Truckee being proactive about climate change



Truckee is taking steps to get a handle on climate change. Photo/LTN file

By Linda Fine Conaboy

TRUCKEE —Truckee Town Manager Tony Lashbrook last week said it is imperative the town starts acting on climate change.

This comes two months after he said that because of its location Truckee is not required to do climate action planning, but that big monetary incentives make it desirable to do so.

Lashbrook and others representing invested entities presented a second workshop, this time to Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce members and guests, on Sept. 15. As this issue has heated up in the last two months with climate change being a factor in the drought and wildfires, so has the town's knowledge base.

The consensus was to get a handle on climate change now. Judging by questions and comments, this audience has gone beyond questioning the reality of climate change, and is

anxious to move forward.

People at the meeting not only endorse things like charging stations for electric cars (eight are planned), one man said he's ready to purchase a hydrogen-powered vehicle. It just so happens that one of the two Shell gas stations in town is in the process of installing a hydrogen fuel pump. Hydrogen emits only water from a vehicle's tailpipe, not carbon dioxide and other nasty elements.

This Nevada County town is a part of the state's "fishhook," Steve Frisch, president of Sierra Business Council explained. As such, it is not required to have formal plans to address a changing climate. These counties are more rural with not enough population to become part of a metropolitan planning organization, and, consequently, not able to apply for some of the grants from the pots of funding available through California's MPO program. Because Truckee is outside the Tahoe basin is cannot be part of the Tahoe MPO established through the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

However, according to Greg Jones, vice president of the Sierra Business Council, and Frisch, this pot, funded by federal cap and trade regulation, is large, more than $2 billion in 2013-15, and guaranteed to grow in coming years. And it's worth going after Truckee's share.

To do this, Truckee has developed a process to address climate action planning, focusing on those activities that can be achieved in a cost effective manner. This includes, among other things, a greenhouse gas inventory, and maybe even more important, public engagement, Jones said.

In fact, in his presentation, public engagement is mentioned many times, along with conducting a greenhouse gas inventory, establishing attainable greenhouse gas reduction targets, and creating a process to implement reductions and monitoring and track results.

He added that some of the benefits of a climate action plan include: saving taxpayers money, enhancing the economy, and job creation.

Since time was short and there were several speakers, each presented a pared-down version of what their organizations are doing in the pursuit of decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Steve Poncelet, public information officer and conservation manager at Truckee Donner Public Utilities District, said Truckee Donner PUD hasn't had a rate increase in years, while generating more than $800,000 annually as a cap and trade seller.

He also said TDPUD's water conservation programs are strong and that according to data, the use of charging stations is up. The question now is where to locate them. According to Poncelet, it costs $1 per hour to charge a vehicle.

Greg Sorenson, the president of Liberty Utilities, took a turn at the podium explaining his company has 49,000 customers locally who make use of Liberty's clean and renewable power generation, for the time being purchased from NV Energy. He added that 23 percent of the company's energy comes from renewable sources and that by 2016 that number will increase to 25 percent.

Liberty energy efficiency programs include: in-home energy audits, free CFL bulbs, refrigerator and freezer recycling and incentives for public schools to save energy. Additionally, the residential carbon credit program allows customers to generate their own power – net metering.

In 2016, pending approval, the company will offer a solar incentive program available to residential and commercial customers and will establish a **50-megawatt power generating plant** in Luning, Nev.

"People are generating their own energy," Sorenson said. "But

they’re not on the grid. The argument is, when a customer needs the grid, how do they pay?”

To his way of thinking, there is no good solution to this problem yet. “How much contribution from solar customers should there be?” he asked. “There are still lots of questions to be answered. For example, what happens on cloudy days? How do you plan for intermittent outages? It’s coming down to storage and distribution.”

The path to sustainable energy and corralling greenhouse emissions remains somewhat bumpy, but Truckee is taking the challenge.

“We’re committed to moving forward with our greenhouse gas inventory,” Lashbrook said. “Once we scope that, we’re looking for money, several hundred thousand dollars. Even though we don’t have a plan yet, there’s a lot of good, effective work being done.”

Opinion: Nutting and his shenanigans

By Larry Weitzman

Last column I promised more discussion regarding Ray Nutting’s claim against the county for “malicious prosecution, abuse of process and numerous other torts” as Nutting identified in his own claim against El Dorado County filed Dec. 5, 2014, receiving case number 14.00096.

All the documents are readily available via the Public Records Act or with a little research. Remember all these documents

are public as the county is a public entity and should operate with complete transparency, with very few exceptions. Unfortunately it doesn’t, but that’s another story and a basic problem with all government.



Larry Weitzman

Nutting’s claim goes back to a criminal grand jury indictment of several felonies based on filing false documents to obtain taxpayer funded Proposition 40 grant money, failure to disclose income, perjury and conflicts of interest in voting for over $600,000 of EDC funds to conservation districts whose boards that have authority over Prop. 40 Grants, along with some misdemeanors. Nutting was found not guilty on all but one of the felonies, as the jury was hung (7-5 for conviction) on that remaining felony, and he was convicted on six of seven of the misdemeanor charges. Because of the acquittals Nutting thinks he can sue for malicious prosecution.

The fact is anybody can sue anybody for anything, but to be successful in a lawsuit a litigant needs a good and viable claim (cause of action) and Nutting has none as the filing of charges by a criminal grand jury creates “probable cause” and bars the filing of a civil suit or claim as Nutting is doing here in the case of an acquittal. Supporting that absolute defense is the fact that in a motion to dismiss the case before the trial based on the facts that the criminal grand jury indictments were improperly obtained among other claims was also dismissed. A reading of the response to that motion gives one a real insight into this case.

That defense motion to dismiss the Nutting case was heard Sept. 20, 2013, and denied. That denial was upheld in Court of Appeal. The violation of Nutting rights during the criminal grand jury proceedings were thoroughly litigated and reviewed by several extremely competent judges and found to be meritless.

But that doesn't stop Nutting. In a single spaced, densely worded attachment to his claim, he alleges in paragraph 25 that he was invited by the criminal grand jury to submit exculpatory evidence. Nutting says he submitted 141 pages of what he claims was exculpatory evidence, and that the district attorney did not properly present such evidence to the criminal grand jury, therefore prejudicing the criminal grand jury.

Before I go any further, understand that this claim was filed on Dec. 5, 2014, and was denied by the county on Jan. 20, 2015. Nutting had six months to file a lawsuit, which according to the county has not been filed or served. But in another twist the denial of the claim was based on the fact that the claim itself wasn't filed within six months of its occurrence and therefore barred by the statute of limitations. So before any suit could be filed Nutting would first have to file a lawsuit to allow the filing of a claim. Nutting's claim is essentially null and void.

But the Nutting case and arguments says a lot about Nutting. Outside of this criminal case, Nutting claims to be a smart guy, a graduate of a California State University, a supervisor and thinker entrusted to make important decisions for the county, some of them with far reaching ramifications that require study and thought, a guy with lots of common sense.

At the trial, which was jointly prosecuted by the state Attorney General's Office and our local district attorney, Nutting portrayed himself as a no nothing, inept at paperwork and that he had no intention of trying to do something

dishonest, they were all unintentional, inadvertent mistakes. Like he was too dumb to file a false document. Nutting's defense attorney said the facts of the case were not in dispute and he as much as said so during his closing argument.

"Obviously a woodsman, he can make mistakes, he can bumble, " argued David Weiner. Nutting's attorney described him as "not a polished witness."

A conviction on a felony count would have certainly ended Nutting's career on the BOS. He would have been removed. But a lesser misdemeanor conviction that Nutting received left his tenure on the BOS up to the judge in his trial. Perhaps the judge's decision to remove Nutting from his board seat is an indication that the judge, the so to speak 13 juror in the room, thought Nutting wasn't as truthful as he claimed when he found Nutting unqualified to continue his term. Perhaps he thought Nutting's story of being a country bumble not believable. In a recent BOS meeting, many of Nutting's supporters continued unabated with false claims and blaming others for his political downfall. It was ugly "political theater." The bad acting never stops.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Coloradans do well at Ironman Lake Tahoe

Stephen O'Mara (M30-34) who lives in San Rafael, but hails from Ireland, was the first to cross the finish line winning the men's Ironman 70.3 Lake Tahoe age-group race in a time of 4:25:27. On the women's side, Erica Clevenger (F18-24), a student at the University of Arizona,was the top female age-

grouper in the Ironman 70.3 Lake Tahoe race with a time of 4:54:25.

For Ironman Lake Tahoe, Gregory Lindquist (M30-34) from Boulder, Colo., earned the win in the men's age-group race with a time of 9:39:23, while Sonja Wieck (F35-39) from Greenwood Village, Colo., took home the women's age-group race with a time of 10:28:55. Wieck was originally signed up to compete in the Ironman 70.3 race, but upon arriving in Lake Tahoe decided to push herself even further in the 140.6-mile Ironman Lake Tahoe race.

More than 2,000 total athletes competed Sunday in the Lake Tahoe triathlons. Ironman Lake Tahoe triathlon consisted of a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2-mile run. Competitors ranged in age from 19 to 70 and represented 32 countries and 45 states. The event offered 50 age-group qualifying slots to the 2016 Ironman World Championship, taking place on Oct. 8 in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

Full results may be found **online**.

Report: Aging voting machines could cause election meltdown

By Zachary Roth, MSNBC

America's voting machines are reaching the end of their lifespans, and many states appear unwilling to spend the money to replace them, a detailed new report warns. The impasse raises the threat of a catastrophic meltdown in next year's presidential election.

The report, released Tuesday by the Brennan Center for Justice, paints an alarming picture. Experts say today's machines have an expected lifespan of 10 to 20 years—closer to 10. But in most states, a majority of jurisdictions have at least some machines that were bought in 2006 or earlier, while in 11 states—including presidential battlegrounds like Nevada and New Hampshire—every jurisdiction uses such machines. Fourteen states will use some machines that were bought over 15 years ago.

Election officials are increasingly sounding the alarm. "We're just really concerned," one county election official in Missouri told the *Kansas City Star* recently. "Going into a presidential election year with old equipment — we don't want to be another Florida."

Read the whole story

EDC to offer series of caregiving classes

El Dorado County is putting on five weeks of aging and caregiving classes.

They are designed to provide instruction and support for caregivers who are or are planning to care for a family member or friend age 60 or older.

Classes include:

Oct. 12: Mealtime Matters: The Importance of Nutrition in the Elderly;

Oct. 19: Understanding the Stages of Alzheimer's Disease;

Oct. 26: Compassion Fatigue: Caring for the Caregiver;

Nov. 2: Music and Memory: Awaken the Minds of Dementia;

Nov. 9: Legal Rights/Responsibilities of Caregiving: How to Stay Out of Trouble.

The classes are at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel in South Lake Tahoe from 1-3pm.

All classes and materials are free, though donations are accepted.

For more information or to register, email tammy.bragg@edcgov.us.

Marlowe – Longtime South Shore doc retiring

By Angela Moniot

Longtime physician Paul Marlowe this month will say farewell to his patients and the urgent care practice where he has provided care for 32 years as he embarks on an adventure with his. wife Lorraine.

The uniquely quirky and endearing Marlowe is known throughout the community for providing exceptional care since 1983.

Growing up in Oakland, Marlowe spent the winters visiting Lake Tahoe and remembers skiing at Squaw Valley during its second season of operation. Skiing has always been a longtime passion of Marlowe’s. He was the team captain for his college ski team at UC Berkeley. While attending Cal, Marlowe fell in love with

photography and recalls taking photos of campus protests against the Vietnam War.

“I was busy dodging tear gas and taking photographs of history in the making. I would be on the riot side avoiding rocks and tear gas taking pictures with Kodachrome 64,” he said.



Paul Marlowe skiing at Kirkwood. Photo/ Steve Brooks

After receiving his undergraduate degree from UC Berkeley, Marlowe moved to Tahoe to coach skiing at Ski Incline (now Diamond Peak) and save money for medical school. While working at Ski Incline, he also met his wife-to-be, Lorraine, who he adoringly calls his “dolly and the love of my life.”

Marlowe went on to attended medical school at the University Autonoma de Guadalajara, Mexico.

“Lorraine and I headed to Mexico in our Mercury Montego station wagon filled with books and toys. We would spend our

free time collecting butterflies and roasting coffee. It was such a blast," he said.

The couple returned to the United States and married in Incline Village and celebrated their honeymoon during a 45-mile backpacking trip near Kirkwood. Following his medical residency in Kentucky, Marlowe returned to Lake Tahoe to begin practicing medicine.

"Being a doc is totally cool. I get to wear a rubber tie [as he pulls on his stethoscope], kill bugs – the bacterial type – and make people happy," Marlowe says. "It has been a great adventure and I have had the pleasure of working with the most remarkable team. Our office is what text books should be written about. I will miss our wonderful staff and patients."

Longtime medical partner and family practice physician, Steven Brooks remembers the first time he spoke with Marlowe about starting an urgent care clinic at Tahoe together.

"I was in Chicago in a hospital looking at films with the radiologist and I took the call from Paul regarding the job opportunity at Stateline Medical Center, which is now Barton Urgent Care, in LakeTahoe. We had a nice chat regarding the setup of the facility and then he told me, 'If you decide to move here be sure to bring your snorkel because there is so much powder you'll need it!' That statement closed the deal for me and we have been practicing together for over 30 years."

Brooks continues to say that he could not have asked for a better partner, colleague or friend.

"Paul is the kindest most caring person I've ever known, in addition to being an outstanding physician. His diagnostic skills are amazing and he takes the time with each patient to know exactly what is going on with them. I know I'll probably never meet anyone like him again, he is irreplaceable. He has clearly earned his retirement but I will miss seeing his

smiling face in our clinic. It's going to be sad but knowing that he and Lorraine will be enjoying their retirement together full time makes me happy," Brooks said.

When Marlowe isn't treating patients, he enjoys mountain biking, skiing, canoeing, photography and traveling. While you can spot him skiing the trees out at Kirkwood, he often spends winter days in the backcountry skiing favorites like Mt. Tallac and Elephants Back.

The Marlowes' next adventure will take them to their favorite places.

"We are going to hitch up our trailer and drive around America to see the big furries in the Tetons, hear the elk bugle during rut, and see Nebraska's Sandhill Cranes migration. Nature is so much fun," he said.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



· Kahle Community Center has a new yoga class starting on Saturdays at 8:15am. Each student needs to bring a mat to class. Class is open to participants 18 years of age and older. The cost is $5 per class. For more information, call 775.586.7271.

· Tahoe City Cross Country's junior development and competition level Nordic training program beings Sept. 23. For more info, email elyah@tahoexc.org.

· Sierra Business Council and Truckee mixer is Sept. 23 from 5-7pm at 10183 Truckee Airport Road in Truckee.

· The Genoa Candy Dance is Sept. 26-27. For more info, go **online**.

· The annual Oktoberfest at Camp Rich is Oct 3-4.

Nevada 3-day drought summit starts Monday

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Water, the lack of it and how the driest state in the nation can best stretch every last drop will be the focus of a three-day drought summit that convenes Monday in Carson City.

It's the penultimate event before a panel convened by Gov. Brian Sandoval meets Sept. 28 to narrow down the voluminous testimony gathered over the past several months and identify priorities and recommendations to be included in a report due Nov. 1.

Sandoval, a second-term Republican, established the Nevada Drought Forum in April. Speaking at the time on a dusty, dried-up lakebed in Washoe Valley just north of the capital city, the governor said the goal is to develop best practices for water use and conservation.

Read the whole story

South Lake Tahoe’s 50th parade

South Lake Tahoe celebrates its 50th anniversary with a parade through town on Sept. 19, 2015.

Truckee progressing on tunnel project

Truckee and Caltrans have finished the tunnel phase of the Highway 89 Undercrossing Improvement Project, nicknamed the Mousehole Project. The tunnel structure is now completely through the Union Pacific railroad embankment.

The concrete tunnel structure and retaining walls were built on the south side of the Union Pacific railroad using over 1,500 cubic yards of concrete. Then the jacking began to insert the tunnel structure into the hole dug into the railroad embankment by a road header machine, which removed over 900 cubic yards of soil and rock. On Monday,

While the tunnel is through the embankment, much work needs to be done before it is safe for the public to travel through. Over the next months, portal wall construction and finish work will continue on this $14 million project that will provide a safer route for pedestrians and bicyclists along the heavily traveled Highway 89 between Truckee and Tahoe City.

Full completion is expected next spring.