

Early jail releases surge in Calif. after prison realignment

By Paige St. John, Los Angeles Times

Jesus Ysasaga had been arrested multiple times and ordered by the court to keep away from his ex-girlfriend. Two parole boards sentenced him to nearly a year in jail for stalking, drunkenness and battery.

But the Fresno County jail would not keep him.

Four times in the summer of 2012, authorities let Ysasaga go, refusing two times to even book him. The jail had no room.

Ysasaga's attorney, Jerry Lowe, said the parade of convicted offenders being turned away from the jail was common. "It became quite a joke," he said.

Across California, more than 13,500 inmates are being released early each month to relieve crowding in local jails – a 34 percent increase over the last three years. A *Times* investigation shows a significant shift in who is being let out of jail, how early and where.

The releases spring from an effort begun in 2011 to divert low-level offenders from crowded state prisons to local jails. The move had a cascade effect, forcing local authorities to release their least dangerous inmates to make room for more serious offenders.

[Read the whole story](#)

Mass casualty drill

Lake Tahoe Airport on Aug. 25, 2014, was the scene of a mass casualty training incident. The scenario was a C130 with 47 people on board crashed while landing at the South Lake Tahoe airport.

Man floating at Sand Harbor identified

Washoe County sheriff's investigators have identified the man who was found floating in the water at Sand Harbor as Carl Strickland, 40, of Incline Village.

Students in a paddleboarding class discovered the body Aug. 22 about 10:50am near the boat docks.

Detectives said the instructor the body was tangled in some ropes affixed to a boat. The victim was pulled to the surface where he was pronounced deceased by emergency medical responders.

Detectives said they found evidence that indicates the man had been working on the boat and appears to have entered the water on his own volition. No foul play is suspected. The exact cause of death has not been determined.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Power temporarily cut to 2 LTUSD schools



A truck struck power line in South Lake Tahoe Aug. 25, knocking out power to two schools. Photo/Toogee Sielsch

A truck carrying trusses for the roof of a house clipped the power lines across from Safeway on Johnson Boulevard between Highway 50 and Fairway Avenue on Monday morning.

The accident knocked out power for most of the Liberty Utilities customers in the area for more than hour. This included putting students in the dark at Bijou Community School and South Tahoe Middle School. And this was the first day of school. The city's recreation center was also affect.

Ten customers are expected to be without power until about 5pm Aug. 25. This is because a transformer needs to be replaced.

A small fire erupted on initial impact. It was quickly put out by South Lake Tahoe police Officer Donna Kingman.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Fireworks show to be part fundraiser

Gar Woods Grill & Pier and the Monte Foundation will be hosting the 2nd annual Fireworks Spectacular on Aug. 31 at 8:15pm in Carnelian Bay.

The lakefront fireworks show will benefit many North Tahoe sports programs. Last year this event raised more than \$14,000.

In addition to the money that Gar Woods and the Monte Foundation (owners of Deluxe Foods in Capitola) will donate from the evening, athletes will be selling event items on the beach that will contribute to the proceeds.

Organic food – high prices, uncertain benefits

By Leslie Patton, Bloomberg

Organic food sales have gone through the roof. It's no wonder. It's widely believed that organic foods are more nutritious and safer than non-organic – they're even said to fight cancer – even though the evidence is far from clear. Consumers have been paying a lot to eat organic; food certified as organic sometimes costs twice as much as conventional products. T

he premium prices may not be buying everything that's

promised.

About three-quarters of grocers in the U.S. sell organic food, including specialty markets, like Sprouts, and mass-market retailers, like Wal-Mart and Target. While that's only 4 percent of total food sales, demand in the U.S. and Europe is growing. The trend is driven both by rising interest in locally grown food – more than 80 percent of farmers markets sell organic food – and fears about food safety.

Roughly 48 million Americans every year become sick and 3,000 die from foodborne diseases.

To be labeled organic, the U.S. Department of Agriculture says food must be grown without synthetic fertilizers and must be free of genetically modified organisms; meat must be raised without antibiotics and growth hormones and the animals must have access to the outdoors. There are similar standards in the European Union and Japan. In China, demand for organic food is skyrocketing after a series of scandals over tainted food has consumers willing to pay double for organic kale and other items.

Until the invention of pesticides, all agriculture was organic.

Read the whole story

Community Pub Run on North Shore

Tahoe City's inaugural Community Pub Run is Sept. 2 at 5:30pm.

Alpenglow Sports has partnered with Hoka One One and Zia Lina

to provide a community-oriented evening for North Lake Tahoe. Participants will have the opportunity to test the hottest trail shoe in the industry for free, make new friends, and enjoy a scenic 4 to 6 mile jaunt on the Tahoe Rim Trail.

At the conclusion of the trail run, Alpenglow and Hoka will treat all participants to chilled adult beverages at Tahoe City's Zia Lina Italian restaurant.

The event is open to trail runners and hikers of all ages and ability levels, is mellow in nature, and designed to be fun and ego-free. Meet at Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City.

In addition to the fun run Hoka will be at Alpenglow from 10am to 4pm for interested runners to take demos to their favorite trailhead at no charge.

For more info, call 530.583.6917 .

Zephyr Cove sewer district faces lawsuit

By Terri Hendry, KRNV-TV

Your right to know is at the center of a lawsuit filed against a small sewer district at Lake Tahoe.

The conservative group Nevada Policy Research Institute has filed suit in the Ninth Judicial Court in Minden, asking the court to order the Tahoe-Douglas Sewer District to disclose its employee compensation information.

NPRI is behind the website TransparentNevada.com, which posts salary and compensation information of Nevada public

employees. “To date, more than 100 public agencies have provided NPRI salary information under the Nevada Public Records Act,” Chief Legal Counsel Joseph Becker said.

The district is very small. It serves about 1,500 customers in Zephyr Cove and has five employees.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Bandit

Bandit is a beautiful purebred St. Bernard. She is so youthful in appearance and behavior that it is hard to believe she is 8 years old.

She is tall, and seems to be at her ideal weight. Bandit has a beautiful coat and is very well behaved. She jumps tall fences and she will chase cats and possibly small dogs. Bandit loves children and sleeping in beds with her people.

Bandit is spayed, microchipped, tested for heartworm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

Tahoe Tom's at center of MTBE issue – again

By Kathryn Reed

Years after MTBE was used in South Lake Tahoe it continues to turn up in well water.

The latest incident involves Tahoe Tom's gas station near the state line. The former owners – Mohammad Ahmad and the Thomas E. Erickson Trust – have never fully cleaned up the contaminated groundwater even though multiple complaints have been filed against them dating to 1991.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board said samples taken from a well used by the Mark Twain Hotel on Park Avenue "revealed the presence of the contaminant MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) at concentrations above the drinking

water standard for taste and odor.”

Lahontan officials were not available for comment.

Cindy Black, manager of the hotel, told *Lake Tahoe News* their water is fine to drink or to shower with. She said the water is tested all the time.

“In the summertime there is more usage so the water level goes down so it looks like (MTBE) is higher,” Black said.

Several properties on the California side near the state line have individual wells. Others use Lakeside Park Association water. That water comes directly from Lake Tahoe.

MTBE is a volatile organic chemical that was added to gasoline starting in the 1980s. In the 1990s it was found to be contaminating groundwater. It has since been banned – from California in 2004 and Nevada in 2007.

It was such a problem locally that 13 of South Tahoe Public Utility District’s wells were put out of service because of the contamination. The district sued the oil companies, winning a \$69 million judgment in 2002.

“MTBE in aquifers has reduced over time, however the drought appears to be increasing groundwater concentrations of residual petroleum left in soil,” Lahontan said in a press release.

Lahontan, again, is going after the former owners. In 2009, those parties were ordered to pay a civil penalty of \$412,900. They never did.

It is not known why Lahontan thinks any enforcement action now will make any difference or get a different result from the prior owners.

“The current owner has gone out of his way to help try to clean that up even though it is not his responsibility,”

Mehrdad Javaherian, consultant for the owner Lake Tahoe Investments, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Historically the other operators released gasoline. That gasoline had MTBE. That is in the ground. The rate of migration of that gasoline depends on the direction and hydrologic gradient of the water. That can be impacted by drought."

Lahontan has added Lake Tahoe Investments as a responsible party to the cleanup.