

Community Partnership Connection



Sheriff Allen Commends Patrol Lieutenant and Sergeant for rescuing stranded elderly motorist outside of Gerlach

Washoe County Sheriff Chuck Allen commended Patrol Lieutenant Phil Condon and Sergeant Dennis Hippert for rescuing a 69-year-old motorist who was stranded for one week on a gravel highway 50 miles north of Gerlach.

Philip Besanson of Eugene, Oregon said he was traveling from Arizona back to Eugene when he became lost in the desert outside of Gerlach. Last Friday, February 5, Besanson was traveling northbound from Gerlach on SR 34 when his pick-up truck broke down on the partially snow-covered road.

Besanson stayed with his vehicle, rationing a limited supply of canned food and using melted snow for water. Besanson said he was preparing for the inevitable when the Sheriff's vehicle arrived. Lt. Condon and Sgt. Hippert were conducting an inspection of this remote area of highway, checking road conditions and making sure that no one was stuck, when they came upon Besanson's vehicle shortly before 10:00 a.m. this morning.

Lt. Condon and Sgt. Hippert transported Besanson to a hospital in Cedarville, Ca. where he is currently recovering. "Mr. Besanson told us that he believes his life was saved by Lieutenant Condon and Sergeant Hippert today and I agree with him," Sheriff Allen said. "Because of the bad road and weather conditions along SR 34 this time of year, it may have been several more weeks before anyone else travelled up that particular stretch of highway and located this gentleman." According to the rescuers, Besanson did the right thing by staying with this vehicle rather than trying to walk back to Gerlach. The vehicle provided shelter and was much easier for them to locate.

The Sheriff's Office would like to remind anyone who is planning to travel alone to let someone know where you plan to go and when you expect to be home. Giving your itinerary to a family member, friend, or trusted neighbor provides you with an extra safety net if something should go wrong. You'll have the assurance that someone is watching for you who can alert the proper authorities if you don't arrive on schedule.

(Photo right of Sgt. Hippert with Mr. Besanson courtesy of Lt. Phil Condon)



NAASIC Unmanned Autonomous System Search and Rescue Symposium

The Sheriff's Office is partnering with the Nevada Advanced Autonomous Systems Innovation Center (NAASIC) to learn more about how drones or UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems) technologies can assist in our Search and Rescue efforts. The potential for unmanned autonomous systems to aid first responders and assist in emergency situations is enormous, but adapting existing UAS technologies to work in public safety environments requires understanding the specific needs and constraints of how drones and other autonomous systems could be used in emergency or public safety scenarios.

That's why we're excited to work with NAASIC who is partnering with area businesses to host a symposium on the uses of unmanned autonomous systems for first responders. The Nevada Advanced Autonomous Systems Innovation Center is a business development arm of the University of Nevada, Reno, focused on serving as a catalyst for innovative business and the development of a technologically advanced workforce. Located in one of six federally authorized UAS test sites, NAASIC connects entrepreneurs and business owners with the resources of a research University with substantial interdisciplinary expertise in autonomous systems.

The UAS Search and Rescue Symposium is bringing together first responders, vendors and industry leaders, to discuss how first responders use or would like to use autonomous systems while also sharing information to potential users about the current state-of-the-art UAS technologies.

For more information on the symposium, click [HERE](#).



Our Washoe County Search and Rescue Team (WCSAR) is now accepting applications for new volunteer members. [#WCSAR](#) is an all-volunteer group that helps all law enforcement, in Nevada, California and Oregon, with Search and Rescue missions.

WCSAR is called on to participate in approximately 90 search missions annually and every member of WCSAR is an Auxiliary Deputy Sheriff of Washoe County. To learn more or to apply - click [HERE](#).

Scam Alerts!

WCSO sees surge in phone scams impersonating Sheriff's Deputies

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office is receiving numerous reports this month about a phone scam in which the scammers pose as Sheriff's Office personnel to fraudulently obtain money from innocent victims.

These reports are particularly concerning because it appears as if the scammers are using names of Sheriff's Office personnel and are able to manipulate the phone technology so that the recipient's caller ID shows an actual Sheriff's Office phone number.

The scammer tells the person there is a warrant out for their arrest for a certain amount of fine. The reason for the warrant is represented as being anything from a traffic violation to failure to pay full income tax requirements to the Internal Revenue Service.

The scammer then tells the potential victim that their options are either to surrender themselves to the Sheriff's Office for arrest, or that they may pay a "reduced" payment of the fine to adjudicate the warrant.

The scammer provides instruction on how the payment should be submitted, usually through an "eGift" cash card or similar payment to a specified account or name given by the caller.

These scam artists use pre-paid phones and many times are not even in the jurisdiction where the crime occurred, making their apprehension difficult.

Although the Washoe County Sheriff's Office will sometimes make calls to inform someone about a warrant, the Office will not ask for payment over the phone or negotiate for payment in lieu of arrest. Anyone with questions about a warrant may call the courts and local law enforcement agencies.

Anyone who has suffered a loss as a result of this scam is encouraged to take down as much information as possible, such as a name and call back number, without giving any information away. Then, immediately contact the Washoe County Sheriff's Office at (775) 328-3001 (option 7).

In a similar scam, the potential victims are told that they failed to appear for jury service and now owe a fine. The Second Judicial District Court does not impose monetary sanctions for missed jury service over the phone.

Additionally, the Second Judicial District Court does not accept payments over the phone. Anyone with questions about jury service may call the Second Judicial District Court's Jury Manager at 775-328-3152. Additional information may also be found at www.washoecourts.com.

Beware of seasonal tax scams

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office is receiving a number of calls from the public today reporting telephone scams involving aggressive and threatening criminals impersonating IRS agents.

Because public awareness is one of the most important keys to preventing this type of scam, the Sheriff's Office reminds residents to stay alert.

The following information provided by the Internal Revenue Service will help identify fraudulent calls. The Sheriff's Office urges residents to share this information with family, friends, associates and co-workers.

According to the IRS, there are five things that scammers often do, but the IRS will never do:

The IRS will NEVER:

- Call to demand immediate payment, nor will the agency call about taxes owed without first having mailed you a bill
- Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe
- Require you to use a specific payment method for your taxes, such as a prepaid debit card
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying

According to the IRS, fraudulent callers often alter caller ID numbers to make it look like the IRS is calling and will identify themselves by using fake names and bogus IRS badge numbers.

The caller may sound convincing and know the victim's name, address, or other identifying information that is often easily obtainable through resources available to the public.

Anyone who receives a scam telephone call is encouraged by the IRS to report the incident to the U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration at 1-800-366-4484 or at www.tigta.gov.

Additionally, they recommend contacting the Federal Trade Commission and using their 'FTC Complaint Assistant' at www.FTC.gov. Be sure to include "IRS Telephone Scam" in the comments of the complaint. For more information on reporting tax scams, go to www.irs.gov and type "scam" in the search box.

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***Dedicated Service in
Partnership with our
Community***

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A guardian angel to guide and protect...

For over two decades, CarolAnn and Armand (Buzz) Moens of Incline Village felt compelled to show community "heroes" how much they appreciated them and wanted to help protect them in their often difficult vocations. As a result, they distributed thousands of guardian angel pins to individuals, church groups, teachers, hospitals, military, and multiple fire and police departments. After 9/11, they sent thousands to the victims and first responders at Ground Zero.

"We have had such an emotional response from most everyone that we hand them to," said the Moens "We feel blessed in their hugs, smiles and tears. So many say 'You don't know how much I need this.' We found that a small act of kindness is an amazing avenue to promote good will and bring happiness to others."

"The Moen's support all public servants including military, law enforcement and fire," said Lt. Jeff Clark. "Their goal is to distribute these angels to all law enforcement across the Nation. They gift them during their travels in every country they visit." said Clark.

Concerned about the challenges law enforcement often face, the Moen's wanted to make sure that every staff member at the Sheriff's Office had a pin to let them know people cared about their welfare.



"God Bless our Law Enforcement. " said Moen.
"This guardian angel is especially for you, to guide and protect you and give you strength and courage when you need it most."