

Douglas residents asked to manage county money

An online tool is allowing Douglas County residents to help the county manage its checkbook.

Now through Dec. 19 people will be given the opportunity to emphasize which services and programs are most important to them by dividing the funds just as they would for their own personal household budget. The six categories are:

- Safe community
 - Economic vitality
 - Well maintained infrastructure
 - Financial stability
 - Preservation of natural environment, resources and cultural heritage
 - Managed growth and development.
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North Shore-Truckee promoting local shopping

Holiday shoppers who infiltrate North Tahoe and Truckee businesses between Black Friday and Christmas Eve will be entered to win a seven-night vacation accommodation package or cash.

Shoppers can enter the Show Your Love – Shop Local promotion by picking up a contest card at participating retailers in Tahoe City, West Shore, Kings Beach, Northstar, Squaw Valley, Incline Village and Truckee and then getting the card stamped

by those retailers after completing a purchase of at least \$25. Shoppers with 12 stamps will be entered into a drawing for the seven-night accommodation package in Greece, Costa Rica, Sedona or Cancun. Shoppers with four stamps will be entered into a drawing for a \$300 cash prize.

The contest was designed to support local businesses, reduce the carbon footprint of locals traveling outside of their community to shop, and protect the region's local character. The contest begins Nov. 28 and runs through Dec. 24. Contestants have until Jan. 5 to submit their cards for entry into the drawing. The winners will be chosen Jan. 15.

For a full list of participating retailers, full contest rules and contest submission guidelines, go online.

Gaines not fazed by insurance commissioner loss; plenty to do as Tahoe's state senator

By Kathryn Reed

Even though Ted Gaines will not be California's next insurance commissioner, he is happy with many of the outcomes from the Nov. 4 election – namely propositions 45 and 1.

Gaines' loss in the statewide race means he continues on as Lake Tahoe's state senator. District 1 encompasses a large swath of the northeast part of the state. His term is up in two years. He's not sure if he will run for another four-year stint in the Senate or go for a statewide office in 2018. He also knows his wife, Beth, who is in the Assembly, would one

day like his Senate seat.

Running for insurance commissioner made sense because that is the business he came from before getting elected to the Assembly in 2006. His daughter and son-in-law now run the day-to-day operations of the business. But Gaines was running against the incumbent – Dave Jones. Jones won with 56.4 percent of the vote compared to Gaines' 43.6 percent.

Controller or treasurer are also on Gaines' radar because he has always been interested in financial issues.



State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Rocklin, is contemplating his options. Photo/LTN file

For now, though, he will be focusing on issues relevant to his district and the state as a whole.

He brought Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de León, D-Los Angeles, to Tahoe about a month ago to explain the environmental and economic issues affecting the basin.

"We went out on the lake and looked at milfoil, found out what

is happening with Asian clams and talked about how those issues need to be addressed,” Gaines told *Lake Tahoe News*.

While he doesn’t have any specific pieces of legislation he plans to introduce, he is looking at how to create more jobs in the state that pay a decent wage.

“I would like to see us provide some relief of burden for small business owners so they can hire people,” Gaines said. “Studies show 80 percent of job creation comes from small businesses. We need to look at regulatory reforms; specifically how they impact business.”

He is concerned with county jails being overcrowded and inmates being released prematurely. Redding, which is in his district, is encountering what Gaines calls a “dramatic” increase in crime committed from criminals who are getting an early release. Gaines would like to create a revenue stream so sheriffs have the option to transfer people to facilities in or out of state that have room for the inmates.

Proposition 45 would have given the state insurance commissioner veto power when it came to rate increases for individual and small-business health insurance policies. Gaines was against this measure, with much of his campaign wrapped around it.

The \$7.5 billion water bond was another issue Gaines supported.

“It will take a lot of time to get water storage built, but at least we have the means of funding it. It will help us in the long run,” Gaines said.

As a skier who has a second home in Truckee, Gaines has seen what the natural snowpack has been like the last three winters.

“I’m hoping for an awesome season that dumps lots of fresh

powder,” Gaines said. “Looking at the ‘Farmers Almanac’ it says normal precipitation for the Pacific. I hope that is in the form of snow in the Sierra Nevada.

“So much of the economy is driven by that. I pray the snow falls at the right time and we can break through the drought.”

Felon arrested by CHP in S. Tahoe

A Nevada County woman was arrested Nov. 4 on several felony charges.

The incident started at 2:55am Tuesday when two California Highway Patrol officers spotted a vehicle on Lake Tahoe Boulevard near Third Street in South Lake Tahoe that matched the description of a stolen vehicle from earlier in the shift.

Officers made a U-turn to overtake the vehicle, but the driver made an abrupt turn onto southbound Third Street. Officers said she made several turns in an attempt to evade them. Then the suspect stopped suddenly in the Matterhorn Hotel parking lot.

The driver, Sarah Elizabeth Downey, was on felony probation out of Nevada County. Officers searched the vehicle and said they found a loaded handgun and drug paraphernalia in the passenger compartment. She was arrested and booked into the local jail.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sass overtakes Swanson in SLT council race

With several hundred votes still to be counted, the South Lake Tahoe City Council race is a bit of a see-saw.

Newcomer Austin Sass has taken over incumbent Angela Swanson in the latest update.

Three seats are up.

Here are the current numbers:

Wendy David – 1,624

Tom Davis – 1,365

Austin Sass – 1,237

Angela Swanson – 1,215

Brooke Laine – 1,185

Matt Palacio – 1,132

Bruce Grego – 1,070.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Letter: Meyers needs democratic process

To the community,

The following issues and concerns were recently presented to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors regarding the Meyers Area Plan process, and they are reframed here for your readers.

I would like to say a few words to the Board of Supervisors members about the lack of process concerning the Meyers Area Plan. The facts are that the Meyers community was not always given published notice for Meyers Community Advisory Council (MCAC) meetings that involved the planning for Meyers community, and the MCAC took no notes and have no minutes from their meetings. This shows distrust for the process that you are now going to be voting on.

The idea that government and their advisory groups did not follow California's open meeting laws (Brown Act) in the set-up of the MCAC clouds the validity of any proposed Meyers plan that the MCAC and all the agencies have agreed. The fact that the public was not formally involved leads people to believe that the interest of the community is not being listened too. Questions have been asked if outside special interest are more important than the desire of the Meyers community. The people of Meyers want to be informed and to be involved with the planning process.

In the meetings that were held by the El Dorado County and TRPA last spring, the community gathered and voted on heights of 35 feet, removal of the Catalyst Program (renamed Incentive Program), and less of an increase in density than the TRPA's 2012 Regional Plan update placed on Meyers. Now it appears the agency personnel have gone back on their word. The question is

who do you represent, the people that vote you into office or corporations and special interests that stand to make millions off the decision you make?

What has happened to the local democratic process? We have on many occasions asked for an unbiased survey so that the entire community can be informed and involved. We want the agencies to have a process with clarity, and without double speak or inundation by acronyms. Do you all know what RPU, ERUs, CFA, CUP, and so many more mean? This is planner speak and is not intended for the public to try to decipher. We want clear language when it comes to policies that impact our lives.

Most of the people that I talk to enjoy the rural life that Meyers offers and want to see appropriate growth.

Transparency goes without saying. Government should pride itself on its ability to be open and honest with the public. After two years of poor public process, there is a cloud of distrust with government and the agencies that governs us about the future of the Meyers community.

In short I would like to see you:

1. Scrap the Meyers Draft Plan until a Brown Act board has been selected that represents the community, then begin a transparent public process to update our community plan.
2. Wait for our new district supervisor to take office.
3. Have a validated survey on the issues that divide us, taken from the Meyers area community using an unbiased and honest survey.

Joe Cardinale, Meyers

Turkey Trot in South Lake Tahoe

The Turkey Trot Fun Run will be Nov. 22 at 10am.

Runners-walkers will start at Bijou Community Park in South Lake Tahoe. Participants are encouraged to dress in Thanksgiving attire. Prizes will be given for best costume and most ridiculous costume.

There is a 5K and a kids fun run.

For more information and to register, go online.

Milk may not do a body good

By Karen Kaplan, Los Angeles Times

Got milk? If you're drinking it to prevent bone fractures or to boost your overall health, you might want to go back to the fridge and opt for a yogurt or a slice of cheese instead.

A study in the journal BMJ casts doubt on the widely held view that milk can help adults ward off hip fractures and broken bones. After tracking more than 100,000 Swedish men and women for up to 23 years, the study authors saw no link between milk consumption and fracture risk. However, they did find that avid milk drinkers were more likely to die at younger ages than their counterparts who drank little to no milk.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans advise everyone over the

age of 8 to consume three cups of milk per day or the corresponding amount of yogurt, cheese or other dairy products. Many European countries offer similar suggestions. After all, milk is a convenient source of calcium, vitamin D and phosphorus, three nutrients that are important for bone growth.

However, the researchers – from the Uppsala University, the Karolinska Institute and the Swedish National Food Agency – wondered whether this advice was scientifically valid. No randomized clinical trials have shown that drinking milk causes the risk of fractures or premature death to fall, and observational studies that might reveal an association between milk and better health have had mixed results.

The research team cited another reason for their skepticism: D-galactose. This is produced by the body as it breaks down lactose, the sugar in milk. Studies in animals have shown that chronic exposure to the nutrient causes “oxidative stress damage, chronic inflammation, neurodegeneration, decreased immune response, and gene transcriptional changes,” they wrote. In fact, when scientists want to mimic the effects of aging, they give animals shots or food containing D-galactose.

Read the whole story

Study: Retreating snow line will worsen droughts

By Andy Coghlan, New Scientist

The Golden State is baking. After months of drought in California the long-term forecast is ... more drought.

Rising global temperatures will turn much of the snow that currently replenishes the state's reservoirs to rain, according to modelling studies by Dan Cayan at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego. Unlike snow, which melts each spring and recharges California's reservoirs, rain evaporates and soaks into the ground – it dwindles away, he says.

Cayan says the Sierra Nevada snowpack could be a third smaller in 2050 than it has been in recent years, and two-thirds smaller by 2100. The snowpack isn't the only source of fresh water in California, but Cayan says it would be "more of a challenge" to manage water as rainfall rather than snow. He presented his findings at the Bay-Delta Science Conference in Sacramento last week.

Cayan's findings emerged as California's Department of Water Resources launched its latest strategic plan to manage the state's water. The future is one of never-ending restraint in water use. "The goals of the plan are to make conservation a way of life," says a department statement.

Read the whole story

Cheese industry not happy with FDA

By AC Shilton, Outside

As Americans, we're used to certain infringements on our liberty, like having the NSA creep on our phone records and the TSA examine our shoes. But there's a limit to our patience. When the government comes for our cheese, people get

pissed.

Earlier this summer, FDA inspectors in New York cited a cheese manufacturer for using wooden boards during the aging process – a common practice among artisanal cheesemakers. Because the New York Department of Agriculture allows cheese to be aged on wood, it contacted the FDA for clarification. In response, it got a terse statement from Monica Metz, the branch chief for the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's Dairy and Egg Branch:

The use of wooden shelves, rough or otherwise, for cheese ripening does not conform to GMP [good management practice] requirements, which require that "all plant equipment and utensils shall be so designed and of such material and workmanship as to be adequately cleanable, and shall be properly maintained." 21 CFR 110.40(a). Wooden shelves or boards cannot be adequately cleaned and sanitized.

Wooden shelves have been used for hundreds of years – pretty much every shard of Parmigiano-Reggiano (not including that from-a-tube stuff) was aged on a wooden board. To enforce this rule would change the way most U.S. artisanal cheese is made—and it would stop the import of many European varieties.

When the news broke, people got angry.

A mob of cheesemakers and cheese enthusiasts took to social media to lambaste the federal agency. Vermont congressman Peter Welch (Dem.) led the fight on Twitter, posting, "We will not back down ☐#SaveOurCheese☐☐☐."

Surprisingly, it worked.

Read the whole story