

Letter: Measure F moves Tahoe out of status quo

To the community,

I've been closely involved with Lake Tahoe Community College since its beginning in 1974 when I was elected one of the first LTCC board of trustees members. I'd like you to consider, just for a minute, what would happen if the college's Measure F bond effort failed to pass this Election Day.

Since the bond would cost homeowners \$25 per \$100,000 in assessed value, Measure F not passing would mean a homeowner savings of about \$6 a month on average – that's true. The college would continue to exist, and the board of trustees, college leadership, and faculty and staff would find a way to keep LTCC going. Our dedicated and professional educators would continue in their efforts to prepare students for transfer to four-year programs, for rewarding careers, and to lead them on enjoyable educational experiences.

But without the solid foundation Measure F provides, our teachers wouldn't experience the excitement and freedom to create and innovate that reliable funding can make possible. Without funding, innovation is hampered. The spark innovation provides makes teaching a true joy, and that would be missing.

Our students deserve the best education we can give them. Measure F funds would continue and even improve the high-quality experience LTCC provides. Should we be satisfied with merely an adequate educational experience, in merely adequate facilities? I believe that in order to achieve their goals and do their best work, students need a well-supported and enthusiastic faculty, teaching in the finest facilities we can provide.

If Measure F fails, it tells our city and the world that the citizens of South Lake Tahoe are satisfied with the status quo, not interested in being the best, but rather in being just run of the mill. Great schools are the result of a dynamic, progressive, forward-thinking community that attracts new business and population to it. Will larger, healthier businesses be anxious to spend large sums of money in communities that don't value exceptional education? Will the state of California be motivated to tap LTCC as one of its 15 pilot schools to offer four-year degrees in a community that's satisfied with a status quo college?

True, everyone dislikes higher taxes. With Measure F, we're talking about \$6 a month to homeowners and businesses. But in the face of worldwide competition for investment and tourist dollars, can South Lake Tahoe afford to be labeled as "status quo"? The health of our local college is tightly bound to the health of our community. Please join me in voting yes on Measure F, and make the right call for our kids, college and community.

Sincerely,

Fritz Wenck, Lake Tahoe Community College board trustee

Barton prepped for Ebola patients

By Vicki McKenna

Barton Health is committed to the safety of our patients, visitors, staff, and physicians. After receiving several confirmed cases of the Ebola virus disease in the United

States, Barton Health is prepared to care for and respond to suspected Ebola cases.

Though the Ebola virus has not reached California or Nevada and the risk is currently low, we take the threat very seriously. An Ebola virus disease workgroup comprised of Barton Health leaders and staff has been formed and we have developed an Ebola preparedness plan. By collaborating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, El Dorado County Public Health, and other health agencies across the nation, Barton Health will be able to deliver the most up-to-date information and most effective action plan to combat the virus.

Barton Memorial Hospital currently follows the CDC's recommendations for hospital infection control to safely manage and isolate a patient with Ebola or other highly infectious disease. Should it become necessary, Barton Health staff and physicians are prepared to care for possible Ebola patients and protect the community at large.

As described by a Centers for Disease Control official, the information about Ebola is changing "daily and rapidly." To keep our patients, visitors, and community safe, Barton Health is taking actions should a suspected Ebola patient arrive. Actions include additional screening about travel history, isolation precautions and procedures, and ongoing education and training.

Travel history screening

As an additional precaution, patients who enter the Barton Health inpatient and outpatient offices will be asked about their travel history. If you or someone you know has traveled to a high-risk country in Africa within the last 21 days or has been exposed to someone who has, the second step is to monitor for Ebola's signs and symptoms. Ebola resembles the flu and signs and symptoms may include a high fever, stomach

ache, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, muscle aches, and unexplained bleeding. Ebola can only be spread by an infected patient if signs and symptoms are present.

Isolation precautions and procedures

For suspected Ebola patients, Barton Health has prepared isolation rooms and procedures to protect Barton Health patients, visitors, staff, and physicians. In addition, appropriate protective equipment and disposal methods are in place.

Education and training

Barton's Emergency Management Services has implemented practice drills and walk-throughs to prepare for a real case scenario, should it arise. Ongoing education and training is also being conducted for clinical and non-clinical staff.

We encourage all members of the community to stay informed. Visit the Centers for Disease Control website for an Ebola checklist and the most updated information.

Vicki McKenna is an infection preventionist with Barton Health.

Stabbing suspect arrested; woman in hospital

Updated 4:45pm:

A South Lake Tahoe woman is fighting for her life at an area hospital after being stabbed Wednesday night.

The man accused of the stabbing – her husband – fled, but was arrested Thursday afternoon. Thomas Payne, 36, of South Lake Tahoe faces attempted murder charges.

Officers are not releasing the name of the 35-year-old victim.

“We don’t know how the altercation occurred or what happened,” Lt. David Stevenson told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The woman was stabbed in the upper chest and neck area. Details about the object used in the crime or even if it was located at the residence have not been released. The call came in at 8:47pm Oct. 15 on Lukins Way. The victim was able to go to a neighbor’s to seek aid.

The suspect left as officers arrived. On Thursday afternoon he returned to their residence where he was arrested by South Lake Tahoe police officers.

“The victim was transported to the hospital and went into emergency surgery to save her life. Prior to surgery the victim identified her assailant as Thomas Payne and divulged additional details of domestic violence,” officers said in a press release.

Child Protective Services was called to take the couple’s 6-month-old child.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Tahoe Rim Trail Association is asking users to take this survey.

- Patrick Johnson, biathlete and cross country skier from Truckee, is training to be on the 2018 U.S. Olympic biathlon team.
- Lake Tahoe Sustainability Collaborative Community Mobility group is asking people to take a survey about connectivity issues around South Tahoe Middle School. Here is the student-parent survey; and here is the community survey.
- Food Bank of El Dorado County is putting on a free farmers market for people in need on Oct. 22 from 10-11am in the parking lot of the American Legion in South Lake Tahoe.
- With ski season around the corner, a reader sent this compilation of ski-snowboard films get people in the mood.

USFS sites in Tahoe basin close for season

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit started closing recreational facilities around the basin this week.

Seasonal closures apply to many recreation sites including

beaches, campgrounds, and picnic areas, which traditionally close in mid-October. Forest roads close around mid-November for soil protection and public safety. For specific forest road closing dates, consult the Motor Vehicle Use Map.

The following sites are closed: Nevada Beach, Fallen Leaf, Bayview, Meeks Bay, and Kaspian campgrounds, and Nevada, Pope, Baldwin, Meeks Bay, William Kent, and Kaspian beaches. Camp Richardson and Zephyr Cove resorts remain open year-round.

The Taylor Creek Visitor Center is open weekends through the end of October. The Tallac Historic Site closed at the end of September.

Artists sought for wildlife stamp contest

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is conducting an art contest to select the design for the state's 2014-15 upland game bird stamp.

The contest is open to all U.S. residents ages 18 and older. Entries will be accepted through Dec. 12. This year's stamp will feature the Gambel's quail, and art contest entries must include at least one Gambel's quail.

Entries will be judged on originality, artistic composition, anatomical accuracy and suitability for reproduction as a stamp and a print.

For contest information and entry forms, go online.

Weather Channel: Warm winter in Calif.-Nev.

By Weather Channel

The Weather Channel has issued its winter forecast for 2014-2015, and it looks a bit different from last winter.

Compared to 2013-14, which was one of the coldest winters in recent memory in the Upper Midwest, this winter the chill looks to be more focused on the East Coast and Gulf Coast, according to the winter forecast prepared by WSI, which along with The Weather Channel is part of The Weather Company.

The forecast, which looks ahead to temperatures from Dec. 1, 2014, through Feb. 28, 2015, is based on an analysis of several large-scale factors in the land-ocean-atmosphere system.

One factor is, as you might expect, the presence or absence of El Nino – an area of warmer-than-average water in the eastern Pacific Ocean near the equator.

While El Nino has not developed yet, WSI forecasters expect a weak to moderate El Nino to emerge over the winter months and potentially persist into the spring.

Read the whole story

USFS planning fires throughout basin

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will begin the fall/winter prescribed fire program this week. Operations may take place today on various urban lots around the Lake Tahoe Basin including Elizabeth Drive on the West Shore, Christmas Valley, Angora Creek, Elks Club Drive, Echo View Estates, and Bakersfield Avenue on the South Shore.

The Forest Service tries to give as much advance notice as possible before burning, but some operations may be conducted on short notice.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, Forest Service staff post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Art studio gives back to nonprofits

Twenty members and friends of Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra recently spent an evening at the Lake Tahoe Paint and Sip Studio at Ski Run Marina.

Each month owners Jill and Frank Slipper provide a unique fundraising experience for a different nonprofit. They donate half of the \$40 per person fee back to the designated nonprofit.

Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra will use the donation to support local programs and projects for youth and women.

Editorial: Keep Pierini as Douglas County sheriff



Ron Pierini

Publisher's note: *This is a version of the Douglas County sheriff's endorsement that ran before the June primary.*

On Nov. 4 Douglas County voters will have the opportunity to vote to retain the current sheriff or replace him with someone from the outside.

Dave Brady contends morale is not great within the department and a change in leadership is needed. If this were true, then we wonder why the Douglas County Sheriff's Protective Association endorsed Sheriff Ron Pierini. The bargaining unit

represents deputies, investigators and sergeants in the Douglas County Sheriff's Office.

We concur with the bulk of the department's employees that Pierini should continue to be sheriff, a position he was first elected to in 1997. He started with the department in 1976 – having been a captain in Tahoe, undersheriff and now sheriff.

Brady had been a reserve deputy for the department before he declared his candidacy.

While it's not always in the best interest of a department to keep the status quo or to hire within, we also don't believe in the need to change leadership for the sake of change.

Pierini has proven he is capable of weathering many storms. We believe he will continue to do so for the next four years. The sheriff's department's budget has been cut by \$2 million and 10 positions have been eliminated in the past few years. Despite the cutbacks, the department's arrest to prosecution rate is 38 percent. Nationwide the average is 22 percent.

He was at the helm when 9-year-old Krystal Steadman was kidnapped and killed in 2000 in Stateline. In 1980, he was a captain at the Tahoe substation when Harveys was bombed. While we don't wish crimes like that to occur, it is reassuring to know someone with that breadth of experience will be directing the troops to find the bad guys.

By the nature of the job Pierini spends the bulk of his time in the valley. But he has a connection to Lake Tahoe that the other candidate doesn't. This is another driving reason to keep Pierini in office. He works well with the other leaders at the lake – whether it is peers in other law enforcement agencies, fire personnel, casino executives or other business people.

Brady's financial background is intriguing and something often not seen in the ranks of law enforcement. But already the

voters of Douglas County ousted him out of office when he was a commissioner.

We need a sheriff who can reach across the aisle. We need someone who is capable of making tough decisions. We need someone who is a leader in his department as well as the community.

That person is Ron Pierini.