

# Missing Gardnerville woman located, safe

Update Feb. 25 8:15pm:

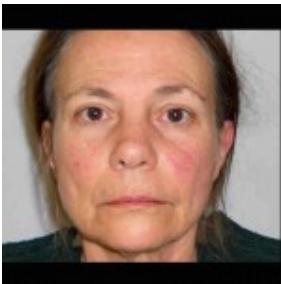
Kathy Arlana Hammond of Gardnerville has returned home after being reported as a missing person on Feb. 15.

Hammond had traveled to Los Angeles on personal business, and was unaware she was reported as a missing person.

Hammond does not possess a cell phone, and had not contacted friends or family during her trip.

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A Douglas County woman has not been seen for several days. Kathy Arlana Hammand, 63, was reported missing by a friend on Feb. 17. She was last seen at approximately 1pm Feb. 15.



Kathy Arlana  
Hammand

Hammond is reported to be driving a teal green four-door 1993 Subaru Legacy sedan, with California license plate No. 3CKF797.

Hammond is 5-feet-2-inches tall, 135 pounds, medium build, fair colored skin, long straight brown hair and brown eyes. She was last seen wearing blue jeans, a brown colored ski jacket with blue trim, and carrying a black fanny pack.

Hammond is known to frequent hiking areas in the foothills along the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of Hammond or the vehicle is asked to call the sheriff's department at (775) 782.9908 or (775) 782.5126.

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## California prosecutors launch criminal inquiry into parks 'hidden funds'

By Kevin Yamamura, Sacramento Bee

The state attorney general's office has launched a criminal investigation of California parks officials after the "hidden funds" case seemingly reached a dead end when state and local prosecutors did not pursue charges last month.

Peter Southworth, a supervising deputy at the attorney general's office, disclosed to a joint legislative committee Wednesday the matter is "still under criminal review in my office." He did not specify how long the inquiry would take.



Vikingsholm at Emerald Bay

State Park at Lake Tahoe.

Photo/LTN file

Three state agencies have found that California Department of Parks and Recreation officials hid funds for at least 13 years from state lawmakers and the Department of Finance. The Bee reported last year the parks department had cloaked a surplus beyond \$20 million while Gov. Jerry Brown and lawmakers threatened to close 70 parks.

The revelations resulted in the resignation of state parks director Ruth Coleman and other disciplinary actions in the department last year.

Attorney General Kamala Harris' office conducted a review that found "conscious and deliberate" acts to hide state parks fee revenue. It then transferred the file to Sacramento County District Attorney Jan Scully for review.

But the state office did not send the most damaging interview transcripts because it questioned employees using administrative, rather than criminal, procedures. The state office also did not identify who was to blame nor which laws were potentially broken.

Scully last month questioned why Harris had sent the case to her, saying that the attorney general's office has "historic authority in the prosecution ... of such cases." The criminal pursuit was believed to be over at that point.

But Lynda Gledhill, spokeswoman for Harris, said her office decided to open a criminal investigation shortly after Scully declined to pursue charges, unbeknown to most until Southworth's legislative testimony.

One curiosity in the state parks controversy is why department officials hid millions of dollars when they needed the Legislature's approval to spend the funds.

State Auditor Elaine Howle in hearings this week referred to the hidden surplus as a “useless reserve” because parks officials in theory couldn’t spend the money without telling lawmakers of its existence. But that left some lawmakers unsatisfied.

“I can’t get my head around the nature of this,” said Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield, D-Woodland Hills, chairman of the Assembly Budget Committee, asking later Wednesday whether “sheer stupidity” was to blame. If officials couldn’t spend the money, Blumenfield wondered, what was their motive for willfully hiding the funds?

Howle acknowledged that after writing her 60-page audit last week, she and her colleagues were also scratching their heads.

But Howle later offered a credible, albeit complicated, hypothesis: The Legislature authorizes the parks department to spend a certain amount of self-generated fee revenue each year.

If the parks department had a down year for fee collection – say, receiving \$15 million instead of \$20 million that the Legislature projected – it’s possible the department could have tapped \$5 million out of the hidden funds. The Legislature would have already given its approval for \$20 million, so the department could spend the hidden \$5 million rather than face cuts.

Howle said her office plans to further explore this possibility in the coming months.

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# Poll: Global warming a concern to Californians

By Jon Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

A new survey shows most California voters don't like government's response to global warming and still support the state's greenhouse gas emissions law.

The Field Poll results released today show that 62 percent of voters are unhappy with the federal government's actions and nearly half, 49 percent, give low marks to what the state is doing.



Overall, about two-thirds of California voters think global warming is so serious that government needs to combat it and 70 percent support Assembly Bill 32, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by regulating industrial polluters.

Both support levels are down somewhat from 2007, one year after AB 32's passage, when 79 percent of voters supported the law and 76 percent wanted something done about climate change.

Republicans, voters 65 and older, Central Valley residents and voters with no more than a high school education tend to believe that more research is needed or that concerns are unwarranted, the poll found.

They also tended to be "by far the people most opposed to AB 32," said Field Poll Director Mark DiCamillo. "Any government action is misguided, from their standpoint."

Luis Hernandez, a 26-year-old registered Democrat, said he's a

global-warming skeptic. He thinks government is overreacting.

“It’s what I hear on the news,” said the Merced resident, “but I’m not a scientist.”

On the other side, Democrats, independents, voters up to age 40, San Francisco Bay Area residents, Asian Americans and college graduates tended to think global warming is serious and merits more government action.

“The skeptics don’t think government has a role,” DiCamillo said. “People who do, view the federal government as dragging its feet.”

Sacramento catering business owner Rose Wallace, 63, said the weather has become “topsy-turvy” in her lifetime, and that government work to counter it.

“I think we’re going to wait on doing something until it’s too late,” Wallace said. “This is serious.”

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## **Lack of approved software prevents Nevada from offering online poker**

**By Cy Ryan, Las Vegas Sun**

CARSON CITY – Even though the Legislature rushed through a bill on Internet poker Thursday, the state has yet to approve the software to allow the game to be offered to the public.

The Assembly and the Senate gave unanimous approval to the emergency measure, and Gov. Brian Sandoval held a quick

signing ceremony.



Gov. Brian Sandoval signed Internet poker legislation last week. Photo/LTN file

But A.G. Burnett, chairman of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, said Friday the computer systems to put the game online are still being tested.

“We have to certify that the software meets state standards,” Burnett said. “The technicians are moving full steam ahead.”

He had no estimate when the first system would be approved.

The state Gaming Commission has issued licenses to nine operators to enter the online poker market. The 2011 Legislature opened the door for companies to offer Internet poker within Nevada.

The bill approved Thursday allows Nevada to sign agreements with other states to offer Internet poker.

Sandoval asked the Legislature to approve the bill within 30 days of the start of the session so Nevada could be the first to enter the field. New Jersey is considering a similar bill.

Sandoval said the bill would “usher in the next frontier of gaming in Nevada. This bill is critical to our state’s economy and ensures that we will continue to be the gold standard of gaming regulation.”

A bill in Congress to permit Internet gambling on a national level has been bottled up.

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# Martis Valley trail route selected

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Sacramento Bee

An alignment paralleling the south side of Highway 267 has been selected for a proposed 9.5-mile multiuse trail through the Martis Valley near Truckee.

The Northstar Community Services District board voted for the alignment Wednesday after easements could not be obtained for an alternate route that would have followed an existing dirt road farther south through the valley.



“The Northstar Property Owners Association was not willing to grant easements for the valley alignment, and we respect that decision,” said Mike Staudenmayer, the district’s general manager.

The district is lead agency for the Martis Valley Trail, a controversial Placer County project.

“The highway alignment is also preferable to the Army Corps of Engineers and was found to be slightly environmentally superior in the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)



analysis,” Staudenmayer said. “There are a lot of interested stakeholders, and we’re doing the best we can to do it right.”

The board also approved a design and consulting contract with Auerbach Engineering Corp. of Tahoe City for the first segment of the trail, from the Nevada/Placer county line to the wildlife viewing area.

Construction of that approximately 1-mile-long section is expected to begin next year.

Almost 3,000 feet of the initial section, within the wildlife viewing area owned by the Army Corps of Engineers, will not be paved initially but will have a packed surface, Staudenmayer said.

“We’re actively working with the Corps as (the trail project) progresses through National Environmental Policy Act review, hopefully within the next year,” he said.

The cost of the trail, from the county line to the Village at Northstar, is expected to be \$12 million, of which the district currently has \$4 million in grants – enough to build the first segment and design the rest, Staudenmayer said.

“We have more fundraising to do, but we hope to get it built as quickly as possible,” he said.

The plan is to extend the trail from Northstar’s Village to the ridge line overlooking the Tahoe basin, where it would connect at the Four Corners area with Forest Road 73, known locally as the “Fibreboard Freeway.”

The 10-foot-wide trail would be available to all pedestrian and non-motorized uses, with the exception of equestrians.

The only motorized use would be powered wheelchairs.

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# Ski report: Corduroy is calling



Time to go carve corduroy.

Here is the Feb. 25 ski report.

– *Curtis Fong*

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# Douglas County starting work on Stateline plan

Douglas County is having a workshop March 1 about the area plan for Stateline.



Area plans are required in the Lake Tahoe Basin per the recently adopted Regional Plan of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

The meeting will be in the TRPA board room (128 Market St., Stateline) from 1:30-5pm.

Comments may be submitted to Douglas County Community Development Department, P.O. Box 218, Minden, NV 89423.

For more info, call (775) 782.6215.

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# **Land trust assists Tahoe residents with affordable housing**

**By Kathryn Reed**

A desire to do something for his community.

That is how the now 10-year-old St. Joseph Community Land Trust came into being. Lyn Barnett learned about land trusts at a planning convention in 2001. He was convinced during a lecture that a land trust is what Tahoe needed.

“A lot of long-term renters were asking for help because people were turning rentals into vacation rentals,” Barnett said.



At the time Barnett was working for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Patrick Conway was the housing coordinator for South Lake Tahoe. Together they researched land trusts to figure out how best to form the local one. At the time there were about 100 in the United States, mostly on the East Coast. Now there are close to three times that number.

Creating a land trust to serve both sides of the state line made it the first bistate trust. It is also faith based, which is not unusual for trusts. Barnett has long been affiliated with the Catholic Church. One benefit for the group is the free office space at St. Theresa Church.

But when it comes to who is on the board, who is helped or who may donate, religion is not part of the equation.

“Our mission is primarily housing, but also housing education, and education that helps people with basic skills in financing to help their overall knowledge to better themselves,” Barnett told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Our primary goal is to help low and moderate income people, but also the general public through education training.”

(See note below about financial workshop.)

The land trust is the majority owner of Sierra Garden Apartments in South Lake Tahoe. The 76-unit complex is all affordable housing. No one has to pay more than 30 percent of his or her income.

Barnett said there is a four-year waiting list for the one-bedroom apartments, and a two- to three-year wait for the two-bedroom units.

Residents are able to serve on the six-member board of the

trust.

Barnett's measure of success for the land trust will be when a majority of the board members are residents. Now one of the six is a resident. He wants the people to have more of say in what goes on with their living quarters.

St. Joseph Land Trust also built a house on Tallac Street about four blocks from Lake Tahoe. The group was the first to do so under TRPA's moderate housing guidelines.

It was then sold to someone who fit the economic guidelines. The trust owns the land it's built on. The house must always be sold to someone who meets the moderate-income qualifications.

"The general perception is that the housing market is affordable. But it's not to locals. And we also have depressed wages," Barnett said. "Incline is high on our target list. They really see need up there."

But he said it's hard to convince businesses that it is good for them to have workers live locally. So they don't give to the land trust, which could help provide affordable housing.

"In the future I would like to see more partnerships. If the economy is truly indeed improving, people need to know we exist and we can potentially help with their housing needs," Barnett said.

Working with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity is a possibility. They could do the rehab work on a fixer up that the trust would buy and then sell to a qualified moderate-income buyer.

A summer workshop geared toward seniors to teach them how not to be a victim of fraud has been talked about.

More information about St. Joseph Land Trust may be found online.

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**Note:**

The free financial education workshop at Lake Tahoe Community College is Feb. 25 from 6-8pm. The focus will be on financial goal setting, budgeting, money savings tips, and basic bank accounts. The speaker is from Wells Fargo Bank.

RSVP to (530) 541.4660, ext. 741 or email Alee@ltcc.edu. Space is limited. The event is in Room G4. St. Joseph Community Land Trust and LTCC's Student Support Services are sponsoring the event.

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## **2014 Winter Games not looking good in Russia**

**By Ryan Dunfee, Powder**

When Mark Meadows first visited Sochi, Russia, in 2009, his first impression was how much work there was left to do.

“That was the first thing that hit you,” said Meadows, the vice president of Torrent Engineering, the company responsible for much of the snowmaking infrastructure for the Vancouver, Sochi, and the future Korean Winter Olympics. “You sat there and said, ‘OK, what’s the date? There’s a ton of stuff to be done.’”

The airport baggage claim looked more like a conveyor belt in

a warehouse, and the entire airport held maybe 100 people.



Sochi in mid-February.

As he headed up the one-lane road into the Caucasus Mountains, he passed a couple of ski shops, but ski culture in this part of Russia was not an established phenomenon. The small village of Rhosa Khutor had one small ski area with some ageing fixed-grip chairs, and one twenty-room family-run hotel. The only evidence of a future Olympic venue were a few muddy roads leading up to an enormous mountain, and a remote camp of grizzled men living in shipping containers and tents, who were responsible for cutting the trails. They'd started only six months prior. Road access and telephones had only come into the valley 20 years prior.

While the Soviet Union was a force to be reckoned with at any Winter Games during the Cold War, after it collapsed in 1991, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan broke away and became independent countries, taking the Soviets' best winter training facilities with them. So Russia has had to build its snowsports facilities for Sochi more or less from scratch. And Vladimir Putin – The Bear – is evidently using every ounce of his position, his dogged enthusiasm for sport, and undoubtedly many of his state cronies and oligarch friends, to muscle the 2013 Sochi Games forward to completion.

Now, 60,000 workers pound away 24/7 both in the palm tree-lined city of Sochi and in the “mountain cluster” where all the alpine and Nordic events, along with the luge and bobsled, are taking place. A new international airport has been built next to the quiet regional one that Mark flew into five years ago, as have countless high rises. The third-largest gas plant in the world has just been finished, with seven others on the way, to power both the construction and the Games. Twenty kilometers of high-voltage lines, along with high-speed light

rail passing through 22 new tunnels, now march up the valley where only the tiny one-way meandered before.

Up in Rhosa Khutor, where the mom-and-pop hotel had been the only show in town, 10 brand-new hotels and 1,600 rooms have opened, with some of the foundations for the buildings having only been poured in October. These look down on a river whose course is being moved by bulldozers. Where they had been no ski area, Doppelmayr gondolas and high-speed six packs climb 5,700 vertical feet to the summit, off of which lies alpine terrain to rival Jackson Hole. Putin is punching through the most sensational development plan of any Winter Olympic Games in history, as an event that's usually held in known ski destinations – Whistler, Salt Lake City, Nagano – is being held in a locale more famous as a summer beach retreat in one of the world's most controversial emerging powers.

But, as in Beijing, the coming out party is not coming together without controversy. Sochi is the warmest venue in Winter Olympic history. Despite the nearly 6K of vertical at Rhosa Khutor, leadership decided to place the halfpipe, slopestyle, aerials, and moguls venue at the bottom, where a climate change report revealed that average February temperatures are around 35 degrees Fahrenheit.

While the run-up to the Beijing Olympics involved a lot of talk about whether the city's notoriously noxious air would be clean enough for elite competitors, at Sochi the concern is whether or not there will be enough snow. The Chinese forced factories to close so air quality would be high enough; the Russians say they can bully the snow into existence regardless of temps via their "Hot Snow" program. The new snowmaking system is reportedly able to make snow at temperatures up to 60 degrees, while a reservoir near the alpine venues holds frozen snow collected from past seasons. In a no-holds-barred, hey-didn't-we-say-this-was-a-green-games approach, chemical additives are at hand to make the snow bond better, and the Ministry of Defense in Moscow even has its hand in cloud-



seeding to ensure any rain might fall as snow.

Despite all this, halfpipe skiers at last week's Olympic test event were competing in the rain in a pipe slushed out by 59-degree temps. Nearby, a bare slopestyle venue sat layered with snow-saving tarps, that test event cancelled due to a lack of snow. Many of the snowboarders were saying it was Vancouver all over again.

Human rights groups have cried foul that many of the migrant workers building Sochi's stadiums and facilities have been abused as contractors push to meet construction deadlines. A heavy security presence alludes to the tension, both recent and past, that beleaguers the area. Almost directly off the back of Rhosa Khutor sits Abkazia, the disputed territory that was the subject of the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia. Abkazia's nominal independence is supported heavily by Russia and recognized by only five other countries. Georgia still considers the area a part of its territory.

Sochi itself was once the capital of the Circassians, a North Caucasian ethnic group that was expelled from the area when the Russians conquered the Caucasus in 1864. They still maintain that a genocide of their people has gone unrecognized, and a lobbyist for the group's 3.7 million-strong international diaspora wants athletes to know that they "will be skiing on the bones of our relatives."

Sports Illustrated's Alex Wolff recently wrote: "Putin is interested in much more than being a gracious and modern host. To maximize the nationalist passions on which his United Russia Party plays, The Bear must win." Only time will tell if the potential fissures in Putin's iron plan for Sochi materialize into anything more serious than a slushy halfpipe.

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# Incline's Pet Network Looking for money to make repairs

Pet Network in Incline Village is looking to upgrade its cat and dog houses.

For more than 10 years, Pet Network has housed homeless dogs and cats in the shelter at 401 Village Blvd. During this period, almost 10,000 abandoned animals have found temporary sanctuary while awaiting their adoptive families.



Pet Network is a nonprofit organization that relies on the goodwill of donors to cover operating expenses. Adoption fees are only a token amount of the needed funds to sustain the operations. Necessary funds are raised each year through major

events like the annual Fur Ball and smaller events such as Strut Your Mutt and Purses for Pets. Dog and cat boarding, doggie day care and the sale of Science Diet food and pet supplies also help cover costs.

And more recently, the organization has begun offering veterinary services to the public.

All of these efforts result year-after-year in barely breaking even.

Now Pet Network is saddled with some extraordinary maintenance and building repair expenses, to the tune of \$100,000. Constant sterilization of surfaces plus human and four-legged traffic have taken a toll. Some of the needed repairs include replacement of cracked and chipped flooring, fixing heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems and raising the height of fencing.

The goal is to raise \$100,000 from individual donations by the end of March. To date, \$34,000 has been raised.

To make a donation, visit the shelter or contact Becky at (775) 832.4404, ext. 114, or mail a check to the shelter at 401 Village Blvd., Incline Village, NV 89451.