

Driver takes out hydrant, SLT streets flood

South Tahoe Public Utility District crews are in the state streets area of South Lake Tahoe dealing with water flooding multiple streets.

The call came in at 6:15pm Jan. 8. The leak was isolated 20 minutes later.

A hit and run driver took out a fire hydrant on Colorado Street that caused unknown gallons of water to flood local streets and yards. Water flowed across Tahoe Keys Boulevard to Jeffery Street.

Water was turned off briefly for some customers.

The water lines in this area, including the mains, are all new. They were put in either in 2013 or 2014, as were the hydrants.

Richard Solbrig, STPUD general manager, told *Lake Tahoe News* barricades will be put up Friday and the hydrant repaired on Jan. 10.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Brown's budget calls for

record \$113 bil. in spending

By Josh Richman and Jessica Calefati, San Jose Mercury News

SACRAMENTO – Gov. Jerry Brown rolled out a \$113 billion budget Friday morning that boosts K-12 schools but doesn't add more money for the University of California, which has threatened tuition hikes.

Although the proposed budget shows income and corporate taxes fueling the state's second consecutive surplus after years of red ink, Brown said his plan signifies "self-discipline and real prudence" – even as advocacy groups say it's high time to shore up the universities and mend the social safety net shredded by bone-deep cuts in past years.

"It's a question of priorities," Brown said. "There's only so much money here."

Still, the plan represents a 5 percent increase in general-fund spending over this current year. It would put another \$1.2 billion into the state's "rainy day" budget reserve fund, bringing its balance to about \$2.8 billion, and would pay down about \$1.2 billion in debt.

K-12 schools and community colleges get \$65.7 billion in fiscal year 2015-16 under Brown's plan – a 39 percent increase over four years ago – with much of the growth going to the Local Control Funding Formula that Brown and lawmakers enacted in 2013. Past K-12 budget deferrals will be all paid off.

Read the whole story

2014 hottest year on record in Calif., Nev.

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News

Driven by climate change and a persistent ridge of high pressure over the Pacific Ocean that caused California's drought, 2014 was the state's hottest year ever recorded.

Temperatures last year averaged 61.5 degrees Fahrenheit in California – 4.1 degrees hotter than the 20th century average, according to a report Thursday by federal scientists.

Three other Western states – Alaska, Arizona and Nevada – also experienced their hottest years since 1895, when modern instruments were first used. And Anchorage, Alaska, didn't have a single day in 2014 in which the temperature dropped below zero, the first time in 101 years of record keeping.

"We do have a long-term warming trend across the globe, across the U.S. and in California," said Jake Crouch, a climate scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which released the data. "This really warm year is just an exclamation point on top of a warming trend for that part of the country."

Read the whole story

Boxer not seeking re-election

in 2016

By Evan Halper, Los Angeles Times

California Sen. Barbara Boxer, a standard-bearer of liberal politics who has served in Congress for more than three decades, announced Thursday she will not run for another term.

Boxer made her announcement during an interview with her grandson, which she posted on her political website. She said she was not leaving the Senate because of the rancorous tone on Capitol Hill or because of her age.

"Some people are old at 40 and some people are young at 80," Boxer said. "I feel as young as I did when I got elected." But she said she wants to return to California and continue her political work through her political action committee.

"I am never going to retire," she said. "The work is too important. But I will not be running for the Senate in 2016."

The departure of the 74-year-old progressive is expected to set off a scramble among the state's most prominent politicians, several of whom are expected to run for her seat.

Boxer has been among the Senate's most unyielding advocates for environmentalists, women's rights groups and organized labor. A feisty crusader with a taste for confrontation, Boxer's combative style was not always conducive to the nuances of legislative deal-making, leaving the senator with few landmark laws bearing her name.

Read the whole story

LTCC eager to spend \$55 mil. on improvements

By Kathryn Reed

While it could take 18 to 24 months before Lake Tahoe Community College begins construction on a new building, that doesn't mean there won't be more immediate changes to the South Lake Tahoe campus.

The passage of the \$55 million facilities bond in November means plenty of improvements are coming. Remodeling the commons area – the main building – could occur this summer and be ready when students arrive fall quarter.

Technology improvements will also be noticeable.

"The goal is from everyplace on campus you will be able to quickly get on the Internet without delay," President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Technology – or the lack thereof – has been a consternation at the college for years. Until recently people could not get cell service throughout most of the campus. It's still sketchy. The same goes for connecting to the Internet.

This also means classrooms are lacking what is now a basic teaching tool – Internet.

"They should be able to connect to the Internet like that. It should be easy for them and not frustrating," Murillo said.

A big piece of the tech improvements will come in the science labs, which are sorely outdated.

Students and staff also have to deal with rooms that are frigid or unbearably hot. While heating and air conditioning systems aren't sexy, they are a necessity. A temperate room is

also more conducive to learning.

The big-ticket items are going to require an environmental impact statement and an environmental impact report. The college expects by the end of the month to release the request for proposal for an environmental consultant.

While it's likely to take 10 to 12 years for the college to complete the project list that the bond will fund, there is a facility's master plan that encompasses 20 to 25 years. The desire is to have the EIS/EIR look at the bigger picture as much as possible. The environmental process could take 18 to 24 months.

The college is getting appointments on the book with Tahoe Regional Planning Agency officials as well. The Division of State Architect office will also play an integral role when it comes to the integrity of the facilities that are built.

"We are making sure everything we do is well thought out. We make up time by making sure we plan well," Murillo said.

LTCC officials are in the process of prioritizing what gets done when. This in turn dictates how much the college will seek with each bond issuance. Murillo said likely there will be three issuances, four at the most. Financial advisors and attorneys help with those decisions.

Another consideration when deciding what to focus on is the fact the state has not issued a facilities bond and likely won't in 2016. That means no shared costs as had been hoped.

"The governor's budget will be critical. It will come out (today)," Murillo said.

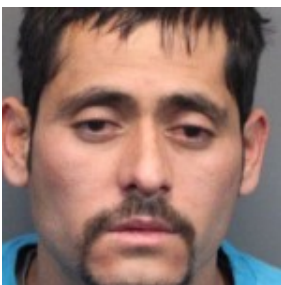
She said what Gov. Jerry Brown proposes for community college funding will play a key role in how LTCC structures its priority list.

"We get the sense Gov. Brown will not do any statewide

facilities bond. He has made it clear if communities want to make an investment in K-12 or a community college, it will be the responsibility of the local community,” Murillo said. “Part of the reason we did the bond is because we thought the facilities would continue to deteriorate while we waited for the state to do something.”

Not having the state matching dollars may mean some of the original plans are scaled back. But the college also has an additional \$825,000 to spend that was going toward the university center. Lisa Maloff has agreed to donate the entire nearly \$6 million needed for that facility. She wants to be at the ribbon cutting, so that project will be accelerated in any way possible.

Incline Village home invasion suspects sought



Angel Infante-Mendoza



The is the vehicle used by
the suspects.
Photos/Provided

Two people suspected in a New Year's Day home invasion in Incline Village are wanted by Washoe County sheriff's deputies.

The third suspect, Angel Infante-Mendoza, was arrested on charges of burglary, home invasion, child abuse and neglect, domestic battery, and battery with a deadly weapon.

Deputies said three people broke in an apartment on the 700 block of Southwood Boulevard midmorning Jan. 1. The suspects fled the scene in a grey midsize SUV.

Anyone with information is asked to call 775.328.3320 or Secret Witness at 775.322.4900.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Woodwind II unable to be

salvaged



The Woodwind II on Jan. 8 was being cut into pieces before being hauled to a landfill. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

CAVE ROCK – Loud crunching sounds could be heard as a 50,000-pound excavator destroyed the Woodwind II. Grown men were somber witnessing the destruction of what was once a beautiful vessel that graced the waters of Lake Tahoe.

The catamaran broke from its mooring Dec. 11 during the windstorm at Lake Tahoe and became stuck on rocks near Zephyr Cove. While this is always a rocky area, it's even shallower with the lake level being so low.

That Zephyr Cove mooring field a few years ago switched from the typical concrete block type anchors to screw auger type anchors. The new ones are not as secure, according to boat owners.

It was expected to take several hours Jan. 8 to breakdown the

entire 55-foot-vessel.

Much of the damage was to the starboard side. Punctures in the hull and pontoon damage were extensive.

“The crane is utilized to pull some of the components out,” Dan Rikalo with Connolly Crane Service told *Lake Tahoe News*.

All the pieces will be taken to the Carson City Landfill.

Diesel from the vessel was taken off a while ago to prevent any spillage into Lake Tahoe.

It was towed to Cave Rock boat ramp on Jan. 7, then hauled out of the water with a large tow truck by its rudders.

Kevin McMullen of Keefe Kaplan Maritime in Richmond was at the dock Thursday morning to get the mast.

“We will cut it up. The insurance company wants it cut up. I hope they save it. It’s a beautiful mast,” McMullen told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Steve Dunham, who operates Tahoe Cruises, could not be reached for comment. He is down to one boat – the Safari Rose. She is currently at the Tahoe City Marina. The original Woodwind, which was a trimaran, also met its demise when it washed ashore. An operating permit for a tour boat at Lake Tahoe is a coveted item, so it’s possible there could be a Woodwind III.

Settlement talks in suit over

busing Nev. mental patients

By Kyle Roerink, Las Vegas Sun

Settlement talks have emerged in a class action lawsuit accusing Nevada of misusing public funds for busing mentally ill patients to California.

The talks are the latest in a 16-month legal battle between Nevada and the city and county of San Francisco. A successful negotiation would end one of three busing-related lawsuits facing Nevada. Any money would compensate California for harboring indigent patients who were discharged from Nevada psychiatric facilities and given one-way bus tickets with directions to seek help in California. The settlement also would aim to outline new rules for transporting patients across state lines.

California officials say the busing cost San Francisco at least \$4 million to treat 21 patients from Nevada, according to legal documents in a San Francisco district court. The San Francisco City Attorney's Office said it has the names of 500 patients who traveled to California from Las Vegas' Rawson-Neal Psychiatric Hospital between 2008 to 2013. It's unclear how many of the 500 sought treatment once they arrived in California.

Officials from both states declined to comment on the details of the settlement negotiations – a standard practice during legal settlements.

Read the whole story

Ex-South Shore woman victim in bar killing

By Sonseeahray Tonsall, Fox-40

El Dorado County deputies are not identifying either of the women targeted as they left the 36 Handles pub early Wednesday morning but family members tell us their loved one, Khrista Ibarolle, is the woman who was killed as a night out spun into tragedy.



Khrista
Ibarolle

Connecting with people was a passion for Ibarolle, one she shared in a video about her passion for gems. Ibarolle had lived on the South Shore.

No one could know that just a few years later, walking out of the 36 Handles pub would connect her with Anderson Swift, the Oakland man El Dorado County Sheriff's deputies say shot her to death after demanding car keys and money from her and a friend.

That friend was able to escape.

Read the whole story

Factory Stores at Y sold – major changes coming

By Kathryn Reed

More than \$1 million is about to be infused into the Y in South Lake Tahoe.

Sutter Capital Group based in Sacramento last month bought the Factory Stores at the Y.

But don't expect discount stores to fill the empty spaces. Owners want to revamp this prime piece of real estate that has 51,811-square-feet of leasable space.

"Factory stores are outdated for that location," Burke Fathy, general manager of the ownership group, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The vision is for a mixed-use retail center that will include a restaurant that would be family friendly.

"Our business plan is to renovate, reposition, rebrand the property, to reinvigorate it and stabilize the assets," Fathy said.

With 33,000 cars passing by the property each day, the location is one of the main things that attracted the real estate management firm.

The owners also want to capitalize on the area plan that is in the works for this section of town. A greenway is planned for behind the center where a revamped bike path exists.

Fathy said it's possible to knock out the vacant section of the building where the L connects so people using the greenway

would have access to the center. Then that square footage may be relocated elsewhere on the property.

Owners hope the more than \$1 million worth of improvements will begin this summer.

Fathy would not divulge what the sale price was. For several years Wells Fargo Bank has owned the center because former owners Shannon Casteel and Nancy Irmer defaulted in 2012. At that time the sisters owed more than \$8 million.

In 2004, they bought the center from their brother, Gary Casteel. He still runs Heavenly Village.

Fathy wouldn't say if the few remaining stores will have a future in the revitalized center, but added, that they've managed to survive this long, so they might thrive going forward. (Izod and Van Heusen closed in December.)

When Big 5 opened in spring 2013 the company signed a five-year lease with an option for 20.