience was the upside.”

Some employees don’t mind filling in for their colleagues with children — in fact, they see it as paying it forward and

advancing the feminist mission to “have it all.”

“I put a high priority on helping other women achieve career success and time with their family,” says Jessie Kornberg, 30, a litigator at Bird, Marella, a Los Angeles-based law firm. But recently she ended up covering for a man – her boss – when he could not make it to a court hearing because of child care responsibilities.

Read the whole story