

Women recount life in the military



Staff Sgt. Bethany Brown is administered the Army oath Nov. 13 by Capt. David Robinson. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

For those who say the military is no place for a woman, they have not met Bethany Brown, Poli Policarpio, Sheryll Valencia or Christina Frolich.

These women on Nov. 13 shared with Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra some of their experiences.

Brown is so dedicated that on Thursday she retook the Army oath, which is done each time a soldier signs up for another stint. Right now she is stationed in Carson City.

“She is the best non-commissioned officer I have in my company,” Capt. David Robinson said.

Brown, who like the other women honored on this Veterans Day week, has been deployed multiple times. This time around she will be a recruiter for the Army.

She spoke about how when she was in Afghanistan a bomb went off about 10 feet from her. Most of the impact was to her

midsection and hips.

"We walked away. That was huge because a lot didn't walk away," Brown said.

But the impact of war is often brought home.

"Twenty-two veterans commit suicide every day," Brown said. "No veteran should take their life because they have already given so much."

She spoke of a young woman at Fort Bragg who last weekend took her life. She was one of the best soldiers and no one saw it coming.

For Valencia, she got choked up when she spoke of the reasons to serve – of how it meant she was ultimately helping to protect her family and friends, as well as everyone else in the United States. In Iraq she worked 16 to 20 hour days. On occasion there would be a half or full day off.

Frolich joined when she was 20. Via a computer she was piloting unmanned aerial vehicles that were the size of a car. In Afghanistan they didn't work well because of the mountains. Several of the half million dollar UAVs crashed.

Then they were used in Iraq. They were flying so slow they were shot out of the air, she said.

On her third deployment to South Korea she was injured while jumping out of a C130 with the Airborne. They were 800 feet above ground – which is low – and she ran into someone in the air.

"A female officer found me. I didn't know where I was," Frolich said. It's rare for officers to have anything to do with enlistees. "There's a lot of amazing women in the military. We take care of each other."

Voters approve raise for Placer County supes

By Richard Chang, Sacramento Bee

Voters in fiscally conservative Placer County last week overwhelmingly approved an initiative that will more than double county supervisor salaries, a reversal of two previous elections in which they handily rejected modest raises.

While supporters praised the result as a fair compensation boost, opponents said voters mistakenly believed they were installing another pay restriction.

"It used words like 'limit' and 'restrict,'" said Tom Hudson, a Roseville activist and executive director of the California Taxpayer Protection Committee. "Based on that, a person who wasn't familiar with the county charter would get the impression this was putting limits. They wouldn't have realized this was a 139 percent increase."

Supervisor pay had been capped at \$30,000 annually after voters approved a 1992 initiative sponsored by a local taxpayers group. Placer County voters had twice turned down proposals to increase that amount, first in 1998 for \$35,000 annually and again in 2008 for \$48,000 a year. Nearly 75 percent of voters rejected the 2008 proposal, according to the Placer County Office of Elections.

But last week, Measure B won with more than 62 percent of the vote.

Read the whole story

Douglas County businesses honored

Two Douglas County businesses took home top honors from the Northern Nevada Development Authority.

The Pioneer awards recognize businesses in the five-county region. Each county chose a business of the year. Douglas County's business of the year award went to Bently Enterprises.

Bently was selected based on alignment with the county's five guiding economic vitality principles:

- Improves business climate and enhances education and workforce
- Is unique and marketable
- Helps maintain the exceptional quality of life
- Preserves the natural environment and infrastructure
- Enhances education and workforce.

Zephyr Photonics won the Wagon Wheel award.

Tahoe poker players in top 10 at Harveys

Barry Kay of Incline Village placed second at a the World Series of Poker Circuit at Harveys in Stateline.

He won \$77,492.

There were 380 players competing for a prize pool of \$570,000.

Winning the four-day tournament was Jesse Wilke of Kenmore, Wash. He took home \$125,401, the gold championship ring, and will have a seat at the season-ending National Championship.

Robert Donahue of Zephyr Cove placed ninth, winning \$11,856.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Gun background checks headed to Nev. ballot

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS – Proponents of gun owner background checks say they're submitting almost 250,000 signatures to Clark County election officials for a Nevada ballot measure to strengthen screening and reporting of weapon purchases.

Nevadans for Background Checks spokeswoman Kayla Keller says the organization will hand in on Wednesday well more than twice the approximately 102,000 signatures needed to qualify the initiative for the 2016 statewide ballot.

The group points to passage last week in Washington State of a measure making that state the seventh, plus the District of Columbia, to require universal background checks for all sales and transfers of firearms.

Nevada currently requires criminal and mental health background checks for gun buyers making purchases from

licensed dealers, but not for purchases from private sellers or exhibitors at gun shows.

Unit of Caesars looking at bankruptcy

By Laura J. Keller, Bloomberg

Caesars Entertainment Corp. reached an agreement with key senior creditors on the outline of a debt restructuring plan that includes a prearranged bankruptcy for its largest unit as soon as January, according to two people with knowledge of the negotiations.

Under the plan being negotiated by first-lien bondholders including Paul Singer's Elliott Management Corp. and Pacific Investment Management Co., the casino company would put its Caesars Entertainment Operating Co. unit into Chapter 11 proceedings as soon as Jan. 14, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the discussions are private.

The proposal, which is the product of eight weeks of talks between the casino operator and its creditors, would help tame a \$22.9 billion debt burden taken on six years ago in one of the biggest leveraged buyouts ever. The company needs the support of the creditor group in order to impose a reorganization that may offer little recovery for lower-ranking creditors.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys at Stateline.

Read the whole story

Possible chemical spill in Truckee

Truckee police and fire units are at Joerger Drive for a possible chemical spill.

They are assessing the involved chemicals, but no evacuations have been ordered.

The road is expected to be closed until 11am Thursday.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Adrenaline junkies and spicy food may be related

By AC Shilton, Outside

A friendly reminder for all of our spice-loving readers: There is no shame in dousing your Thanksgiving feast in Sriracha. Tell your offended mother that science has linked your love of spicy condiments to your adrenaline-seeking personality.

Biologically speaking, we should all hate spicy food. Burning—and the pain that comes with it—is bad, right? “If

your dog gets a little something spicy, it has a very clear negative reaction to the burning,” says Dr. Nadia Byrnes, who conducted a study on the link between personality type and spicy food. “So if we think about it from purely a biological standpoint, the more that something burns, the less you should like it.”

But that’s clearly not the case. In 2012, market research company IBISWorld included hot sauce in its list of top 10 fastest growing industries. Huy Fong Foods, makers of our beloved “Rooster Sauce,” made \$85 million in revenue in 2013.

Read the whole story

Nevadans seek to legalize marijuana

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS – Backers of a drive to legalize and tax marijuana in Nevada say they’re turning in almost 200,000 signatures supporting their measure.

Democratic state Sen. Richard “Tick” Segerblom and Joe Brezny of the Nevada Cannabis Industry Association say they’ll turn in petitions Wednesday morning at the Clark County Elections Department in North Las Vegas.

Tuesday was the deadline for collecting almost 102,000 signatures to qualify a ballot measure.

The marijuana initiative would go beyond legalizing medical use of pot.

It would require the 2015 state Legislature to consider legalizing marijuana altogether, or automatically put the question on the November 2016 ballot if state lawmakers fail to act.

Supporters say the Nevada measure would put Nevada with Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Alaska and the District of Columbia in lifting prohibitions on marijuana.

Public offers ideas for loop road



Mike McKeen wants more to be done at the state line area than officials have proposed. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Whether people want a loop road around the Stateline casinos or not isn't the question. The questions are what do they want it to look like and where should the roads go?

This isn't to say realigning Highway 50 on the South Shore is a done deal. It isn't by a long shot. Environmental documents still need to be finalized, then reviewed, revised and a final version released. Then there is the conundrum of financing what will be a multimillion-dollar project.

Wednesday night was a chance for people to reacquaint themselves with the project that is being spearheaded by the Tahoe Transportation District. What the agency was looking for is public comment that can be incorporated into the environmental documents as the four alternatives, plus do nothing are studied.

Mike McKeen, who owns the property where Naked Fish and Powder House are located, has taken that invite to offer suggestions a step further than most. He hired an architect to draw up plans for how the area could look.

This has a lot to do with some of the proposals calling for his buildings to be wiped out as well as the Bottle Shop, which is owned by Kathay Lovell.

"Businesses would thrive more with a whole new gateway," McKeen told *Lake Tahoe News*.

He had copies of his plan available for anyone who wanted them.

His ideas somewhat complement what has become known as the triangle plan. It has the loop road starting near the vacant lots along Highway 50 before Pioneer Trail.

But what is different is McKeen proposes abandoning the current highway from that point to essentially today's

intersection of 50 and Pioneer Trail. The highway, which becomes the loop road behind Harrah's and MontBleu, continues as proposed. Pioneer Trail, though, through this stretch becomes more of a pedestrian arcade.

McKeen envisions tearing down his buildings and replacing them with something more contemporary that would hold up over time.

The Bottle Shop is also proposed for demolition and rebuild under his plan.

Lovell told *Lake Tahoe News*, "I do like (Mike's) thought process on this. I like the idea of a gateway. I really like the whole idea of the traffic flow there."

And she likes the idea of keeping businesses and making the area more attractive. What she hasn't seen are the numbers to know how everything pencils out.

Where there are old hotels McKeen proposes building affordable housing so the people who are displaced could still live in the neighborhood. He also wants a community center and parking to go on the other side of Pioneer Trail from his buildings.

Carl Hasty, executive director of TTD, said this kind of public input is exactly what the agency is looking for.

New to the official drawings is a proposed cycle track that is similar to one in Sparks. It calls for narrowing the vehicle lane to accommodate a bike lane. This segment would then possibly eventually tie into the Stateline-to-Stateline trail, Linear Park and the Greenway.

Curtis Fong, who puts on two major cycling events on the South Shore, told *Lake Tahoe News* the proposed changes to 50 would not affect his events. He also likes anything that makes roads more bike friendly. What he worries about is the proposed roundabout at Lake Parkway.

"I'm always concerned as a cyclist about the traffic

circulars, especially a double lane,” Fong told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Brenda Knox of Meyers embraces the roundabout, saying they make traffic flow better and can be visually appealing.

Some people said they were there to take all the ideas in and hadn’t made a decision on the loop road, while others said it is imperative the area make progressive changes that will bring a visual and economic vitality to the area.

More than 70 people attended the Nov. 12 open house at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel.

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Notes:

- More about the proposals may be found online. This website also allows people to make comments.
- The environmental documents are expected to be released in the first quarter of 2015.
- Advocates are promoting the loop road so the casino corridor can be more pedestrian-bike friendly, with the bulk of traffic going to the east around the casino corridor.