

Properly disposing of hot ashes



By Sallie Ross-Filgo

One of the most common fires we respond to is a fire caused by hot ashes being placed in a box or bag and stored on the back deck.

When you clean the ashes from your fireplace or wood-burning stove this fall, make sure to place them in a metal container with a tight fitting lid. Place the container on a non-combustible surface like your concrete garage floor and leave them in the container for at least one week. At this time they will be safe to discard in the trash.

Sallie Ross-Filgo works for the South Lake Tahoe Fire Department.

DA reacts to Garrido letter



By Vern Pierson

On Nov. 12, 2009, KCRA 3 reported receiving a third letter from criminal defendant Phillip Garrido. In it he reportedly apologizes stating, "First off I would like to apologize to every human being for what has taken place." It continued, "People all over the world are hearing testimony that through the spirit of Christ a mental process took place ending a sexual problem believed to be impossible."

The news story describes Mr. Garrido as expressing "genuine remorse".

In response to defendant Phillip Garrido's recent statements to the media, we see this as just another example of his attempt to control the situation around him and his prior victims – he is a master manipulator.

Defendant Phillip Garrido claims to express "genuine remorse" and asserts that "he's a changed man." However, these recent statements are eerily similar to what Mr. Garrido told the judge who sentenced him in 1977 and to the parole board when he duped them into releasing him from prison after serving only 11 years of a 50 year federal sentence and five-to-life Nevada State sentence.

We have been careful to limit our public comments regarding this case. However, it has become clear from Mr. Garrido's repeated calls and letters that he is attempting to manipulate the process, the people involved in that process, and, most significantly, his prior victims.

Before abducting Jaycee Lee Dugard, Mr. Garrido already had several prior sexual assault victims. It appears once again that Mr. Garrido seeks leniency due to claims of religious transformation and alleged personal change. Our office fully intends to hold Mr. Garrido legally accountable for his actions and see that he is punished to the full extent of the law.

Vern Pierson is district attorney of El Dorado County.

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Thank you for reading *Lake Tahoe News*. And please feel free to send this to your friends who might be interested in subscribing.

Kathryn Reed, LTN publisher

Seeking literary compassion

Dear Reader,

With the return of winter, we decided it was time to put out a call for guerrilla acts of literary compassion.

Please take a few minutes to read about it, copy your favorite works, and make the world a less lonely place – the power of the written word in action!

Kim Wyatt, Bona Fide Books publisher

Perez: Putting money toward resources, not himself

Letter to the Publisher,

With 12 vacant deputy positions, we must look introspectively at what we can do for our county and Sheriff's Department to help improve public safety and community services. Personally, I have chosen to reduce my salary if elected sheriff.

As you may know, the sheriff of El Dorado County receives a salary of \$15,236 each month, plus benefits totalling thousands more each year.

I've said from the beginning of my campaign that if elected sheriff, I will reduce my pay to \$1 above that of the undersheriff. This will result in an immediate savings to the

county and Sheriff's Department of \$27,384 each year.

Further, once in office, I will work to eliminate overlapping coverage I may already have such as medical, dental, life insurance, and long term care insurance. Additionally, if I'm elected sheriff, the county can eliminate its contribution into the PERS retirement system on my behalf. These benefit reductions will realize additional savings of thousands of dollars each year.

My self-imposed cuts will save precious dollars which I will ask be redirected to help fill vacant deputy positions. This is but one example of many fiscal restructuring efforts I will implement, if elected sheriff, to return more deputies to our schools and neighborhoods.

Stan Perez, El Dorado Hills

Running away – the whys, the consequences

By Laura Salinas

Between 1.6 million and 2.8 million youth run away each year and even more contemplate running. What would lead teens to believe life is better on the streets than in their home? Factors that lead youth to run away are family conflict, sexual orientation, drug/alcohol related issues or escaping state care. For whatever reason youth choose to run away, life on the streets further exposes them to life threatening risks.

Youths under the age of 18 are at higher risk for homelessness than adults. Young people who have made the choice to leave

their homes are at an elevated risk for pregnancy, suicide attempts, substance abuse, and participating in criminal activity.

Awareness and prevention is the best way to help the youth in our community from feeling that running is the best solution.

November is National Runaway Prevention Month. It is a public education campaign coordinated between the National Runaway Switchboard, Tahoe Youth & Family Services, and people in the community. The goal is to increase awareness of the issues facing runaways and to find solutions to prevent youth from running away.

When a youth runs away, the impact is felt throughout the entire community. Everyone is encouraged to participate in National Runaway Prevention Month. Working together to identify resources and to help youth develop life skills can make the difference between a youth running away or a youth finding needed resources. Youth and families need to know that there are options and alternatives to running away from home and living on the streets.

Tahoe Youth & Family Services'™ Drop-In Center is an excellent resource for runaway, homeless, throwaway and couch surfing youth in our community to get their basic necessities met. The Drop-In Center is a great place for youth to Get Recharged, Get Resources, and Get Respect. Staff at the Drop-In Center can assist youth with food, clothing, laundry services, showers, and hygiene kits, help looking for a job, a place to live, and obtaining proper identification.

For more information on the Drop-In Center or how you can help runaway youth in our community, please contact Tahoe Youth & Family Services' main offices at (530) 541.2445 in South Lake Tahoe, or (775) 782.4202 in Gardnerville. The Drop-In Center in South Lake Tahoe is open from 1-5pm Tuesday through Friday and 1-7pm on Saturdays. The Gardnerville Ranchos Drop In

Center is open Tuesday-Friday 3-8pm and noon-8pm on Saturdays. (Both Drop In Centers are closed Sunday and Monday.)

Tahoe Youth & Family Servicesâ€™ 24-hour crisis line is (800) 870.TYFS (8937).

Laura Salina is an outreach assistant with Tahoe Youth & Family Services.

Dealing with snowy conditions

Publisher's note: *The following is from Placer County.*

Tahoe area residents may be experts dealing with snow, but travelers who visit and find themselves in a sudden storm may be caught off guard. How many stories have you heard about people being stuck on the freeway for hours waiting for the roads to clear? Some of us have certainly been there.

Here are a few tips for those less experienced with snow conditions.

Before you go, have an emergency plan in place and tell someone your itinerary.

Check with the National Weather Service or go online to check on weather conditions for the area you'll be visiting. It's also very important to check with snowCaltrans on road conditions. Call (800) 427-ROAD (7623). Snow conditions will require chains, especially if your vehicle isn't a four-wheel drive with snow tread tires. It isn't uncommon for weather conditions to cause spin-outs and accidents, especially on major highways such as I-80 and Hwy. 50. Be prepared for road closures. A variety of weather-related storm conditions, such as zero visibility, high winds or avalanches, can cause road

closures.

Make sure your car is stocked with extra water, food, blankets and dry clothes. The gas tank should be at least half full and your tires should be checked before you leave home. Tools in your trunk should include a shovel and scraper. Use windshield wiper fluid that does not freeze. A bag of sand or burlap bags will give traction to tires mired in snow.

Be aware of snow plows, which push large amounts of snow onto road shoulders with heavy force. Snow berms block visibility, so don't park your car or stand near one in order to remain visible to the snow plow operator. And, snow blowers hurl snow, ice, rock and other debris at high speed. Stay away when in use.

Dress for snow by wearing layers of loose-fitting, lightweight warm clothing. Include mittens, which are warmer than gloves, and a hat and scarf to protect your head and lungs.

Foothill residents should be prepared for an occasional snow storm and storm-related power outages. Pets should be brought inside. Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly. Make sure your family's emergency kit is stocked with flashlights, extra batteries, candles, a battery-operated radio, extra blankets and warm clothes.

Be aware of potential dangers, such as carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is clear, odorless and deadly. Make sure vents, chimneys and flues are not blocked or clogged and that there are working carbon monoxide and smoke detectors in the house.

Don't use portable kerosene or gas heaters or charcoal briquettes for heating within an enclosed area. Electric space heaters can be used for heating small areas, but can be dangerous if they become overheated, get knocked over, or come in contact with flammable materials. Fireplace ashes not properly disposed of can cause fire. Homes have burned down

when ashes were put into containers that were not metal. Don't store warm ashes in garages, decks or trash cans.

One of the best defenses against an unexpected situation is to be prepared and use common sense. Drive slower in bad weather. Leave earlier. Make a checklist of things to do to winterize your car or home. Write an emergency plan with your family. Stock up on emergency items.

Pierson: More questions regarding Garrido

By Vern Pierson

In response to the release of the Inspector General's report pertaining to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's supervision of parolee Phillip Garrido, we welcome this report as a critical first step to: (1) Identify the problems with the federal and state systems that supervise dangerous sexual offenders released on parole; and (2) Implement the changes and reforms that are needed to assure that this type of oversight does not happen in the future.

A more critical question which has not yet been addressed is why a dangerous sexual predator like Phillip Garrido was released after serving only eleven years of a fifty year federal sentence and a five-to-life Nevada State sentence. Ultimately, that is an issue to be addressed by federal and state legislatures who determine the criteria for parole board reviews and who set funding levels for corrections facilities. Unfortunately, California's current financial crisis and the pending prisoner healthcare litigation may lead to further reduction in funding which is necessary to ensure the

incarceration of dangerous criminals and their supervision upon release.

We look forward to working with Matt Cate, Director of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and California Inspector General David Shaw to ensure that reforms are instituted that will protect the citizens of El Dorado County and the State of California.

Vern Pierson is El Dorado County district attorney.

Gaines calls water bill reckless

Publisher's note: *Assemblyman Ted Gaines voted Wednesday against the water bill. These comments were issued after that vote.*

By Ted Gaines

While this plan addresses California's longtime need for additional water storage and much-needed infrastructure, it does nothing to help our state by creating more unaccountable bureaucracies that don't answer to those they serve. The plan could take water rights out of the hands of Northern Californians at a time when we should be eliminating boards and commissions and bloated bureaucracies.

We shouldn't be asking taxpayers to fund more of the government's pork projects during a recession, when California should be reducing the amount of money it spends. California faces a massive \$20 billion deficit next year and this plan does nothing but add significantly to the state's deepening

financial hole.

Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, represents Lake Tahoe in the state Assembly.

Nason: Water bond critical to keeping Tahoe blue

Dear League Members and Friends,

(On Nov. 3) Senators Reid, Feinstein, Ensign, and Boxer introduced in the Senate a bill that would authorize up to \$415 million for projects at Lake Tahoe, including wildfire risk reduction, stormwater pollution prevention, and environmental restoration. However, future federal funds will be contingent upon the ability of the states of California and Nevada to provide matching funds. The state of Nevada has already arranged for bond funding for its share of the match.

Given the state of the California budget, bond funding is Lake Tahoe's only hope at present for financial support to match federal funds. Currently, the California Legislature is engaged in a special session to consider whether to place a water resources bond on a future statewide ballot. Various proposals are circulating, and at least some of them include \$75-\$100 million in bond funding to help Keep Tahoe Blue.

Lake Tahoe's future is at stake. Please contact your state senator and state assembly representative today and urge them to support funding to Keep Tahoe Blue in the water bond. Point out to them that Lake Tahoe is a statewide and national natural treasure, not a local issue, and that critical federal matching funds may be at stake.

Thank you for taking action!

Rochelle Nason, executive director League to Save Lake Tahoe