

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Lake Tahoe Blue's hockey season at the South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena has started. For more info, go online.

- Longtime Placer County Supervisor Kirk Uhler has been named CEO of Sacramento Regional Technology Alliance.

- Two of Barton Health's female doctors will talk for free about breast cancer and other common cancers that affect women. Female conditions, such as pelvic pain, will also be discussed Oct. 21 at 6pm in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

- The charity for the Oct. 5 1-4pm Genoa's Sweet Sippin' Sundays is Kids and Horses. It is on Main Street. Cost is \$12 for new sippers, \$10 with glass.

- Tahoe City's Oktoberfest is Oct. 4 from noon-4pm on the grounds of Gatekeeper's Museum.

Study: Physical activity helps kids think better

By Deborah Netburn, Los Angeles Times

Here's another reason to get your kids off the couch and make them run around instead: It will help them think better.

In a paper published in Pediatrics, researchers report that kids 7 to 9 years old who attended a daily, after-school fitness program showed an increased ability to pay attention, avoid distraction and switch between tasks at the end of a nine-month period, compared with a control group that did not attend the program.

“Our study shows that brain activation was different in the ‘FIT Kids’ group compared to a control group,” said Charles Hillman, a professor of kinesiology and community health at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and lead author of the paper.

The study involved 222 elementary-school-aged children. Half of them were accepted to a free fitness program called “FIT Kids” (for “Fitness Improves Thinking”) that met daily after school on the campus of the University of Illinois. The other half were put on a wait list for the program, and were used as a control group.

Read the whole story

Mutt Strut benefits SLT animal group

The 10th annual Mutt Strut Poker Run is Oct. 12 on your calendar. It will start and end at Lakeview Commons in South Lake Tahoe.

And please have your fingers crossed that our weather will be more like this week, and not last weekend!

Three poker hands are \$20 in advance (\$25 day of event) and

three hands plus a Mutt Strut T-shirt are \$30. They are available at Alpine Animal Hospital (921 Emerald Bay Road) or Bonanza Boot and Leather (at the Chateau) or call 530.307.3638.

Registration from 11-11:30am. The walk is 1.6 miles.

Proceeds benefit Animal Coalition of Tahoe.

Curtzwiler: 'El Dorado County has lost its focus'

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the two El Dorado County District 5 supervisor candidates a series of questions. All are the same except for one that is specific to each candidate. The responses are being run in the order LTN received them.*



Name: Kenny Curtzwiler

Profession/work experience: Room service waiter at Sahara Tahoe – two years / Bartender-Carlos Murphy's –19 years / Bartender Chevy's – one- year / Bartender Tudor Pub – three years / Nevada Army National Guard – 20.5 years (I held the ranks of E-1, E-2, E-3, E-5, E-6–O-1, O-2, O-3, and retired an O-4-Major.) I own Skibumfamily Inc and dba K & K Services. Pam and I named our business K & K from the initials of myself

Kenny and my son Kaleb (Tree Service, Roofing and Construction Clean Up Company) Lake Tahoe Custom Cycles (Motorcycle Repair Shop) Tahoe Skibum, South Lake Tahoe Skibum and Lake Tahoe Skibum (Retail clothing and writer of the Skibum articles in *Lake Tahoe Entertainer* and *Tahoe Mountain News*).

Age: 58

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: It would be much easier to ask which ones I haven't been involved in as I am involved with them all. Specifically the major ones are Christmas Cheer, the Children's Memorial Tree, American Legion and Boys and Girls Club. I do not belong to any one group with the exception of the American Legion. I feel in this way I can give freely to everyone without breaking any affiliation feelings. My company and family have donated to almost every function this community has had for the last 33 years. I am also a registered non partisan and am not affiliated in any way to a political party, in this way I can vote for what is best for our community and not a certain group whether it be political or special group.

Why are you running for supervisor?: My son asked me to make a difference here in a letter he wrote.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidate?: I honestly feel that I have prepared for this position since I first moved to Tahoe by getting involved with the community and lifestyle this area has to offer. I would also like to hold the agencies and elected officials (yes, that will include myself) accountable for their actions, decisions and commitment to our community, which now includes our friends in Pollock Pines.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing El Dorado County and how will you deal with it?: El Dorado County has lost its focus when it comes to the community and the

community needs. It is the responsibility of the government to take care of police, fire and community infrastructure like our roads and facilities. Too often they have gotten lost in the eye candy and smoke and mirrors of certain interest groups whose only focus is to promote themselves first and the community second.

The 56-acre project, which includes Lakeview Commons and the campground on the other side of Highway 50, is owned by the county and maintained by the city. The county has not invested a dime and does not contribute to the maintenance and operations. Would you ask the county to help with paying some of the bills or would you advocate for deeding the land to the city? Why or why not?: I do not know if the county has invested anything. I would have to check on that and get back with you. To the best of my understanding the county is no different than a landlord, they lease the facility to the city and it is the city's responsibility for T I & M. There are several hundred examples of a landlord not doing anything to their property as long as the rent is paid up here in our community. They see no reason to invest in our community as most of them do not live here, the county is no different, outta sight outta mind. Rather than sell it to the city we need to work together to improve our community, if the county is not willing to work with us then perhaps we should look into transferring stewardship of the site to our community and the people that actually live here.

The city and county are putting together a recreation master plan, but the Board of Supervisors has never voted on whether it would fund the implementation of the plan. Would you dedicate funds to promote the investment of recreation?: See above answer where I talk about out of area landlords. The word Landlords used to be reversed where there were Lords of the Land until the land became a part of the community. As far as investment goes, yes. Obviously, I will take care of our community first.

Being on the board requires working with four others. Give readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: My experience in the military required me to work with everyone above and below my pay grade on a daily basis. Contrary to belief the military is not a democracy yet we were required to work as one. The biggest asset I have is that I do not belong to a political party, special interest group or community organization. I belong to this community and will and have always kept that first and foremost in everything I have done in the 37 years I have lived here. I have had a working relationship with just about everyone in this town through my writings as the Skibum to my business as a contractor and specifically due to all the years as a bartender. I am able to walk into the offices of our officials and work out any differences we may have. We don't always agree but that is what I am here to work out and move on for the betterment of our community. I do not always get what I want but neither does the other side but we do come to a compromise.

What is working in the county and what isn't; and how would you go about changing what isn't working?: What isn't working is the communication between the BOS and the community. It is our, the community's, job to get involved with what is happening but it is imperative that the BOS share with the community what is going on. For too long these agendas have been pushed through for the consultants and their employers as to what we need without full disclosure and communication with all those affected. We need a representative that is willing to ask the question "Really?". Our elected officials need to remember who they work for.

Would you consider replacing the current CAO? Why or why not?: I do not have enough information to comment on this question.

The grand jury labeled the county dysfunctional. What is your opinion of that assessment?: No more dysfunctional than our own City Council. I would agree with the statement based on

the fact that I have served on the civil grand jury for a year a few years back and am somewhat familiar with the inner workings. The grand jury is made up of volunteers, community members who want to make a difference yet they have no teeth. Every grand jury report has been ignored and if you read all of them they are almost always the same theme. Our elected officials need to read the grand jury report standing next to a mirror to see what they are talking about.

Agriculture is a huge economic driver for the county. What are your ideas in regards to the drought to ensure farmers and ranchers have enough water?: I do not have enough knowledge or interaction with farmers and agriculture to answer this question.

The Sand Fire this summer proved El Dorado County was lacking in emergency response coordination efforts. What improvements would you propose?: I will use our Lake Valley Fire Department as an example. We must be proactive and not always reactive. I attended an El Dorado County meeting [in August] where all the fire district chiefs and committees were there. The biggest theme was they are all asking for money and their fair share of tax dollars and what do we need to improve their services. LV has been proactive in seeking grant funds for defensible space and wood shake replacement. I am a Tree Service and Roofing contractor and I can tell you that when they implemented these programs we have done about a thousand jobs for defensible space and the protection of our community. Proactive not reactive. LV is now asking for a new "tax" for more defensible space programs. This money will stay in our community to help our community. I applaud our Lake Valley Fire Department for being proactive and taking care of the community. The problem with the Sand fire was the same problem with the Angora Fire. Too many agency chiefs egos were bruised because all the outside agencies wanted to be in charge when they should have had less egos involved and let one local agency take charge. We needed to be able to cross

jurisdictions and power structures without worrying about stepping on another agency's perceived power ego.

How would you improve relations with the city of South Lake Tahoe?: Are you asking what I would do as a person or are you asking as the county? Since the question is stated as "you" I will answer that way. I will be no different in what I have done in the past, present or future. I will still just walk in or call for a talk with our officials. I will still communicate with them only this time we can actually move forward on critical issues not just the issues in my articles.

On Lake Tahoe News you commented how you are proud to collect unemployment in the winter when your business closes down. Ethically, how do you justify this?: Below is the actual wording of what I said. I had Ms. Reed look it up for me as I asked her to show me where I said I was proud.

Jealous Jeff? Yes I do collect unemployment on your dime and enjoy every powder day and have absolutely no regrets or ashamed of what I do. Thanks for your opinion.

My company is a corporation and I am an employee of the company. I receive a paycheck and pay into EDD.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: Someone asked Pam, my lovely wife of 33 years, if she or I was afraid of someone saying something about us that might not be flattering. Her response, "Are you kidding? This guy puts his whole life story out every month in the Mountain News, there is nothing anyone does not know about us." There is probably one thing though, both Pam and I were adopted.

Opinion: EDC budget debacle all because of Daly

By Larry Weitzman

With winter coming, it was a good thing that Supervisor Ron Mikulaco and Auditor Joe Harn came up with a plan to pay for the second snowplow and saved the county \$50,000 interest instead of following the Community Development Agency's plan to lease it, which is usually the most expensive way to acquire anything.

It was an item that dated from June 2013, that the chief administrative officer and the CDA handled more like the Three Stooges with no insult to the Stooges intended. There will be an investigation to find the mistakes made, by whom and why. Even our CAO, who signed the purchase order, made a \$30,000 mistake on the purchase price (she doubled the sales tax), which did get corrected during the Sept. 23 Board of Supervisor meeting. At the same meeting, unfortunately the overall El Dorado County budget was approved on a 3-2 vote with a huge deficit with Mikulaco and Shiva Frentzen voting no.



Larry Weitzman

But the fiscal future of El Dorado County may be beyond help. While Terri Daly's CAO's office has grown from 16 employees in the 2011-12 fiscal year to 72.5 employees for the 2014-15 fiscal year, which included half dozen or more new highly paid

“analysts” with titles like CAO administrative analyst, department or principal administrative analyst, overall county hiring in the last three years by CAO Daly amounted to 170 new employees. But none of those hires was in the most important county departments such as the sheriff’s or the DA’s offices. In other words, county services have not improved and if you consider the snowplow debacle, services have gone in the other direction.

These new county employees have added about \$14 million to county expenses. If you add in the cost of the 15 percent raises recommended by Daly, you can add another \$7 million to budget expenses or about \$20 million to \$21 million annually.

Here is the problem Daly has created. While the CAO claims the budget will be in balance for fiscal year 2014-15, it isn’t. Revenues (which are mostly property taxes and sales tax with the division being about 60/40) are projected at \$222 million. But expenses are \$254 million. That’s not balanced, but a negative \$32 million. The way the CAO figures it is that as of the end of the last fiscal year (June 30) the county had \$45 million on hand (down from \$54 million at the end F/Y 2013) and EDC will plug the gap with the county savings. In the following year (15-16) spending will outstrip revenues according to county forecasts by \$27.5 million. Known bank reserves will only be \$13 million. The county will be out of cash.

In the three following years the combined forecasted deficits will be another \$89 million. El Dorado County will be upside down by \$103 million. Perhaps there will be a higher sales tax proposed for El Dorado County, possibly a 25 percent rise and that will still not totally solve the problem while damaging local business.

And why? Because our CAO, Terri Daly, hired 170 new employees over the last three years, claiming we are still not back to pre-recession levels of staffing (and implying that the

recession is over). Being a county employee making over \$200,000 a year plus benefits (about \$250,000-\$260,000 a year total), Daly never felt the recession. We are still in a severe recession, with real unemployment well over 10 percent and housing prices significantly depressed.

With respect to those employees who were hired within the CAO's office, salaries have grown by about \$4.5 million since June 30, 2012, with a total of about 56 new employees. That equates to an average salary of \$80,000 per employee. And you wonder why we have a budget problem. Using that same salary cost for the 170 employees hired by Daly during the last three years and the total reaches \$13,600,000.

But wait there's more.

Within that hiring of 56.5 employees 18 were classified as some sort of analyst, fiscal tech or administrator; 18, all hired in the last two years. Is Daly that bad an administrator that she needs that much help? If they are analysts or administrators, they are not doing their jobs as can be seen by the terrible fiscal shape the county is in. The total cost for those 18 employees is \$112,700 a month or about \$1.35 million a year plus benefits (about \$1.7 million a year total). Those seven newly hired (within the last two years) CAO employees with the actual title of analyst had total monthly salaries of totaling \$43,000 or about \$645,000 a year with benefits. And you wonder why we are looking at huge deficits.

On top of all this spending, Daly recommended that the county give all employees a 15 percent raise over three years starting in 2014. Total cost of that will be about \$7 million annually. Without the hiring and without the 15 percent raise, there would be no budget deficit.

If you study Chief Financial Officer Laura Schwartz's budgets projections, the total deficits through F/Y 2018-19 are only

\$51 million. CAO Daly claims there will be savings of \$32 million from the multimillion dollar Fenix accounting system of which she has yet to produce one work paper demonstrating these savings and other county budget saving of about \$20 million that will materialize out of totally unproven savings devices. Please CAO, show us the data.

Daly's solution is an across the board 3 percent salary savings in all departments. First, why should longer-term employees pay for Daly's excesses? Second, about 35 percent of the new hires were under the CAO's office, she gains, every other department suffers. And finally, a 3 percent salary savings does nothing. It's a gimmick. It would only save about \$5 million a year, still leaving EDC about \$80 million upside down. The solution is laying off the new hires, especially those in Daly's office. Looking at the budget deficits, they and Daly are responsible.

Daly loves the words "strategic investments" and uses them liberally in everything she writes and says. The term should be as demonstrated above – "useless and wasteful spending." One more thing, with all these new employees, there has been no improvement in county services. More is coming.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Dad's quest to name peak after son on hold

A South Lake Tahoe father still desires to name a peak in Desolation Wilderness after his son, but doing so is in limbo.



Ryan Shreve

The idea was Mitch Underhill's. Underhill and Ryan Shreve were best friends and firefighters. Shreve died in 2003 at the age of 24 from second impact syndrome following a wakeboarding accident on Folsom Lake. Underhill died last year.

"Shortly after Mitch died, the USGS met and determined that our application to name an unnamed geologic feature did not meet the 1999 Wilderness Act's requirements," Mike Shreve, Ryan's dad, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "So now without Mitch with us, I have had little excitement to go after other mapmakers and Google Earth to have the name changed on their sites. I will pursue these options this winter."

The goal is to have Peak 9441 renamed Mount Ryan.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

King Fire burning in interior, not spreading

The King Fire is at 94 percent containment.

Crews on Oct. 1 spent time suppressing isolated heat sources south of the Rubicon River on the west flank, but the acreage burned remains at 97,099. Full containment is expected Oct. 4.

Helicopters were on scene to stop further spread. The heat and dry weather is causing the interior to continue to burn. Crews are working to make sure roads are safe for the public. There are about 2,500 people still on the fire.

The Rubicon Jeep Trail, Wrights Lake, Desolation Wilderness and the east side of Ice House Road are open to the public.

The following recreation areas and roads remain closed to the public: lands west of Ice House Road, including Union Valley Reservoir; Stumpy Meadows, the Hell Hole Reservoir area, Sand Mountain Blvd, Peavine Road, and Eleven Pines Road.

– Read the whole story

Wynn: Gambling not key to casinos' success



Harveys has found success with its outdoor concert series. Photo/LTN file

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Nongaming revenue isn't just crucial to the success of casino-resorts now – in fact, it's always been "the story," Las Vegas mogul Steve Wynn said in a speech this week.

Wynn delivered a keynote address to a packed crowd at the first full day of the Global Gaming Expo, or G2E, at the Sands Expo. Much of his remarks focused on revenue sources aside from gambling, an area to which the casino industry has shifted attention in recent years as many patrons have done the same.

Wynn stressed that bankrolling a successful resort on nongaming dollars – from hotel rooms, restaurants, shops and entertainment – is nothing new. He gave a history lesson of sorts, beginning with his tenure at the Golden Nugget decades ago.

Wynn brought up the fact that most Americans now live in a state where they can easily access a casino, meaning that a resort's gambling opportunities can't be the only thing attracting customers.

Read the whole story

Letter: El Dorado County chamber ethics questioned

To the community,

How do you know when someone has crossed a line of ethical standards? It's a tough topic because it is a subjective concept and many people will have a different point of view. What if it's even bigger than that? What if it's an entity

that receives taxpayer funding that crosses that line? Would you request that its funding be revoked until it cleans up its act and makes changes in its political practices?

I'm sitting here at a Board of Supervisors meeting waiting to ask the board to stop funding El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce programs until the chamber makes changes so that there is a clear distinction between its political activities and regular chamber activities.

Why? Because the county chamber has shown a consistent pattern of mixing its political activities with its regular activities, and it has recently crossed the line of what most people would consider ethical practices. The most recent infraction was the Town Hall Phone Meeting hosted by El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce board member Mike Kobus, owner of Koby Pest Control, on the evening of Sept. 24, 2014. Mr. Kobus stated misinformation about the measures and its proponents. I'm going to stop sugarcoating it here, Mr. Kobus flat out lied about the measures and their proponents.

According to California Election Code Section 20501. (b):

"A person who is a sponsor of a sponsored committee, as defined by Section 82048.7 of the Government Code, is liable for any slander or libel committed by the sponsored committee if the sponsor willfully and knowingly directs or permits the libel or slander."

The sponsor of the phone meeting was the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, a 501c6 organization, of which Mr. Kobus is a board member. The Chamber also has a Political Action Committee, which has previously spent over \$70,000 against all grassroots efforts to put land use measures on the November ballot. A request will be made to the Fair Political Practices Commission to investigate whether the chamber has overstepped the boundaries of what is allowed in its campaign against the measures by using lies to scare voters.

The amount of lies in Mr. Kobus' phone meeting was astonishing. He reached out into people's homes over the phone to intentionally spread misinformation and cause confusion. An uninformed listener would be led to believe that Mr. Kobus is an expert about these measures, when in fact he lumped all of the measures together and mixed up and distorted the facts. For example, Measure 0 is the green petition that was part of the 1-2-3 initiatives. Measure 0 simply removes urban boundary lines that make existing rural communities a target for high density development. Mr. Kobus debated with one caller that Measure 0 has a kill clause in it that will wipe out all of the other measures if it got the most votes. That is an absolutely erroneous statement because Sacramento-based Region Builders' Measure N has the kill clause in it, which is one of many reasons I am opposed to Measure N.

Sue Taylor, a Measure 0 proponent, agreed with a caller that said, "Follow the Money." Taylor went on to say, "Mike Kobus should have explained that it is with the Chamber's Board members and directors where the money lays... such as Sierra Pacific Industries, PG&E, AT&T, The Mountain Democrat, and Kirk Bone of Parker Development who developed Serrano and is proposing the Marble Valley development project. There is a lot riding on this election for these people."

Further updates will be published online as the inquiry progresses.

Lori Parlin, proponent of Measure 0

'Some Thing Else' coming to

Tahoe City

The Lake Tahoe premier of "Some Thing Else" will be Oct. 16 on the North Shore.

Powderhore Productions, the Salt Lake City film crew celebrating its 10th year of ski filming, captures some of the steepest and deepest powder on the expeditions to remote mountain ranges.

Part ski-porn, part-documentary, "Some Thing Else" is a propaganda piece that promotes the joys and wonder of exploring winter on skis and splitboard.

Tickets will be available at Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City or at the door. The show begins at 6pm.

For more info, call 530.583.6917.