

Plane leaving from Carson City crashes in Utah

By ABC 4 NEWS

CEDAR CITY, Utah – A small plane crashed into a Cedar City resident's backyard Sunday afternoon.

About 3:30pm a 56-year-old man was flying a small plane from Carson City to Georgia when he lost power.

Officials say he was trying to glide into the airport in Southern Utah, but he didn't have enough altitude to make it, and the plane went down.

The plane crashed into the backyard of a Cedar City home. The pilot received minor head injuries. He was transported by ambulance to Valley View Medical Center.

Plan to reduce congestion, upgrade Camp Rich campsites

By Kathryn Reed

Reconfiguring the three sections of the Camp Richardson Campground, making the road leading to the Beacon Restaurant more efficient, reducing congestion in the area, and removing parking from dirt areas along Highway 89 are the major components of a multi-million dollar, multi-year project the U.S. Forest Service wants to undertake.

The federal agency is taking public comment on the 79-acre

project until Aug. 8.



Campsites at
Camp Rich are
slated to be
improved by
the USFS.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

But the homeowners on Jameson Beach Road are not happy with the proposal because some believe their needs are not being met. This is the road that goes from Highway 89 by the cabins to the Beacon and then turns right to the residences.

Daniel Cressy, who is in charge of the project for the Forest Service, said the last meeting regarding the Jameson Road issue was Thursday, but there is still uncertainty over who owns the road. He told *Lake Tahoe News* his agency is looking into the issue.

Jameson Beach Road residents are doing research, too.

At issue is whether the residents own the road or have an easement or right-of-way to use it to get to their property. The houses were there long before the Forest Service acquired the land in the 1960s. There also used to be another route to get to the houses, which the USFS has closed off. That was next to the general store.

Both sides agree congestion is horrible in that area.

Cressy said the proposal calls for having homeowners have an ID that would allow them to get home without enduring the backup at the parking kiosk. This would also entail widening the road to legally allow for cars to pass to the right.

A bike-pedestrian trail will be put in along Jameson Beach Road with easy access for people parking on the road so people and vehicles are not using the same strip of asphalt, as is the case now.

Four alternatives are being proposed in the environmental assessment. One is the standard to do nothing. Alternative 2 is the one the agency would like adopted.

With the campgrounds, all alternatives call for a reduction in sites from the 325 that are now available.

“As we redevelop the campsite to meet modern accessibility standards and vehicle radius turning, the campsites take more space (based on) how campsites are currently configured,” Cressy explained. “Now they are tucked in wherever they can fit.”



New bathrooms will be available this summer.

Alternative 2 calls for 253 campsites. Up to 170 of those would have sewer-water hook-ups. The majority would accommodate six people, with some designed for 12 and others for groups of 24.

Cressy said feedback from users reflects a changing demographic for camping – bigger groups, more RVs.

Moving the check-in for the campgrounds out of the main commercial area is designed to reduce congestion.

Work on the campgrounds could begin next summer. Without specific engineering and design work, it's unknown today if this would take two seasons.

Instead of needing a four-wheel drive to pull into the campground, the road will be improved, defined routes (instead of driving through the forest), and identifiable spurs for campers will be installed.

To accomplish this and other components of the proposal about 1,000 trees are slated to be felled – with about 40 of those being more than 30-inches in diameter.

Cressy acknowledges this sounds like a lot, but said to make the campground function – which includes having a fire truck be able to come and go – trees need to come out. He also said the density of some areas makes this no different than a thinning project.



Millions of dollars in improvements are proposed by the USFS.

Having more transit stops and ones off the highway to allow

the flow of traffic to continue are being proposed.

Restrooms are part of the project, too. Those are in addition to the two facilities that will be open later this summer. (They replace ones built in the 1960s.)

One will be by the beach to replace the port-a-potty near the cabins.

Funding initially will come from Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act money. Cressy roughly estimates about \$2 million worth of work could take place in 2012, with another \$1.5 million in work the following year.

The entire project could cost between \$10 million and \$15 million. Cressy stressed this is not a hard figure by any means. He also said funding for the project is not secured. Oftentimes dollars are not available until the environmental review is finished.

Once the public weighs-in, the agency assesses the comments to see if more work is needed. The forest supervisor has ultimate authority in signing off on the document.

Components of the proposed action plan that will affect the masses who use or drive through the Camp Rich area – which is about three miles north of the Y in South Lake Tahoe on Highway 89 – include eliminating the free parking in the dirt along the highway.

More defined parking areas on Jameson Beach Road will be installed.

With all of this will come better filtration of stormwater runoff to reduce sediment flowing into nearby Lake Tahoe.

Other parking areas will be built.



Congestion
like this on
July 9 may be
reduced.

The bike trail that crosses Jameson Beach Road close to the highway will remain because it acts as a sidewalk as well. But cyclists will be directed to a new path that will go behind the general store on one side of the beach road and behind the lodge on the other side.

User-created trails in the Pope Marsh area will be decommissioned, with the most logical ones being revamped to encourage they be the only ones used.

The trail design is being worked on with the Forest Service employees who are involved in the larger bike-pedestrian plan being formulated for the area that goes to Fallen Leaf Lake Road. (That document is slated to be released in the fall for public review.)

The current document is online as well as at the USFS office at 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe. Questions may be directed to Cressy at (530) 544.2857 or dcressy@fs.fed.us.

Dugard speaks about 18 years as sex slave, life after release

By Martha Groves, Los Angeles Times

As 14-year-old Jaycee Dugard struggled in a crude backyard shed to deliver her baby daughter, the serial predator who had abducted and raped her stepped in to unwrap the umbilical cord that trapped the infant.

"She was beautiful," Dugard said of the child she birthed three years into her captivity in Northern California. "I felt like I wasn't alone anymore. I knew I could never let anything happen to her."



ABC News' Diane Sawyer, left, speaks with Jaycee Lee Dugard in her first interview.

Photo/Jill Belsley-ABC News

In an exclusive interview with Diane Sawyer broadcast Sunday on ABC, Dugard, displaying remarkable poise and smiling often,

provided chilling details about the 18-year ordeal she endured at the hands of her captors, an increasingly deranged parolee named Phillip Garrido and his wife, Nancy, who aided the abduction and condoned his rapes.

Dugard's memoir, "A Stolen Life," to be released Tuesday, tells how the Garridos informed her she was pregnant when she was 13. At the time, she knew she was putting on weight and waddling, but she didn't know why.

A naive, toothy-grinned blond when she was taken captive at age 11 in 1991, Dugard is now 31 with brown, shoulder-length hair and impossibly young skin – the result, she said, of years spent with little exposure to the sun. Around her neck she wears a pine cone on a chain.

A pine cone, she told Sawyer, was the last thing she grabbed after Phillip Garrido shocked her with a stun gun and Nancy Garrido dragged her into the car as she walked toward the school bus on the street in front of her South Lake Tahoe home.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Keys focus of SLTPD enforcement

The South Lake Tahoe Police Department will be continuing its Neighborhood Traffic Enforcement Program for the next two weeks in the Tahoe Keys.

Last week officers concentrated their enforcement efforts in the Sierra Tract; with 41 traffic related traffic stops were

made. Officers wrote three speeding citations, 11 stop sign violation citations, 11 citations for other violations, and 18 warnings. One motorcycle was impounded for the driver having a suspended license, no insurance, no registration and speeding.

Another violation that is often seen and not regularly enforced is bicycle traffic violations. Bicyclists must follow the same traffic laws as the driver of a motor vehicle, stop signs, stop lights, riding on the roadway in the same direction as traffic flows and not ride while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Anyone riding a bicycle under the age of 18 must also wear a helmet. The South Lake Tahoe Police Department has free bicycle helmets for our youth.

If anyone would like their street or neighborhood put on the enforcement list, call or email Sgt. Shannon Laney at (530) 542.6104 or slaney@cityofslt.us. Leave your name, number and a description of the problem in as much detail as possible and include times of days the problem is most prevalent.

Survey: Most small businesses operate out of owner's home

More than half (51.6 percent) of all businesses that responded to the 2007 Survey of Business Owners were operated primarily from someone's home in 2007, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau released this month.

Only 6.9 percent of these home-based businesses had \$250,000 or more in receipts, while 57.1 percent of home-based businesses brought in less than \$25,000. About 23.8 percent of employer respondent businesses and 62.9 percent of nonemployer respondent businesses were home-based.

“Most businesses are started by people who dig into their own pockets for at least some of their start-up capital,” Census Bureau Deputy Director Thomas Mesenbourg said in a statement. “This is true for both firms with employees and those without them. Furthermore, more than one in five (20.8 percent) of respondent businesses used no start-up capital at all.”

Roughly three in 10 (30.6 percent) of the respondent firms that required start-up capital launched their business with less than \$5,000. Of the firms that needed start-up capital, 17.5 percent of employer firms needed less than \$5,000; for nonemployer firms, the figure was 35.8 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, 1.5 percent of the firms needing start-up capital required \$1 million or more for this purpose.

Other highlights from the reports include:

- In 2007, more than half of women-owned businesses (58.2 percent) and equally men- and women-owned businesses (58.1 percent) were home-based; for businesses owned by men, the figure was 49.1 percent.
- Most nonminority-owned (54.4 percent) and equally minority- and nonminority-owned firms (56 percent) were home-based, while 46.5 percent of minority-owned firms were home-based.
- Among firms with payroll any time during 2007, 75.4 percent had full-time paid employees and 58 percent had part-time paid employees. In addition, 5.3 percent of employer firms used paid day laborers; 7.3 percent used staff from a temporary help service; 1.3 percent used leased employees; and 36.1 percent used contractors, subcontractors, independent contractors or outside consultants.
- About 2.1 percent of all firms operated as a franchised business.
- E-commerce sales were reported by only 6.6 percent of firms.

- About 28.2 percent of firms were family-owned.
- About 62.9 percent of owners reported working 40 or more hours per week in their business; the same was true for 34.3 percent of owners of nonemployer firms.
- Business owners were well educated: 50.8 percent of owners of respondent firms had a college degree.
- About 36.5 percent of owners were 55 or older, with another 29.6 percent between the ages of 45 and 54. On the other hand, 31.7 percent of owners of firms were between the ages of 25 and 44 and only 2.2 percent were younger than 25.

The Survey of Business Owners is conducted every five years as part of the economic census. The 2007 survey collected data from a sample of more than 2.3 million businesses.

Toddler survives fall from S. Tahoe window

A South Lake Tahoe 3-year-old girl who fell out of a second floor window has been released from Renown Medical Center in Reno.

Police responded to an apartment at 1801 Lake Tahoe Blvd. at 9:25pm July 9. The toddler was airlifted from the scene by Careflight to Reno.

At this time no foul play is expected, according to police Sgt. Josh Adler. However, the investigation is ongoing.

– Kathryn Reed

CalPERS fraud case against Tahoe businessman can proceed

By Dale Kasler, Sacramento Bee

For nearly a year, Alfred Villalobos has been able to use the bankruptcy laws to sidestep a state lawsuit accusing him of bribing officials at the California Public Employees' Retirement System.

Now California officials have won the right to pursue the \$95 million case against Villalobos.

A federal judge in Reno has ruled that the Lake Tahoe businessman can be sued over fraud allegations by the California attorney general's office, even though he has filed for bankruptcy protection.

"This is a great victory for law enforcement, and we're moving forward," said Lynda Gledhill, a spokeswoman for Attorney General Kamala Harris.

But a bankruptcy law expert, Lynn LoPucki, said it's unclear whether the state could collect any money from Villalobos even if it wins the lawsuit. That's because Villalobos' assets would normally be controlled by the bankruptcy judge and would be divided among all of his creditors, LoPucki said.

Read the whole story

UNR may be integral key to treating muscular dystrophy

By Susan Voyles, Reno Gazette-Journal

A cocktail of drugs likely will be the answer to cure people with muscular dystrophy, and a researcher at the University of Nevada, Reno believes the university has developed one of the key ingredients.

Dean Burkin, an associate professor of pharmacology, has been working for a decade to isolate and test a protein called laminin-111 that helps keep muscle cells intact. A patent is pending and has been transferred to Prothelia, a startup company in Massachusetts, to do more studies before the drug can be approved for human trials.

Muscular dystrophies are genetic diseases that cause weakness and muscle wasting mostly in skeletal and voluntary muscles, the muscles the body can control.

"These are Jerry's kids," Burkin said, of the children with muscular dystrophy featured in Jerry Lewis' annual televised fundraisers.

Burkin said he has developed a drug that has shown it can prevent the progression of the disease in mice. He said that the drug, a naturally occurring protein isolated from mouse tumors, also has worked on human muscle cells in a petri dish. The same protein is found in embryonic and kidney tissues of humans.

"It's like a Super Glue, fusing muscle fiber that breaks down and degenerates," Burkin said.

If successful in human trials, the drug could be combined with others to block the major pathways to the disease, he said.

With more than 40 different types of muscular dystrophy, Burkin and others said there will be no single cure.

Jim Brown, Muscular Dystrophy Association public relations vice president in Tucson, Ariz., said several drugs now are in human trials, and several more might soon get the green light. One drug, for instance, coaxes cells to ignore part of the dystrophin gene. Another research group is seeking children to test a drug that has been shown to improve blood flow in the muscles of mice.

Read the whole story

Post-Angora permitting rules violate state law

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Regulatory reform aimed at reducing fire risk at Lake Tahoe, adopted in the wake of the 2007 Angora fire, has been found in violation of state law.

The reform measure was adopted amid intense political pressure after the fire. It sought to streamline rules governing logging projects to thin overgrown forests at the lake.



Dead trees

remain in the
Angora Creek
area; their
future up in
the air.
Photo/LTN file

But on June 30, El Dorado Superior Court Judge Steven Bailey ruled in favor of conservation groups, which argued the reforms violated key environmental laws, potentially risking Tahoe's fabled clarity.

"We're not attacking the thinning projects," said Craig Thomas, executive director of Sierra Forest Legacy, which joined the Sierra Club in the lawsuit. "We're saying we want rigorous examination of those treatments."

The Angora fire in June 2007 destroyed 254 homes near South Lake Tahoe.

A special bistate commission appointed after the fire recommended that the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, a California state agency, hand over regulatory authority for some 68,000 acres of forest-thinning projects to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Read the whole story

Not enough damaging evidence to charge EDSO deputies

By Kathryn Reed

Coming just weeks after a scathing grand jury report, El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson outlines egregious behavior by the sheriff's department in regards to giving incentive pay to employees who had phony degrees.

"None of the universities involved in this investigation were appropriately accredited," the report states.

The 22-page report was released July 7.



Vern Pierson

Because criminal activity could not be proved beyond a reasonable doubt, no charges are being filed against the five employees in question. None of those people work in the Lake Tahoe substation. But their names have not been released and are not in the report.

"... the conduct and actions of these officers is extremely troubling and we believe it is necessary to change the incentive pay process," the report says.

The report has testimony from former Sheriff Jeff Neves and others who say the incentive pay documents were not scrutinized or verified for validity.

The report says, "The former Sheriff suggested that he and his administration were too busy to fulfill their oversight obligation to the county in so much as PPF forms were concerned. Retired Sheriff Neves testified that because they received so many PPF forms for review and signature, they adopted an unwritten policy of simply signing the forms and

submitting them to county payroll without even attempting the most cursory or surface review of the forms and their content."

The report indicates Neves may have turned a blind eye to the truth when confronted with it.

It was Fred Kollar, who was undersheriff to Neves and filled out Neves term after he retired, who brought the case to the DA's office.