

**Contact Information:**  
Jerry Funderburgh  
Preston Castle Foundation  
P.O. Box 488  
Ione, CA 95640  
209-274-6357  
Email: [jerryfund@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jerryfund@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.prestoncastle.com](http://www.prestoncastle.com)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2014

## **TOURS OF PRESTON CASTLE SUSPENDED**

IONE, CA: The California State Fire Marshal's office is now requiring the Preston Castle Foundation (PCF) to acquire a permit from their office for events, tours, etc. that bring people into the structure. The State Fire Marshal's office has changed their position and are now unwilling to grant such a permit (as they have in the past) due to the lack of an automatic fire suppression system in the 120 year old building. The result of this unexpected action is that the PCF cannot conduct its popular historical and paranormal tours, as well as the upcoming Photographer Day, which are major fundraisers for the Foundation in its efforts to preserve and rehabilitate this magnificent building.

The PCF is consulting experts in the field of historic preservation to determine the best course of action. It is hoped that tours and events will be allowed to resume within a reasonable amount of time. We do expect that events that are to be held strictly outside the Castle, such as the upcoming Preston Castle Golf Classic on May 1<sup>st</sup> are not affected by this. Please consult the Preston Castle Foundation website at [www.prestoncastle.com](http://www.prestoncastle.com) for up to date information.

### **About Preston Castle Foundation**

The strikingly beautiful Romanesque style Preston Castle, on a hill in Ione, was actually the administration building for the Preston School of Industry, the first major attempt in California at rehabilitating, instead of just imprisoning, young offenders. Opened in 1894, the Preston School of Industry became a leader in the juvenile prison reform movement by giving convicted boys a real chance at life by educating them not only in academics, but in all of the useful trades of the time. Closed in 1960, when the Preston Youth Authority moved into a new administration building down the hill, the Preston Castle was left to deteriorate due to weather, vandalism, and general neglect. It now serves as a vacant, but vitally important landmark for Ione, Amador County, and the Motherlode. It is a California State Historic Landmark and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Mission of the Preston Castle Foundation is to preserve, rehabilitate, and utilize the historic Preston Castle site. This year we are pushing hard to obtain our own utility connections that will ultimately lead to acquiring the title to the property. To help raise money for this important project, the Foundation sponsors several fund raising events throughout the year. The first event for 2014 is the annual Preston Castle Golf Classic, on May 1, at Castle Oaks Golf Course.

###