

South Tahoe not in a hurry to find permanent police chief

By Kathryn Reed

When Martin Hewlett walks into the City Council chambers this morning he won't be relegated to the back of the room. He will be at the big table at the front of the room.

Hewlett is acting police chief for South Lake Tahoe for the indefinite future. His first day on the job was to oversee the New Year's Eve chaos.



Martin
Hewlett

"I told the commanders to not burn down the city on my first day," Hewlett was able to joke days afterward since nothing newsworthy happened that night.

Hewlett took over for Terry Daniels who retired.

Hewlett, who prefers to be called captain and not interim chief, has been with the department since 1993. He worked his way from an officer to sergeant to lieutenant to captain, a position he has had for almost three years.

He has been in patrol, detectives and on the SWAT team.

Before coming to Tahoe, Hewlett was with Escondido Police Department for almost 10 years and with the Orange County Sheriff's Office for a year.

"Overall, I don't plan to make significant changes that will

affect anyone," Hewlett said. "I don't think it would be fair to the next person."

He isn't sure if he'll apply to be police chief. It isn't something he was aspiring to be.

"I will know better in the next few months after experiencing (the job). I will keep my options open," Hewlett said.

For now, Hewlett is captain and interim police chief, with some duties being spread to the lieutenants and sergeants.

City Manager Dave Jinkens is responsible for hiring the next police chief. The city manager hires all department heads except for the city attorney.

Jinkens expects to have the selection process in place in the next 30 to 60 days. Historically, the city has not used an outside recruiting firm to hire department heads. Jinkens believes this will be the case for the next chief as well.

"I don't think there will be a sense of urgency to do this since the council decided we needed an interim chief to realize the cost savings," Mayor Kathay Lovell said. "We are not trying to fill it today."

The position needs to be vacant for at least six months to be able to realize the benefits of the cost containment plan the council approved late last year.

It's possible Jinkens won't be the one to actually hire the next police chief, but to merely start the process. His contract expires in the summer. He has not indicated if he wants an extension. The council is divided over wanting to keep him employed.

At today's council meeting several employees who took early buyouts will be honored. Some of them have served for more than 20 years.

The meeting begins at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport.

Court: Tahoe killer has no right to parole

By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun

CARSON CITY – The Nevada Supreme Court has ruled that a Las Vegas man does not have a constitutional right to parole.

Michael Anselmo, now 57, was sentenced in 1972 to life in prison without the possibility of parole in the death of college student Trudy Hiler, who was stabbed 18 times. She and Anselmo both worked during the summer at a casino at North Lake Tahoe.

[Read the whole story](#)

Protesters return to Broc's

By Kathryn Reed



A half dozen protesters came and went from outside Broc's Puppies on Sunday.

The atmosphere between them and workers at the South Lake Tahoe store were friendly, with coffee and cookies brought out to the sign carrying group.

The protesters were startled at one point when a firecracker came flying out of a vehicle and landed about 5 feet from the nearest person.

Protesters contend the store sells sick puppies acquired them from puppy mill breeders.

The store says its breeders are legitimate and has a policy to pay some veterinarian bills when appropriate.

A group which wants the store to close plans to go before the City Council at its meeting at Lake Tahoe Airport on Jan. 12.

The store must close in spring 2011 because of a city ordinance that became law last year.

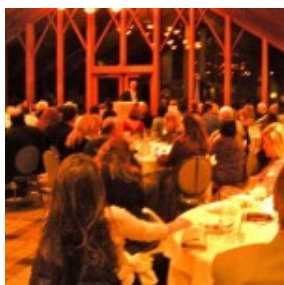
Real estate leaders say now is the time to eliminate greed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – “Real estate was never intended to be an ATM machine.”

That’s what Jim Hamilton, 2005 president of the California Association of Realtors, told a group of nearly 90 people on Friday night during the annual South Tahoe Association of Realtors installation dinner.

Hamilton told those at Edgewood Tahoe, “This country was not founded on owning a home and making millions of dollars. Real estate should be about home ownership.”



Jim Hamilton
gives the key
note address
Jan. 8 at the
annual STAR
installation
dinner.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

He talked about when he was president of the state organization five years ago it was a no brainer to be a leader with how the housing market was booming and how agents didn’t have to do much to get an escrow.

Now he believes the market is on the edge of change “ with things looking better for 2010.

He also encouraged agents to get involved and not be afraid of disagreements, but to be able to shake hands at the end of the day no matter the differences.

“Disagreement creates awesome ideas,” he said.

Hamilton had high praise for outgoing President Barb Childs and incoming President Theresa Souers.

Souers, who was also president in 2006, carried on with some

of Hamilton's themes.

"The negativity of greed and fear is weighing us down," Souers said. "We need to stop longing for the old days because they aren't coming back."

She also pointed out that the old days weren't always so great. Agents were afraid to miss a call, to leave the office and come back to a stack of pink "while you were out" notes.

Today cell phones allow agents to work in the field "or on the slopes.

Souers said how the top performers have the same problems as everyone else "the difference is how they tackle the problems."

Education is going to be her emphasis in 2010. She wants to enrich the nearly 300 members with information about how they can better use technology, time management, have more effective negotiating techniques and to tap into what the state and national organizations can provide the South Tahoe group.

Protesters picket outside Broc's Puppies

By Kathryn Reed

Gloomy weather in South Lake Tahoe was not enough to keep a group of frustrated residents from protesting today outside of Broc's Puppies on Highway 50. They plan to be back Sunday.

The protest is one of many since the store opened in 2008. Unknowingly being sold a sick dog is the primary complaint. Accusations have also been made that the shop buys from puppy mills.



Protesters at
Broc's Puppies
on Jan. 9.
Photo/Judy
Brown

"It is so sad that a business of this sort is allowed to continue to sell sick puppies and to misrepresent them as 'pedigree' animals," said Judy Brown, one of the protesters and president of the South Lake Tahoe Humane Society's board of directors. "And now with apparent criminal connections with drugs with store employees and owners, the city should take action to revoke their business license."

Legally the city cannot revoke the business license because of the most recent charges the owner faces.

Christine Jacques said the protest helped business.

"People came in who didn't know we were here. It was great," Jacques told *Lake Tahoe News* on Saturday afternoon.

She said she is a friend of the family's who is helping while David Franks deals with being arrested on Jan. 8 on a probation violation out of Nevada.

Jacques said Franks is part owner of the pet store. She said

his brother Dennis and their father were original owners. A call to the city's business license office on Jan. 8 was not returned so it's not known who the city has on record as being the owner.

When the council was discussing the ordinance more than a year ago there was talk that the business could not be sold and still sell puppies. But no language to that effect is in the ordinance. This was news to some council members when reached Saturday.

The retail outlet is the only one in South Lake Tahoe that is allowed to sell dogs.

That will end in a little more than a year because when the City Council approved the ordinance last year to ban stores from selling dogs or cats, Broc's was given two years before it would need to close.

Study: Nevada leads nation in food stamp user increase

By Lenita Powers, Reno Gazette-Journal

Nevada had the largest increase among 30 states in the number of residents who depend on food stamps as their sole income, according to a New York Times analysis of recent welfare data released this week.

From June 2007 to June 2009, the number of Nevadans relying only on food stamps rose by 173 percent. Florida was second with a 113 percent increase.

Read the whole story

El Dorado 1 of 13 counties to not go after state IHSS grants

By Kathryn Reed



Forty-five of the 58 counties in California are sharing millions of dollars in state grants to combat fraud in In-Home Supportive Services programs. El Dorado County is not one of them.

This is because the county did not apply for grant, not because the county doesn't have fraud.

“(Fraud) is definitely out there. But we have to look at the cost and benefits of combating it. On the face of it you want to say fraud is completely unacceptable. But if it costs more to root out the fraud than the fraud itself, it is a better scenario to not spend that money and to spend it on other priorities,” explained Mike Applegarth, senior administrative analyst for El Dorado County.

The other part of the equation is that each county had to come up with matching dollars if they were to be awarded money from the state.

The anti-fraud effort is expected save the state's general fund \$130 million in the 2009-10 budget. The \$26.5 million

grant program is divvied up by \$10 million coming from the state's general fund, \$12.2 million in federal matching funds and \$4.3 million in county matching funds.

Most county Human Services Departments do not have much discretionary money because most of the dollars they receive from the state and feds are allocated to specific areas.

Senior nutrition and elder protection programs are a couple of the areas where El Dorado County said it has leeway with spending.

"We looked at the amount we would likely receive as a result of the application and compared it to the amount we would have to contribute as a match and it didn't seem to pencil out for us," Applegarth said.

The amount of fraud in the county was not going to generate a large grant payout from the state, Applegarth added.

The District Attorney's Office does have someone who investigates these types of fraud cases. Applegarth didn't have a figure for how much fraud may be going on in El Dorado County.

Nearby counties receiving grants include: Amador \$20,046; Placer \$230,229; and Nevada \$67,226.

Los Angeles County receive the largest sum – \$9,460,104.

Owner of Broc's Puppies

arrested

By Kathryn Reed

Police descended upon Broc's Puppies this morning, arresting four South Lake Tahoe men and taking two dogs.

The arrests had nothing to do with the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office's ongoing investigation into the South Lake Tahoe store on allegations it sells sick puppies from illegal puppy mills.



Detective Matt
Harwood
searches a
Broc's
Puppies' van
Jan. 8
Photo/Taylor
Flynn/Tahoe
Mountain News

However, the owner of the store, David Franks, is one of the people in custody. He was arrested by El Dorado County sheriff's deputies on a probation violation out of Nevada. Why he is on probation and what the violation was are not known.

Also arrested Jan. 8 were South Lake Tahoe residents: Octavio Trejo, 29, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, possession of paraphernalia and bringing a controlled substance into jail; Andres de la Torre, 26, on a parole

violation and possession of a hypodermic needle; and James Rogan, 46, on felony and misdemeanor warrants out of San Bernardino County.

The dogs taken by Animal Control were not puppies for sale, but belonged to one of the suspects.

The store stayed open today with the assistance of Franks' family members who did not want to make a comment.

South Lake Tahoe implemented an ordinance last year that bans the sale of dogs and cats. Broc's is allowed to operate until spring 2011 based on that legislation.

The Lake Tahoe Humane Society sent this to the media today, "The LTHS and SPCA has been contacted by a buyer who had DNA testing performed on a puppy purchased at Broc's. The test results contributed to a court judgment for damages, according to the buyer. The buyer would like interested parties to know that she is holding a demonstration in front of the Broc's Puppies store beginning at 10 AM Saturday, January 9. She stated that the demonstration will continue until the judgment is paid. Signs will be available for those who wish to participate in support of the judgment."

Vail Resorts skier visits drop 2.7%

Denver Business Journal

Vail Resorts Inc. said Friday its skier visits at its five winter resorts were down 2.7 percent through Wednesday from a year earlier, but the company said it was pleased with its

results so far given light early-season snowfall.

The Broomfield-based winter-resort and hotel company (NYSE:MTN) operates the Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge and Keystone ski resorts in Colorado and the Heavenly resort on Lake Tahoe in



Skier visits
are down at
Heavenly's
parent
company.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

California and Nevada.

[Read the whole story](#)

Nancy Garrido's attorney off the case, again

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

Gilbert Maines' on-again, off-again effort to represent Nancy Garrido in her kidnapping trial was off again Thursday after an appellate court in Sacramento upheld his removal from the

case.

“This came as a complete surprise to me,” the Placerville attorney said shortly after the order was issued by the 3rd District Court of Appeal.

Maines was appointed to represent Garrido in August after she and her husband, Phillip, were arrested in the 1991 abduction of Jaycee Lee Dugard. Maines has been fighting since November to stay on the case.

Read the whole story