

# Community Partnership Connection



## Sheriff Forced to Eliminate Graffiti Investigations

Effective this month, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office was forced to eliminate graffiti investigations conducted by this Office due to budget reductions by the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners.

"This action is counterintuitive to the philosophy of my Office and staff and was made only after careful analysis of the impact of the Board's reductions on our operations," Sheriff Haley said.

To help meet the latest reductions, a Sheriff's Support Specialist who had been dedicated full-time to documenting graffiti incidents and violators has been reassigned. In addition, a Deputy Sheriff who was dedicated to full-time graffiti investigation and enforcement has also been reassigned to the Patrol Division.

Sheriff Haley said that current graffiti abatement efforts using inmate and community service work crews would continue. However, the Sheriff expressed concern that graffiti would increase across the region.

"When funding was available for enforcement, education and abatement, graffiti decreased, Sheriff Haley said. "But when funding ceases, the offending vandals will claim victory because we are no longer able to investigate, educate or fully abate graffiti vandalism in Washoe County.

"This is an extremely difficult decision to make after seeing the improvement in our region, but I was given no choice under the current budget mandates."



## Emergency Family Preparedness Part 3 of 9: Preparing for Possible Evacuation

Beginning last January, each monthly newsletter throughout 2012 will offer important information on how you can prepare for any emergency. This month we will cover how to prepare for a possible evacuation. When disasters or emergencies strike, such as the recent Caughlin and Washoe Fires, it could be unsafe for residents to remain in their homes. The amount of time you have to leave depends on the threat. Many disasters allow very little time to gather essentials, which is why planning ahead is important. For more information, go to [www.readywashoe.com](http://www.readywashoe.com).

**Plan to Stay with a Loved One if Possible:** Know who you will stay with ahead of time. Consider which loved ones could assist you with your animals or special needs.

**Research Motels or Hotels in Advance:** Call local hotels and motels within your area. Check to see if they take pets in an emergency situation. Alert staff of any emergency medical care you might require when you check in. Check local news or contact 211 (this number is only activated in a declared emergency) to see if any local hotels offer discounts for evacuees.

**Make Transportation Arrangements in Advance:** Keep emergency kits and supplies in your car. If you don't have a car, ask friends and family if they can transport you during an evacuation. Make sure you have a backup plan in case your first choice is not possible. Develop a transportation plan for your animals.

**Emergency Shelters:** If staying with loved ones is not possible, may you need to go to an emergency shelter. Contact 211 or (775) 337-5800 if out of town (these numbers are only activated during a declared emergency) for information on where to go and to receive information regarding animal evacuations/shelters.

**Stay Alert to Evacuation Orders Issued by Local Officials:** If possible, evacuation orders will be broadcast on radio, television and on Washoe Sheriff's Twitter. Be alert for instructions and follow travel routes outlined by public safety authorities. Stay away from downed power lines.

**If You Must Evacuate, Follow Important Steps:** If possible tell an out-of-town contact person where you are going. If instructed to, have the water, electricity and gas turned off at the main switches in your home. Take a grab and go emergency kit (see February newsletter) which should include current medications, dentures, hearing aids, or other necessary items. Bring a change of clothes for every family member. Secure your home; close and lock doors and windows. And leave early enough to avoid being trapped.

**If You Have Time:** Decide which objects and keepsakes are most important to you in advance. Make a list of those cherished items and keep with important papers. When you're required to evacuate, all you have to do is check the list, grab those items and go.

**Develop a Pet/Animal Evacuation Plan:** In the event of a disaster and you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do for your pets is to evacuate them too. If you are away from home when your neighborhood is evacuated, you will not be allowed back to retrieve your pet, so make arrangements before disaster strikes.

- Make sure your pets are current on their vaccinations
- Keep a collar with identification and licensing on your pet and have a leash or lead on hand
- If possible have a pet carrier or arrange transportation for each animal
- Have a supply of food, water and any required medication. Have a copy of your animals' medical records in your go kit.

## “Someone Who Cares” Donates Totes to Help Sheriff’s Victim Advocate



Jackie Russow describes herself simply as “someone who cares.” She is also a person with a passion for making beautiful cloth tote bags.

Russow recently donated 15 of her hand-made totes to Washoe County Sheriff’s Victim Advocate Kasey La Foon to use as emergency toiletry kits for victims of crimes such as domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Russow said she has been making totes for victims through the Crisis Call Center for over 12 years.

“I saw what they were using and thought I could make something a little nicer,” she said. “I enjoy making the totes and love the idea that they are going someplace where they can do some good and be appreciated.”

Sheriff’s Victim Advocate LaFoon said the totes also send an important message to victims because they show that people do care.

“Even the smallest touch of caring and warmth helps a victim down the path toward becoming a survivor,” La Foon said.

Russow plans to make more totes for victims in the near future.

## Front Desk at 911 Parr Closed on Weekends Due to Budget Cuts

Washoe County Sheriff Michael Haley announced this month that staff will no longer be available to take reports at the Sheriff’s Office Front Desk on weekends effective March 24, 2012 as a result of budget cuts made by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners.

The Front Desk will continue to be open to the public Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

“Faced with the impact of the Board’s reductions, we have made the decision to reallocate our limited resources to meet higher demand for service periods during weekdays and evenings,” Sheriff Michael Haley said. “In order to do this, we will no longer have staff available to assist the public with filing reports of non-emergency crimes or complaints during the weekends.”

The Front Desk at the Sheriff’s Office has been staffed with personnel on weekends to answer questions and for the public to file reports of criminal activity not requiring an immediate response by law enforcement. These reports included burglaries when no suspects were present, destruction of property, illegal dumping, runaway, and abandoned vehicle reports. Other services included traffic accident reporting, victim support, and other local service agency information.

Front Desk staff will be scheduled to continue providing service when demand is highest during weekdays.

Non-emergency crime reports, crime tips, and complaints may be filed online via the Washoe County Sheriff’s website: [www.washoesherriff.com](http://www.washoesherriff.com). An online reporting station is available twenty four hours a day in the Sheriff’s Office lobby located at 911 Parr Blvd.

Computers are also available to the public at Washoe County libraries. For information about library locations and hours, call (775) 327-8300.

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*Dedicated Service in  
Partnership with our  
Community*

Follow the Sheriff's Office on Twitter at:  
<http://twitter.com/washoesherriff>



### Hands- on experience with pawed patients

Brooke Webster, a second year student with Truckee Meadows Community College's Veterinary Technician Program, gives a touch of tender loving care to a young Chihuahua following a health inspection at the Regional Animals Services Center. TMCC Vet Tech students and instructors make weekly visits to Animal Services when school is in session for hands-on experience in their chosen field. Over time, this relationship has proven to benefit students, Animal Services, the community as a whole and, of course, the health and welfare of the animals.



### AlertID Offers New Feature: Virtual Neighborhood

Virtual Neighborhood allows members to receive alerts and advisories from more than one location. Members can now register and add up to five additional address locations to their account, selecting to receive separate advisories for these additional locations.

Members are now able to use Virtual Neighborhood to extend AlertID coverage to their schools, employers, recreation areas, businesses, or homes of other family members, in addition to their residences. For more information, go to [www.alertid.com](http://www.alertid.com).