

Opinion: An officer and a friend



Donna Kingman, second from right, retires today after spending her entire career with the South Lake Tahoe Police Department. Photo/Bill Kingman

By Kathryn Reed

In retrospect, having your roommate clean her service revolver when your date is coming over for the first time might not be the best idea. It did, however, keep what's his name in line. I just don't remember a second date.

Today is South Lake Tahoe police Officer Donna Kingman's last day on the job. She is retiring after having started with the department in December 1987.

Hers is a storied career in many ways. When she was 8-years-old with her family on vacation in Southern California there was some police incident that she recalls being the coolest thing – she just doesn't remember exactly what it was. That led her to want to be an officer. She begged and begged her

dad to buy her a pair of handcuffs. He finally did.

Through her youth her desire to be an officer never wavered. Kingman went to CSU Sacramento where she majored in criminal justice. The South Lake Tahoe native knew she wanted to work for her hometown department. While she tested with others, she was one of five who was hired that December. About 600 had applied.

In her tenure she has worked for six full-time chiefs and two interims. She's been part of some of the biggest cases – like the murder at Campground by the Lake in 2001. Kingman was working in detectives at the time. (In 2003, Lisa Platz was found guilty of the murder of her 9-year-old daughter, Rebecca Aramburo. The child was found with her throat slashed inside a tent at the campground. Platz was sentenced to life in prison. Her boyfriend James Csucsai hanged himself in jail.)

I met Kingman in September 1988 when I first moved here. She lived in the apartment below me on 13th Street. Being the same age and single it led to many nights out at the Cantina, which we could walk to, and to Lily's to dance. It was inside High Sierra, which is now the Hard Rock. It seemed like a weekend ritual with us.

Unfortunately, Kingman remembers the night she dragged me out of there and I all I could say was something about my shoe.

"I don't know whatever happened to that shoe," she laughed. I don't either. "You had to hang your head out of my car because it was new." I don't remember enough to argue with her memory. We both agree I didn't get sick.

Kingman had a Camaro and as two women in our early 20s we thought we were pretty cool cruising around in it. The heater would be on and the sunroof open. They were fun, carefree days – and nights, and really early mornings.

I was covering cops for the *Tribune* at the time. My boss

thought this would provide with me intel. *Wrong*. Her boss was worried. *No need to be*. To this day Kingman has always been loyal to the department. I've also never asked for anything that would compromise our friendship.

During that stint at the *Trib* I thought it would make a great story to try out for the department, but not let the higher ups know. This was when SLTPD had an obstacle course. That was first test; the written, psych evaluation and other stuff came later.

I ran into a 6-foot wall. Literally. More than once. Kingman was in charge of that particular obstacle. She told me to place my foot on the wall, jump, grab the top and haul myself over. This was a slick, wood wall. I thought her instructions were stupid until they worked.

"I remember at the end of that you were like 'oh, my god'. I think about two hours later you were on the couch and you didn't want to move," Kingman said. My selective memory has no recollection other than I completed the course and gained a tremendous amount of respect for those carrying a badge.

By then we were roommates; renting a house on South Shore Drive. Eventually another officer, Lori Scott, joined us. This was before she married her current husband.

Oh, the fun we had.

I left Tahoe for bigger papers, but Kingman and I stayed in touch. I came back for her wedding that was in town, with the reception at the Ridge. Then our calls and letters dwindled, before becoming non-existent. (This was pre-texting and emails.)

When I came back in 2002 I learned she was still at the department. By then she had a son – who is now 19. Our lives were different. I was managing editor at the *Trib* then. We were friends, but not. We didn't – and still don't –

socialize. We've never been to each other's house. And, yet, I still consider her a friend. We wave when we see each other. She picked me up in her patrol car when I was on foot because my car was in the shop. (I figure she can't get in trouble for that now.) Ironically, it's her dad, Bill Kingman, who does the "Then and now" articles for *Lake Tahoe News* who I am better friends with.

Oh, the laughs Donna and I have had in the last few weeks reminiscing about life in our 20s. Now we're both 50.

She always seemed to be in the thick of things. A pursuit she was on not long after being hired remains the longest in the department's history. She followed the suspect from here to Sacramento – making it there in 32 minutes. The dude wasn't happy a woman caught him.

At times there were three women patrol officers on one shift, plus the sergeant. Suspects thought a guy should be called. Even if there were one to call, one wasn't needed.

"Most people who did wrong know they did wrong. I try to treat people decently so I am not adding to their issues," Kingman said.

But she is also guarded about her personal life. Retribution is a real part of being a cop – even in South Lake Tahoe. Someone once broke into her home and killed her dog. That's not the only incident.

She's had to pull her gun many times, but never fired it. However, she has been there when her colleagues pulled the trigger. Taser – that was more her instrument of choice.

Some cases have stuck with her more than others. The near fatal slashing of **Susie Rizk Laney** is one of those. It was a case that necessitated the department to bring in a psychologist for officers to talk to.

There's the **Adam Rose** case. He was on his bike when a drunken driver hit him. From there the two formed a bond.

"Adam Rose is up and walking around and doing his thing," Kingman said with a softness that speaks to their friendship that formed after the incident.

Then there was the juvenile rape victim whose case she handled while in detectives.

"We had a connection and have a friendship as a result of that to this day," Kingman said. "When she comes in to see me she is so successful today. It is so awesome to see through the darkest time there is this shining star living her life."

Like anyone, there are things she would do differently, what with hindsight being 20-20. But she would not choose a different career or another town.

Thanks for the memories, my friend. Good luck in retirement. Go see the redwoods, the cherry blossoms, sleep in and please give me the exclusive when you find Bigfoot.

Columnist quits after being barred from writing about owner

By Ian Whitaker, Las Vegas Sun



John L.
Smith

Las Vegas Review-Journal columnist John L. Smith announced his resignation Tuesday, days after the newspaper's new editor said publicly that Smith had been barred from writing about the *R-J*'s new owner, Sheldon Adelson.

On Saturday, editor Keith Moyer told a meeting of the Society of Professional Journalists at UNLV that Smith would no longer be allowed to write about Adelson "as long as I'm editor," according to an *R-J* reporter who tweeted details of the event. Smith had written numerous times about Adelson, including in a December 2015 *R-J* column following the revelation that the billionaire Las Vegas casino magnate and his family had purchased the paper.

In that column, Smith called Adelson "precisely the wrong person to own this or any newspaper."

Read the whole story

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care is in need of uncleaned fish for the bald eagle and four bear cubs in its care. Drop off the fish at LTWC on Cherry Hills Circle off Elks Club Road in Meyers.

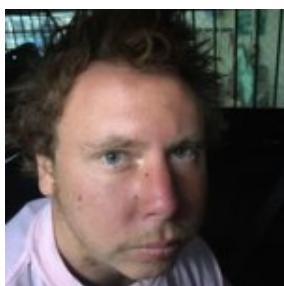
- Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority is looking for videographers to submit a short video that shares the Tahoe South brand objectives in a fun and engaging manner. More info is available **online** or email Georgette@LTVA.org.

- Lake of the Sky Outfitters (1023 Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe) is celebrating John Muir's birthday with a showing of "John Muir in the New World" on April 28 at 7pm for free. Seating is limited, so call 530.541.1027 to reserve a seat.

- The Genoa Cowboy Festival is April 28 to May 1.

Truckee man accused of possessing 10-inch knife

A 22-year-old Truckee man was arrested early Wednesday on a felony weapons charge.



Mitchell Hunt

Officers got a call early April 27 from someone who said there was a suspicious person in the doorway of a building in the Gateway area of Truckee.

Officers said they found Mitchell Hunt, 22, a large hunting knife concealed inside his jacket. An approximate 10-inch fixed blade hunting knife was booked as evidence.

Sgt. Bob Womack said finding weapons on suspects is not unusual. He said this is the second person in a week who had a knife.

“While both were cooperative, there is always the concern they may have mental health or other issues that present officer safety risks,” Womack said in a statement.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sandoval may sue if BLM won't pony up for mustang roundups

By Scott Sonner, AP

RENO – Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval is considering legal action to force the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to pony up some money to pay for roundups of wild horses in the state that have been put on hold because of federal budgetary constraints.

BLM State Director John Ruhs asked agency leaders in Washington, D.C., earlier this month to approve funding for a series of gathers in northeast Nevada's Elko County where ranchers are being asked to curtail livestock grazing due to lingering drought.

The federal agency currently plans no large-scale roundups in Nevada this year because of budget shortfalls driven largely by the cost of housing more than 45,000 mustangs now in government holding facilities across the country.

Sandoval says if BLM's parent Interior Department refuses to provide the necessary funding, he'll "pursue all legal options" to protect Nevada's ranchers and rural communities.

The Republican governor in a statement Tuesday said the BLM has "underfunded the wild horse program for years."

"For too long, Nevada has been forced to compensate for the federal government's inability to manage these growing populations without the appropriate resources," Sandoval said.

Nevada is home to nearly 28,000 wild horses – more than half of the 47,000 estimated in 10 western states, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming.

BLM argues the range can sustain less than half that many – about 12,000 in Nevada and 26,000 nationally.

Sandoval said BLM's latest estimates indicate there are more than 5,000 wild horses in a series of herd management areas in southern Elko County alone – three times more than BLM maintains is appropriate for that region.

Nevada Department of Agriculture Director Jim Barbee said ranchers could face anywhere from a 25 percent reduction to elimination of grazing altogether on federal lands in Elko County where they have permits to graze their cattle through the end of the year. He said those restrictions could have as much as a \$1.8 million negative impact on Elko County's economy.

Nevada Department of Wildlife Director Tony Wasley said many of the areas with the horses contain habitat critical to the

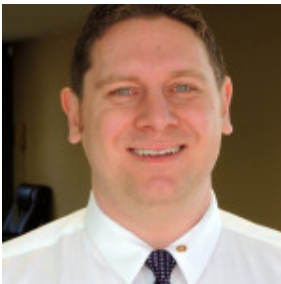
greater sage grouse at risk of being degraded.

Deniz Bolbol of the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign said private livestock grazing on public land far outweighs the negative impacts mustangs have on sage grouse habitat.

Money matters: Financial independence takes planning

By Nic Abelow

We are all faced with choices every day. Mostly those choices are related to what we should be doing, what we can purchase, or where are we going. Today it is more important than ever to control what you can control.



Nic Abelow

Here are my five keys to financial independence:

1. **Have a plan** – Everybody has a unique set of circumstances that requires a unique perspective and understanding. Know your numbers and understand your strengths and weaknesses.

“Plan for the future because that is where you are going to spend the rest of your life.” – Mark Twain

2. **Pay yourself first** – Savings are born from sacrifice. Target your income and savings to have purpose. Identify your values and make sure your money has your back. Remember spending has no upward limit.

“Don’t save what is left after spending: spend what is left after saving.” “Someone’s sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” – Warren Buffet

3. **Balance experience and things** – Learning to live on everything is nothing while learning to live on nothing is everything.

“Wealth is the ability to fully experience life.” – Henry David Thoreau

4. **Be prepared** – Build your short-term reserves as well as plan for your short-term goals. Remain focused on the objectives and keep at it. Discipline yourself or the world will do it for you.

“Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans.” – John Lennon

5. **Take action** – Financial success will not come by itself. Honesty is the best policy. It is hard to remain disciplined if you are not being honest with yourself. Fostering illusions of prosperity only further cripples our ability to make the necessary difficult decisions.

“When it is obvious that goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.” – Confucius

Take control today for tomorrow may never come. Set realistic expectations, open your mind to new possibilities, live in the here and now, but do not forget about the future.

Nic Abelow is a LPL financial advisor with Abelow, Pratt & Associates Financial Advisors and Wealth Management in Lake Tahoe.

Severe weather on West Slope headed to Tahoe

A severe thunderstorm warning has been issued for the West Slope of El Dorado County and part of Amador County through 4:15pm April 27.

The National Weather Service in Sacramento says the storm could produce quarter-size hail and damaging winds in excess of 60 mph. Funnel clouds may be possible with this storm.

Deadly lightning and heavy rain are also forecast.

“Intense thunderstorm lines can occasionally produce brief tornadoes and widespread significant wind damage,” the Weather Service said in a statement.

In the basin, expect rain, snow and snow pellet showers.

“Weather will remain relatively unsettled through the weekend as systems continue to drop into the Sierra and western Nevada. The storm moving into the area on Friday and Saturday will bring breezy and cold conditions. More thunderstorms and showers are possible with snow levels around 7,000-7,500 feet,” the Reno NWS said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

NDOT to start Incline Hwy. 28 path, upgrades

Improvements to Highway 28 near Incline Village are designed to have multiple benefits – get cyclists and pedestrians off the road, add parking, make it safer for motorists, and improve Lake Tahoe's clarity.

It all started as a bike path. Construction of the three-plus mile shared-use path from the south end of Incline Village to Sand Harbor State Park is part of the larger **Stateline-to-Stateline bike path** that will link the Nevada side of the lake. The Incline section starts this summer and will take two to three years to build.

An underpass will be constructed near the Flume Trail. Two parking areas will be put in near the Ponderosa Ranch and Tunnel Creek Café. Centerline rumble strips and emergency roadside turnouts will also be added to Highway 28 for safety reasons.

Water quality improvements include enhanced roadside drainage inlets, sediment filtration systems and erosion control measures.

More than 2½ million vehicles a year travel on Highway 28, mixing with as many as 2,000 pedestrian and bicyclists who park and recreate near the side of the road. This creates safety and accessibility concerns. Between 2006 and 2013, 107 crashes occurred in the area; accounting for approximately 25 percent of crashes Highway 28, according to the Nevada Department of Transportation.

About 1 million a year visit this section of Lake Tahoe.

The project will be paid for with federal, state and local dollars.

World would be out of water if everyone ate like Americans

By Nathan Halverson, Reveal

If the rest of the world ate like Americans, the planet would have run out of freshwater 15 years ago, according to the world's largest food company.

In private, Nestle executives told U.S. officials that the world is on a collision course with doom because Americans eat too much meat, and now, other countries are following suit, according to a secret U.S. report titled "Tour D'Horizon with Nestle: Forget the Global Financial Crisis, the World Is Running Out of Fresh Water."

Producing a pound of meat requires a tremendous amount of water because farmers use tons of crops such as corn and soy to feed each animal, which require tens of thousands of gallons of water to grow. It is far more efficient when people eat the corn or soy directly.

The planet is on a "potentially catastrophic" course as billions of people in countries such as India and China begin eating more beef, chicken and pork like their counterparts in Western countries, according to the 2009 report released by WikiLeaks and first reported by Reveal at the Center for Investigative Reporting in a cache of water-related classified documents. The Chinese now eat about half as much meat as

Americans, Australians and Europeans, a figure that continues to rapidly rise as more Chinese are lifted out of poverty and into the middle class.

And Nestle – which makes Gerber baby food, Nescafe, Hot Pockets, DiGiorno pizza, Lean Cuisine, Stouffer's, Nestea, Dreyer's and Haagen-Dazs ice cream– is deeply concerned.

Here are some of the takeaways, with key quotes from the secret report:

Global water shortages are just around the corner.

"Nestle thinks one-third of the world's population will be affected by fresh water scarcity by 2025, with the situation only becoming more dire thereafter and potentially catastrophic by 2050."

Major regions, including in the United States, are being drained of their underground aquifers.

"Problems will be severest in the Middle East, northern India, northern China, and the western United States."

Excessive meat-eating is driving water depletion.

"Nestle starts by pointing out that a calorie of meat requires 10 times as much water to produce as a calorie of food crops. As the world's growing middle classes eat more meat, the earth's water resources will be dangerously squeezed."

There's plenty of water to feed everyone a diet that's not so meat-centric.

"Nestle reckons that the Earth's maximum sustainable freshwater withdrawals are about 12,500 cubic kilometers per year. In 2008, global freshwater withdrawals reached 6,000 cubic kilometers, or almost half of the potentially available supply. This was sufficient to provide an average 2500 calories per day to the world's 6.7 billion people, with

little per capita meat consumption.”

The American diet is eating the world dry.

“The current U.S. diet provides about 3600 calories per day with substantial meat consumption. If the whole world were to move to this standard, global fresh water resources would be exhausted at a population level of 6 billion, which the world reached in the year 2000.”

This is an even bigger problem now that other countries are eating like America and the global population’s set to grow by 2 billion by 2050.

“There is not nearly enough fresh water available to provide this standard to a global population expected to exceed 9 billion by mid-century.”

So what’s Nestle’s prediction for the future? Think “Mad Max”

...

“It is clear that current developed country meat-based diets and patterns of water usage do not provide a blueprint for the planet’s future. Based on present trends, Nestle believes that the world will face a cereals shortfall of as much as 30 percent by 2025. (Nestle) stated it will take a combination of strategies to avert a crisis.”

Why is this the first time you’re hearing this from the world’s largest food company?

“Sensitive to its public image, Nestle has maintained a low profile in discussing solutions and tries not to preach ... the firm scrupulously avoids confrontation and polemics, preferring to influence its audience discretely by example.”

Squaw Olympic museum moves forward

The Squaw Valley Ski Museum Foundation board of directors is working toward establishing a 1960 Winter Olympics museum at the entrance of the resort.

It would showcase the colorful ski history of the Sierra. Peter Pfau, of Pfau Long Architecture in San Francisco, and Larry Young, of Ward Young Architects in Truckee, will lead the architectural design process. They will work with Gary Davis, whose local design and engineering firm JKGD Architecture & Engineering is taking the lead for the site application process.

While fundraising for the site application is under way, the board is also raising funds to hire an executive director to manage marketing, community outreach, fundraising and administrative tasks.

More info is **online**.