

Lake Valley Fire's ISO rating drops

Lake Valley Fire Protection District has earned a better rating from the Insurance Services Office. As of this month the district has an ISO Public Protection Classification of 2 in areas with fire hydrants and 2Y for rural portions of the fire district without fire hydrants.

“Basically, the district demonstrated to an ISO representative that we strategically operate to National Fire Protection Association standards,” Leona Allen, spokeswoman for Lake Valley, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “The rating is good for three years, and, yes, – folks should contact their insurance companies to advise them of the change.”

Lake Valley has been working diligently during the last few years to reduce the rating from a 5 to a 2. The district is one of 750 fire departments in the country to receive this designation.

The change could bring a reduction in fire insurance rates for all properties within Lake Valley's boundaries.

The Insurance Services Office Inc., better known as ISO, is a company that serves insurance companies by evaluating communities all over the country and assigning a risk classification ranging from the lowest risk being 1 to the highest being a 10. They rate communities based on three criteria: The fire department's capabilities, the firefighting water supply, and the emergency communications capability.

S. Tahoe council defers city manager review

The South Lake Tahoe City Council on Tuesday continued the review of City Manager Nancy Kerry to the Oct. 1 special meeting.

At that meeting the 2014-15 budget will be voted on, as will contracts with multiple employee groups.



Nancy Kerry

"She wants employees to come first," Mayor Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News* after the Sept. 16 meeting.

"Least and last" is Kerry's approach when it comes to any adjustments to her contract. In other words, she wants as many of the employee contracts to be finalized before the council offers her a raise.

In the past, Kerry turned down the one time 2 percent increase that was like a bonus for all staff. She also said no to what should have been an automatic 5 percent step increase.

She is also the first city manager in decades who has not taken a car allowance.

"We are going to offer her a package that includes some additional compensation," Cole said.

Details will be released once the council votes on it next

month.

The other key item discussed in closed session on Sept. 16 involved the property the city owns at the corner of Ski Run Boulevard and Highway 50. Cole and Councilwoman Brooke Laine will be meeting with each of the entities who submitted a letter of intent to develop the site. They are going to develop a format be able ferret out the best proposal.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Study: More Americans have health insurance

By Sabrina Tavernise, New York Times

Federal researchers reported on Tuesday that the number of Americans without health insurance had declined substantially in the first quarter of this year, the first federal measure of the number of uninsured Americans since the Affordable Care Act extended coverage to millions of people in January.

The number of uninsured Americans fell by about 8 percent to 41 million people in the first quarter of this year, compared with 2013, a drop that represented about 3.8 million people and that roughly matched what experts were expecting based on polling by private groups, like Gallup. The survey also measured physical health but found little evidence of change.

The findings were part of the National Health Interview Survey, a nationally representative examination that is considered a gold standard by researchers. It interviewed

about 27,000 people in the first quarter, fewer than Gallup, which interviewed 45,000 people in the second quarter alone. But researchers say it is considered particularly trustworthy because federal interviewers conduct the survey in Americans' homes. It also sets a federal level that others can use as a benchmark.

Read the whole story

Nonprofits can benefit from celeb golf event

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority has \$48,000 from the American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament to give to local nonprofits.

The LTVA in partnership with NBC Sports and American Century Investments will provide funding for programs that help make a difference in the community.

Groups must meet 501(c)3 certified nonprofit guidelines, provide an outline of their mission, describe how the donation will be used, and indicate impact in the community. The application may be downloaded. The deadline is Oct. 3. Recipients will be announced Nov. 3, with checks presented at the LTVA meeting Nov. 13 at 3pm.

An additional \$67,200 was previously provided through on-site volunteer and other efforts to area high schools, Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe, South Lake Tahoe Booster Club, Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, and the Gene Upshaw Scholarship, among others.

Recycled art contest in Nevada

The Nevada Recycles program has partnered with Las Vegas Sands Corp. to support a statewide recycled art contest to increase Nevadans' awareness and interest in recycling.

Entrants must be Nevada residents and projects must be composed of used recyclable materials.

Submission of entry form and photos of artwork are due Oct. 31.

Prizes will be awarded for grades K-5, 6-8, 9-12 and adult.

Materials that can be used include, but are not limited to: tires, electronics, appliances, plastic bags, bottles, batteries and aluminum cans. Fastening materials may include tape, glue and/or string.

Winners will be announced prior to America Recycles Day, Nov. 15.

More information is available online.

Iconic French restaurant in Stateline closing



Chef Camille Schwartz will be closing Mirabelle in Stateline on Sept. 28.
Photos/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

The South Shore is saying *au revoir* to its only French restaurant.

Mirabelle, which has been a tradition here for 14 years, is closing Sept. 28.

"I have been cooking for the last 60 years. It is time for me to stop before it gets too bad ... before I use sugar for salt," chef Camille Schwartz told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The owner-chef who has never lost his French accent is ready to do new things – including enjoying Tahoe. Working six days a week and maintaining a relationship with his wife who lives in Santa Barbara has been challenging. Now he wants to spend his days hiking and snowshoeing, and getting to Southern California more often. And he wants a dog – something he hasn't had time for based on his hours.

One thing he is a bit apprehensive about is cooking at home. He never does it.

"I always eat at the restaurant. I don't have food in the

refrigerator,” Schwartz said.

Mirabelle has plenty of regulars who also may have to learn to do more home cooking. This is what some of them have to say about Mirabelle:

- Bob Keller of Zephyr Cove: “I have enjoyed chef Camille’s wonderful cooking almost since the day he opened; many times by myself; many times with just a few friends; and many times with a large number of guests, including for Carolyn’s and my wedding dinner. When out-of-town friends or family have visited, Mirabelle has been a must on our agenda. Chef often would come out of the kitchen to talk with us. Many of the servers have become close friends. It was like going home. Of course, it helped that the food was always fabulous.”
- Carolyn Wright of Zephyr Cove: “Bob took me to Mirabelle during my first Tahoe visit with him. It’s since been an important and weekly part of our relationship – a place where everyone knows our name. Chef’s food always has been delicious, from his pureed soup to after-dinner sorbet. Chef would make a fortune selling his incredible lemon and mint sorbets.”
- Kim Wyatt of Meyers: “It’s our regular date night spot. I love the onion tart, the mushroom tart, the pasta, the soufflé, the care with which the food is made, and the ambiance.”

Schwartz doesn’t have a favorite dish to eat or prepare. He said he likes to change things around, whether it’s making a bouillabaisse, soufflé, foie gras or escargot.

His interest in food started when he was a boy in France.

“I grew up on a small farm. I was always interested in the smells in the kitchen, what my mom was cooking,” the 75-year-old said.

At 14 he was an apprentice cook in another part of France. From there he joined the navy and was a cook for the French fleet. Then he spent six years as a chef on ocean liners. Schwartz was working for a hotel chain in the late 1960s that transferred him to different locations in Canada and the United States. It was in Chicago where he met his wife. She's American, but speaks French.

For 20 years he had a restaurant in Santa Barbara called Mimosas. He sold in 2005 because it was getting to be too difficult operating it and Mirabelle.

With the number of hours he spends at the restaurant, Schwartz is pretty sure he won't miss the work.

"I will miss the contact with staff who is family, and with customers who have become friends through the years," Schwartz said.

He has between five and eight employees depending on the season.

Schwartz knows the finality of it will take some time to sink in.

"I'm going to miss friends. It's going to hit me later," Schwartz said.

Lecture to focus on prenatal issues

Your Prenatal Roadmap: Facts Revealed, Myths Dispelled is the title of the Oct. 1 Barton wellness lecture.

From 6-7pm Kenneth Spielvogel, a doctor with Barton Women's Health, will talk about health and nutrition, as well as exercise recommendations. Pregnancy myths will be dispelled and questions will be answered.

The free lecture is in the board room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

For more info, call 530.543.5537.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- To celebrate the rehabilitation completed this summer, the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Joint Powers Authority Bicycle Advisory Committee invites the community to a celebratory bike ride Sept. 19 at noon. Meet at the Rubicon Trailhead off Lake Tahoe Boulevard and Rubicon Trail at the end of Rubicon Trail and Mackinaw.

- The board of trustees of Tahoe Truckee Unified School District voted to approve a three-year agreement with the Boys & Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe to bring a before and after school program to Truckee.

- Jimmy's Restaurant at the Landing Resort & Spa in South Lake Tahoe and the Rafters at Sierra Nevada Resort & Spa in Mammoth Lakes received the 2014 Wine Spectator Award of Excellence for their wine selections.

- Alpine County Harvest Health Fair is Oct. 4 from 10am-2pm at Turtle Rock Park, Markleeville.

- Caltrans and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

remind motorists to remain alert for wildlife near roadways during Watch Out for Wildlife Week, which runs through Sept. 21.

Laine: Advocate for enforcing city's ordinances

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the seven South Lake Tahoe City Council candidates a series of questions. All are the same except for one that is specific to each candidate. This is the final one.*



Name: Brooke Laine

Profession/work experience: Bank manager, US Bank – January 2014 to current

Assistant sales and service manager, Bank of the West – December 2007-March 2013

President, Laine Photolabs Inc. – January 1990-October 2010.

Age: 50 years old

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: Sports: South Tahoe National Little League, Babe Ruth, Pop Warner Football, The Quarterback Club,

American Youth Soccer Organization.

Volunteer: South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation, Clean Tahoe Program, South Tahoe High School Alumni Foundation.

Liaisons (past and present): Tahoe Transportation District, LAFCo, Solid Waste JPA, Clean Tahoe Program, California Tahoe Conservancy, South Tahoe Public Utility District, Local Area Formation Committee.

Why are you running for City Council?: This community needs to continue heading down the positive path that we are currently on. Issues that can be resolved involving business, recreation and the environment will have my direct focus.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidates?: I am passionate. I am honest. I am focused. I get results.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing South Lake Tahoe and how will you deal with it?: City unfunded health care is the elephant in the room. The City Council in partnership with our current employees and retired employees, are working hard to come to a positive resolution that will free this city from a financial burden so large that it cripples our ability to simply maintain our infrastructure let alone invest in new recreational opportunities.

If the city cannot reach an agreement with its bargaining units, are you willing to go to impasse? Why or why not?: I believe that the employees will resolve this matter under normal negotiations. The desire of our employees is as strong as the council's desire to reach a mutually agreed upon and beneficial solution. I would be willing to go to impasse if necessary because we are putting our best offer on the table. We have nothing to hide.

How would you resolve the CalPERS and health care issues in the city?: The public retirement system, known as CalPERS, needs revamping. The recent internal corruption may create an

opportunity for the state of California to examine their “system” and makes some necessary changes. In the meantime, the city must remain fiscally prudent in securing the necessary retirement dollars needed so that our employees are secure. We will continue to chisel away at the health care issues as we continue to negotiate with our current labor force.

What is your opinion about term limits for the council?: Absolutely. There is value in having experience but there is also value in turnover. This position takes a minimum of two years just to get your arms around some of the issues and to gain a sense of how government works. I feel that two to three terms max is plenty. Then it is time to move on and share this opportunity with others in the community who want to leave things better than the way we found them.

If the city has positive cash flow, where should the money be spent?: Invest wisely! No “tax and spend”. Infrastructure and sustainable business and recreation are vital.

What are your ideas for increasing the city’s revenues?: Investing in our core product, recreation, will attract the families and individuals who appreciate the outdoors and want to experience Tahoe. The city will prosper as the business sector prospers.

What is your vision for the 56-acre project?: I was instrumental in advocating that the city purchase property in the industrial area at the Y. The purchase of this property now affords the opportunity to relocate our public works yard that is currently next to the campground. This move will free up valuable land that can now be used for additional improvements and added amenities to the campground that are articulated in the 56-acre project.

What would you do to improve relations with El Dorado County?: I currently represent the city by serving on the Local Area

Formation Committee which meets in Placerville on a monthly basis. The composition of that board is multi-jurisdictional with representatives from the city of Placerville, the city of South Lake Tahoe, and representatives from the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors in addition to others. We work hard on that board to establish a good working relationship with all of the representatives. This has allowed me a base to build from.

Is the city on the right course with restructuring debt and focusing on recreation? Why or why not?: At this time, it appears the city is on the right course. We restructured our debt to take advantage of lower interest rates. The city's focus on recreation is right on.

Name one vote the City Council made in the last four years you are proud of and one you are disappointed in – and why?: I am proud of the council's decision to support the direction of the TRPA's – Regional Plan update which was an important, historical move toward returning power back to local government; giving back local control; and focusing on the larger issue for TRPA – as environmental governance and lake clarity. City government continues to improve with few disappointments at this time.

What is working in the city and what isn't; and how would you go about changing what isn't working?: The city of SLT has begun to view itself as a business.

What isn't working: Enforcement. Policies are in place, but we lack the political will and financial resources to enforce our own rules. Our sign, outdoor display, and vacation rental ordinances stand out as perfect examples of lack of enforcement. I will advocate for proactive enforcement of the city's ordinances and will support the necessary level of funding to make it happen.

Being on the council requires working with four others. Give

readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: There are two meetings a month. Every meeting is a mutual meeting of the minds in an effort to manage the city. Differences may arise and are heard and resolved with a vote. Everyone brings something to the table. Elected officials must respect the opinions expressed.

What is your opinion about the following topics:

- **Ferry service on Lake Tahoe?:** I have always liked this idea.
- **Loop road?:** Depends on the option.
- **Future of Lake Tahoe Airport?:** General aviation has my support. Current facilities need a facelift.
- **Increasing the transient occupancy tax?:** Not supportive. I see this as a short-term remedy to a long-term solution. Growing the economy has greater impact in the long term.
- **Changing the vacation rental ordinance to reduce the number of such units in neighborhoods?:** Support.

Some consider you a good ole girl – in a negative way. How do you address this criticism?: What a kudo to be called a “good ole South Lake Tahoe girl” at 50! I am the product of parents who owned a successful business. I was born at Barton, educated in the SLT school system and a graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz with a degree in economics. This is my hometown. I married my husband, Jose here. We raised two children in Tahoe.

It’s my honor to serve this community as a “thank you” to all SLT has afforded me and our family.

Living and working here makes this good ole girl with fresh ideas work harder for our community.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: I love to hike and do so on a daily basis. My goal is to

complete every mile of the Rim Trail.

Letter: McClintock is not the problem

To the community,

A recent letter criticized Congressman Tom McClintock for opposing government regulation of the Internet. Net neutrality mandates by the federal government is not the answer. We do not need the government harming yet another industry. Look what happens when government gets involved in mortgages, picking winners and losers in energy and health care, and the increase in education funding and mandates without accompanying results.

There is a difference between a company needing a faster Internet connection to download a critical component for their company- upon which jobs depend- and the ability for someone to stream a movie or access social media. If someone is willing to pay more for faster service, they are free to switch to a company that better meets their needs.

The previous letter inaccurately linked Congressman McClintock's position on net neutrality to campaign donations. This is not just misleading – it is plain false. Ninety-two percent of Tom McClintock's come from individuals. OpenSecrets.org, which tracks campaign donations, shows that less than 0.02 percent of Congressman McClintock's donations have come from the computers/Internet industry.

Mavis Bowes, Truckee