

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- Sierra State Parks Foundation presents an evening with John Grenbenkemper, Institute for Canine Forensics's historic human remains detection canine handler, on April 21 at the Donner Memorial State Park Visitor Center located at 12593 Donner Pass Road, Truckee. Doors open at 5pm, with the program beginning at 5:30pm. Cost is \$5. Parking is free.
 - North Tahoe Business Association's free concert series at Kings Beach State Recreation Area kicks off June 29 and takes place for nine consecutive Friday evenings through Aug. 31 (excluding Aug. 10).
 - Suzi Vinci is now Placer County's veterans service officer.
 - The Bicycle Advisory Committee of the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority will meet April 4 from 9-11am in the downstairs conference room at Lake Tahoe Airport.
 - The Douglas County Public Library is showing "Winnie the Pooh: Springtime with Roo" (rated G) on April 7 at 2pm in the Minden Library meeting room. The movie and popcorn are free.
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Man makes off with cash from SLT Wells Fargo



Police are looking for this suspect.

Police are looking for a man who robbed the South Lake Tahoe Wells Fargo Bank on Saturday.

The suspect entered the Emerald Bay Road on March 24 just before 1pm, presented a teller a note. He left with an undisclosed amount of cash.

No weapon was seen.

The suspect is described as a white or Hispanic, approximately 40, black goatee, wire frame glasses, wearing blue jeans, a tan beanie, dark green or brown zip-up jacket and black gloves.

The FBI is also involved in the investigation

Anyone with information should call the South Lake Tahoe Police Department at 530.542.6100, or to remain anonymous Lake Tahoe Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Elegant Evening tickets going up April 1

Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra's annual fundraising event, Elegant Evening, is April 21 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

Soul Experience featuring Trey Stone will provide the music as guests taste wine, beer and vodka.

The \$75 tickets include a full dinner. Purchase tickets **online** or email sitahoesierra@gmail.com.

The raffles and auctions help with the fundraising. For those wanting to bid early or who can't make it, it's the silent auction is **online**.

All money raised benefits education and service opportunities for women and youth on the South Shore.

Dave McClure – 1950-2018



Dave McClure

Lake Tahoe's ultimate maître d' has died. David Alan McClure

was special and one of a kind.

He died Feb. 24, 2018, of organ failure at Renown Medical Center in Reno. He was 67.

In a 2012 story about Mr. McClure in *Lake Tahoe News* he said, "My job is to change people's experiences. You never know who will be standing in front of you. People plan their whole vacations around who they can see and when they can see them."

Mr. McClure moved to the mountains in 1979 when the Park Tahoe Hotel opened, which then became Caesars Tahoe and eventually MontBleu, where he has worked for 36 years and had been maître d' of the showroom.

On Oct. 7, 1950, he became the first born child of Charles and Florence Engstrom McClure or Martinez, Calif. They moved to San Francisco where they lived in the student housing Quonset huts while his father got his teaching degree. Four years later they moved to San Anselmo where the family lived in an Asian pagoda style home until 2016.

As a child, Mr. McClure participated in many sports and Boy Scouts. He graduated from Sir Francis Drake High School in 1968. He then attended College of Marin, University of Hawaii and UC Davis, where he was a student and teacher of histology.

While in Davis, Mr. McClure had three consecutive days off, which enabled him to have his first ski pass at Squaw Valley in 1971. He immediately became a mountain man. He decided not to pursue a medical degree, and spent two years at City College of San Francisco where he earned a degree in hotel and restaurant management. While in San Francisco, he worked at the St. Francis Hotel on Union Square. Then he worked for a short time at the new MGM Grand in Reno.

He was a lifelong fan of the San Francisco Giants, 49ers and Warriors.

Mr. McClure had a huge circle of close friends and acquaintances who have great memories of skiing and hiking in Tahoe, and a crew of “salty dogs” that spent hours plying the waters of Tahoe on the sailboat he and his boat partners owned and enjoyed. Being his friend was a gift of love and enormous generosity never to be forgotten.

He is survived by his four younger siblings: Patricia, Glenn, Carol and Donald, and their children, as well as his cousins in the North Bay, Judy, Kenny, Clayton, Linda, Robert and Joanne; as well as his legion of friends.

A burial service will be on April 5 at 11am at Valley Memorial Park, 650 Bugeia Lane, Novato.

SLT residents try to find answers to housing issues

By Kathryn Reed

Solutions to South Lake Tahoe’s housing woes were in short supply during a talk about the issue on Wednesday.

Mayor Wendy David’s monthly gathering was focused on housing last week, with planning staff (Kevin Fabino and John Hitchcock) there to provide the bulk of the information.

“There are a lot of things we could potentially do, but we need to always remember what TRPA will allow,” Fabino told the group gathered at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center on March 21. What he didn’t share is what the city would/could do if the bi-state regulatory agency weren’t in the picture.

One of the reasons the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency was

created in the 1960s was to stop local jurisdictions from unregulated growth, especially after the most sensitive marsh in the basin was paved over to create the Tahoe Keys – in South Lake Tahoe.

Fabino and David pointed to the successes of turning some of the rundown hotels into more livable residential units.

“It’s a good short-term solution. I’m not sure it’s a long-term answer,” Fabino said.

To build affordable housing as it’s defined by the state where income needs to be verified and units are deed restricted is actually more expensive to build than market rate housing because of all the state requirements.

Land is a premium in the basin. Then there are the costs to do business. Of the \$60,000 in development fees the city collects, only \$6,300 of that is the actual building permit fee. The rest is money that goes to other entities like the TRPA, sewer-water district, schools and air quality mitigation.

Heidi Hill Drum, who runs the Tahoe Prosperity Center, said that is why it would be better to look at assessing fees based on the square footage of a structure instead of a flat fee.

South Tahoe Public Utility District has reduced its sewer connection fee. That board is now contemplating allowing sewer hookups to be transferred, which would reduce the cost of construction.

Others at the talk advocated for businesses to provide housing for workers.

A representative from Heavenly Mountain Resort said of the approximately 1,500 winter employees the ski resort has there are beds for 72. This housing is at the bottom of Keller Road.

A former city worker suggested creating a higher transient

occupancy tax for vacation home rentals and then using that money to create work force/affordable housing.

Someone else suggested dorm-style housing for workers. This is done at the CCC building in Meyers.

Opinion: Let Calif.'s kids make educational budgets

By Joe Mathews

California education finances are an unholy mess—with incomprehensible budget formulas, equity funding that doesn't produce equity, and cuts to schools even during the current economic expansion. And our state's so-called education leaders refuse to fix the system.

We should let the kids fix it instead.



Joe Mathews

This isn't a modest proposal: I'm as serious as a month's detention. To fashion something workable from California's broken education-funding system, we should give budget powers to the students themselves.

Sounds radical, but it's not a new idea. Students already make

financial decisions in schools in San Jose, Sacramento, Phoenix and Chicago— often about school-site capital spending—as part of a popular process called participatory budgeting. In New York, Mayor Bill De Blasio recently said he'd give students in all his city's public high schools these new spending powers.

Typically, students in these processes spend less than \$100,000 (though Paris, France, allows its students to allocate \$10 million). But given California's problems, we should expand participatory budgeting for bigger budgets at the district and statewide level.

You might think that decisions about the \$80 billion that California spends annually on schools should be made exclusively by adults.

Except that we've already let the adults do it, and it would be impossible for the kids to do any worse. Indeed, the grownups—the governor, legislators, teachers' unions—supposedly in charge of school funding don't really understand how the funding system works. It's that complicated.

The logical place for the kids to start making decisions involves the latest faulty adult attempt to fix education funding: 2013's Local Control Funding Formula, or LCFF.

LCFF was supposed to bring democracy, equity, and simplification to school funding. It replaced existing spending categories with a new formula to direct more money to poorer school districts. This LCFF system also required local school districts to work with teachers, parents, and students to set goals and make plans—called Local Control and Accountability Plans, or LCAPs—for spending the money. Governor Jerry Brown has touted this as a democratic advance.

But, in practice, it's not at all democratic. The Local Control and Accountability Plans aren't local, don't provide

control or accountability, and aren't even plans. Instead of setting their own goals, communities must answer complicated questions posed by the state, creating bureaucratic documents that are often hundreds of pages long. Asking someone to read one should be prohibited under the Geneva Convention.

Without real plans or accountability, LCFF spending is becoming a multi-billion-dollar black hole. No one really knows whether the dollars are used for equity purposes, like closing the achievement gaps between disadvantaged students and other students.

This uncertainty appears to be just fine with state officials: Jerry Brown has said no one should expect achievement gaps with disadvantaged students to be closed: "The gap has been pretty persistent," the governor said, "so I don't want to set up what hasn't been done ever as the test of whether the LCFF is a success or failure."

In other words, the grownups have surrendered. We should turn to students to fill the void in leadership. And the most proven and democratic method would be participatory budgeting.

In recent years, schools have begun using participatory budgeting. In these processes, students, along with parents and teachers, study a question in committees, and make plans that are put up to a public vote of the school community. In California, successful participatory budgeting processes have been run at Sacramento's Met High School and in San Jose's East Side Union High School District, where students voted to bring back a driver's education program targeted for budget cuts.

Scaling such processes up in order to budget LCFF money would be challenging, but doable. Students in each school district could elect their fellow students to serve on committees that would decide how best to spend the money. The plans made by those student committees then would go back to the student

voters for approval.

This would be more than just a real civics class for California kids. It would provide a dose of democracy—and authentic local control—for an ineffective system dominated by a few adult interests in Sacramento. Students also could force simplification of the complicated funding system, insisting on plain language and accounting that doesn't disguise pension costs.

Student control of school budgets shouldn't stop at LCFF. I'd love to see today's students replace the misbegotten constitutional formula at the heart of California school funding—Proposition 98. Voters approved that ballot initiative 30 years ago, more than a decade before today's public school students were born.

Proposition 98's funding guarantee has kept school funding below the national average for a generation. Surely California's students can design something better.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

'Rewilding' missing carnivores may help restore landscapes

By Joanna Klein, New York Times

If you're lucky, you can spot a gray wolf in Yellowstone

National Park. But a century ago, you'd have been hard pressed to find any there. Poisonings and unregulated hunting obliterated nearly all of these majestic canines from Canada to Mexico, their original home range.

Then the rewilding began.

Since their reintroduction to Yellowstone and Idaho in the 1990s, gray wolves have done so well that they're reclaiming other parts of the northern Rockies.

In the places where they returned, wolves tidied up explosive deer and elk populations, which had eaten valleys barren. That helped bring back trees and shrubs. Birds and beavers, as well as the animals that live in dams, also returned. The wolves ate coyotes, freeing up their prey for others. Bears and raptors came back for carrion. With more trees controlling erosion, the flows of some rivers were less chaotic, forming pools that became new habitats.

Read the whole story

Long-public Nevada arrest database made secret

By Alexander Cohen, Las Vegas Review-Journal

A database of Nevada arrest records that was open to public inspection for decades has been made secret by a new state law.

The Nevada Department of Public Safety, which collects the information from law enforcement agencies across the state, won approval of the new law after the Las Vegas Review-Journal

requested arrest and conviction records last year.

In May, DPS submitted an amendment to Assembly Bill 76, a measure to update rules for Nevada's main repository of criminal history information such as arrests and convictions. The amendment prohibited releasing to the media any personal identifying information, such as names and dates of birth. The change, which took effect two months ago, allows the disclosure of identifying information only if media requesters ask for the records of a specific person.

Read the whole story

Calif. housing bill has people freaking out

By Matt Levin, CalMatters

Memes of a mild-mannered California legislator photoshopped as a Star Trek villain. A San Francisco supervisor suggesting the city should sue the state, to "thunderous applause." Wealthy Marin County homeowners and South Los Angeles tenants' rights groups working as political bedfellows.

All inspired by a wonky state housing bill yet to receive a single vote—and faces tough odds of passing the Legislature.

SB827, sponsored by state Sen. Scott Wiener, a Democrat from San Francisco, tries to force cities to build more dense housing around public transit hubs. The bill has received a remarkable level of media attention both within California and nationally, providing fodder for think pieces from *Slate*, *Vox*, *Boston Globe*, *Bloomberg* and *New York Times*—which called it a

“bold, divisive plan to wean Californians from cars.”

That attention has only amplified a loud and acrimonious debate over how the bill would transform California cities. Proponents see the bill as a radical and necessary step for the state to solve its endemic housing shortage and meet its ambitious climate change goals. Opponents see it as a blunt overreach of state power that would destroy the character of local communities while displacing long-established residents so developers could build more luxury condo towers for rich people.

Here are four things you should know about California’s most controversial housing bill in decades:

This isn’t hype. If it becomes law, the bill could really revolutionize California cities.

As currently written, SB 827 would essentially exempt all new housing built within half a mile of a train stop or quarter mile of a frequent bus stop from most local zoning rules. So, if a city had zoned an area for single-family homes, developers could invoke the bill to build multifamily apartment buildings between four and eight stories high. It would also free those projects from parking requirements and other zoning rules frequently abused by cities to impede new development.

How much area in major California cities would fall under the bill? That’s what makes this so radical. Preliminary analysis by the San Francisco Planning Department shows that basically all—yes, all—of San Francisco and huge swaths of Los Angeles would lose their local zoning regulations. Ninety percent of San Francisco’s residential parcels would have a higher height limit for new development under the bill.

A more rigorous analysis of just how much developers would take advantage of the bill, and how it would apply to smaller California cities, has not yet been conducted. But the

potential is huge.

For decades, urbanists across the state have have longed for the type of density SB827 would bring. Despite major push back from some quarters of his home city that San Francisco would become unrecognizable should the bill become law, Wiener has stressed that such density is good for cities like San Francisco, and the most effective way to combat the region's astronomical housing prices.

Many environmentalists love this bill

Proponents of SB827 say it has two primary goals: 1) to increase the supply of housing and thereby lower housing prices, and 2) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Urban planning academics and climate change activists argue the state can only meet its climate change goals—a 40 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by the year 2030—if it succeeds in getting people out of their cars and onto public transportation closer to where they work. Alternative energy sources and cleaner-burning power plants can only go so far: The leading cause of emissions nationally is the tailpipe. Building tons of housing in major job centers close to good transit seems like a sensible and necessary solution, they argue.

But at least one prominent environmental group with a tradition of opposing new development has balked at the measure. Angering many climate change activists, California's Sierra Club has argued the bill would only create more local hostility to future transportation projects and would displace low-income residents.

Anti-gentrification groups argue that communities whose residents have lower incomes are much more likely to ride a bus or take a subway to work than commuters who earn more money. If lower-income residents are exiled to the suburbs as

a consequence of the bill, its success at cutting carbon emissions will be muted at best.

Anti-gentrification and tenants' rights groups not so much

Advocates for lower-income renters and urban communities of color have greeted SB827 with a mixture of skepticism and hostility. A group of prominent Los Angeles anti-gentrification and civil rights groups signed onto a letter opposing the bill last month on the grounds that it lacked sufficient protections for renters whose apartments could be demolished to make way for newer, bigger, market-rate projects. They also expressed the broader fear that "opening the floodgates" around transit corridors would mean rents around shiny new developments would rise out of reach of current residents.

Wiener has addressed some of those concerns by amending the bill to include fairly strict renter protections. Developers who wish to demolish a renter-occupied unit would have to pay for the moving and living expenses of tenants for more than three years, and renters would have the right to move back into the new development at their old rent.

But the changes have yet to attract broad support from major housing equity groups, who fear the larger gentrification pressures possibly unleashed from the bill. It also didn't help that backers of SB827 waited until after the bill's announcement to try to court those groups' endorsement.

The bill faces a very tough road in the Legislature—a road that goes through Marin County

Bills that override local zoning control are rarely popular in the California Legislature. Homeowners in many regions of the state are, by and large, not thrilled with the idea of new apartment complexes going up next door over their objections. Homeowners are also more likely to vote than renters—a fact state legislators are acutely aware of.

Cities and counties are stealth power players in Sacramento, and are also not fans of having their zoning power stripped away. Up and down the state, mayors, city council members and county supervisors have come out against the bill, including Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

Last year, lawmakers passed a handful of laws that encroached on the traditional zoning power of cities. But that housing package took a herculean effort to enact after years of failure, and importantly included new funding sources for subsidized housing, as well as tenants' protections that attracted support from a wide coalition of housing groups. And the zoning process changes brought by those laws pale in comparison to what SB 827 could do.

Nowhere has opposition to state interference in local planning decisions been as fierce as in Marin County, an affluent northern suburb in the Bay Area. If the bill is to receive a full vote of the Legislature, it will first have to clear a committee controlled by Sen. Mike McGuire, a Democrat who represents Marin. McGuire could prevent the bill from moving past his desk and receiving a vote.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- On March 30 at 11am there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for El Dorado County's state-of-the-art public safety facility. The ceremony will be at 200 Industrial Drive in Placerville, and will last approximately 30 minutes.

- Morgan Heritage & Fiji, plus Maoli & Nomad and Ambassador DJs will be at Blu Nightclub at MontBleu in Stateline on April 21. Doors open at 9pm. Must be 21 or older. Tickets are \$25.

- Rapper, actor and producer Pitbull will be at Harveys on July 13 at 8pm.
- Special Olympics Northern California and Nevada raised approximately \$185,000 at the polar plunge this month in Zephyr Cove.
- Plans to change the historic landscape of Placerville around the Druid Monument, now called the Clay Street Hangtown Creek Bridge Replacement Project, will be the focus of a Placerville open house set for 6pm April 4 at Town Hall, 549 Main St. in Placerville.