

Letter: Time to admit SnowGlobe needs silencing

To the community,

As many of you know, I am vocal critic of SnowGlobe. Well, after another year I feel like it's kind of tradition for me to write my letter and vent about the event.

I will preface this letter with a reminder that I am not against events in the area. I just want events to be at a proper venue and I want them to not shake the walls of my house.

Days before SnowGlobe I reached out the City Council to try to get them to turn down the bass. There were numerous articles that they were expecting louder than usual sound and I thought maybe I could get a jump on it and talk some sense into the people involved.

I was fortunate enough to acquire a meeting with [City Manager] Nancy Kerry and [Councilman] Tom Davis (they were the only ones to reply) to express my frustrations about the event. They offered to pick me up where I live and give me a tour of the event.

During this meeting I found out that they refer the area where I live as "the war zone." This term was used more than once. For them to know that the noise/bass is overwhelming for this area and do nothing shows very poor leadership. The utter disregard for the residents of Pioneer Village was really surprising.

I asked if they could turn it down and was told that at one point in the past they turned it down 20 percent and it did nothing. So I asked them if they could turn it down more. They said if they turn it down more than that it doesn't have the

impact that the artist or the concert-goers want. What about the residents?

I asked what the long-term plan was for the event. Any chance of it being moved to a proper venue? They said it's staying in its present location. What about the disruption to our area, surrounding areas and the wildlife center that's going in? Ya, I played the cute animal card.

I asked why it keeps growing and why it has moved closer to the road/my house when it has been controversial from the first time. Blank stares

I mentioned a well run event is held at a proper venue and that it is also courteous to its neighbors. This event does neither. More blank stares.

A well run, well placed event doesn't cause this much controversy within the community.

I offered for both Nancy and Tom to stay at my place for the three days that the event ran and was promptly told no.

I'll just mention that there are a bunch of VHRs next to me. I think the people that OK SnowGlobe should stay there during the event.

At one point Tom Davis asked me if he should call Harveys to complain because he can hear their music in the summer. Really? That's your response to my complaint, deflection.

Now on top of all the existing issues over the last few years the community now has to deal with a road closure and it slowly taking over Bijou park.

So just to recap ... the event has been controversial and disruptive from the first time, it's in a spot that is not conducive for an event like this, it disrupts many surrounding neighborhoods with noise even though we have continuously requested they turn it down. And now we have it growing and

closing our roads.

I find it a bit amusing that the city and the people who put on this event get surprised when you point out that they are putting a round peg into a square hole. "Ya know, it just doesn't fit there. It's a nice peg but it doesn't fit the space."

This morning I read that LTCC wants to distance itself from the event. I ask: How can this event move forward without the cooperation from LTCC? Will it want more of Bijou park?

I also read that the city wants to mitigate the sound. Tom and Nancy had mentioned a sound cloud technology when I met with them, but they also freely admitted it would not help with the bass issue.

There were also statements that the city thought it was better than years past. It wasn't. At times the bass was as bad or worse than years past. Add in the additional fireworks and road closure I would have to say it got worse. Really? Fireworks in the middle of a forest?

I will say that the clean up/breakdown has been better than in the past.

Also now we find out that the promoter did not follow through on the promise for a field cover. Why do you keep doing business with someone who doesn't follow through on agreed to conditions?

Some people have said I should compromise. I reply, are they compromising with me? I asked them to put it in a proper location, I asked them to turn it down. I got an event that grew bigger, moved closer to my house and is still rattling the walls of my house. It's been seven years and we constantly ask them to turn it down. It's a constant valid complaint from more people than just me.

I'll say it again: It's been seven years and we want you to turn it down.

If you eliminate the bass that invades people's houses, you might find most of us tolerable to the event.

Now I have come up with another compromise. I am asking the city and/or SnowGlobe to pay to relocate me and my family to a VHR in the county for the three days the event runs. Look, I know a lot of you are laughing at this request but that is where I am at with the noise/bass level. You have my email. I await your response.

Again, have your fun, listen to your music, make some money, bring people to the area, but be courteous to your neighbors and act accordingly for the area you occupy.

John Spinola, South Lake Tahoe

PS – You want to hear a crazy thought, all of this SnowGlobe fiasco could have been avoided if the city had required a completion/surety/performance bond when they OK'd the convention center.

Should we eat snow? Probably not

By Matt Blitz, Food & Wine

With winter upon us and snow coming down in delicious flakes (in some parts of the country), it's hard to fault the hungry people who are racing outside to scoop up the fluffy white stuff by the spoonful. OK, maybe you haven't filled up a natural snow cone yet this winter, but humans have been eating

the stuff for thousands of years.

Legend has it that Cleopatra served her lover Mark Antony a frozen slush treat after a rare Egyptian snowstorm and the extravagant Roman emperor Nero had snow transported from the tops of nearby mountains to his table for a sorbet-like dessert. Even Marco Polo may have brought back a snow ice cream recipe from his Far East travels that Kublai Khan kept a closely guarded secret.

While we always knew not to eat yellow snow, unfortunately recent studies now say that perhaps we should avoid eating this wintry treat falling from the heavens altogether.

Read the whole story

Ski Run speaker series features photographer/filmmaker

Photographer/filmmaker Chris Burkard has captured some of the most beautiful places and committed people on the planet.

He will be giving a talk Jan. 5 as part of the Ski Run speaker series.

Doors open at 6:30pm upstairs at Blue Angel Cafe in South Lake Tahoe, with the show at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for children under 13. Cash only. All proceeds will support the Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association.

Truckee's Engel matches career best in slalom

By U.S. Ski & Snowboard

Mark Engel of Truckee matched a career-best FIS Ski World Cup slalom result in 24th on a soft, grooved and punchy course under the lights in the capital of Croatia on Thursday night. But most important, he maintained a World Cup start position for the United States.

Austria's Marcel Hirscher came from behind in the second run to snatch victory away from his teammate Michael Matt, who finished second. Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen was third.

For Engel, finishing was not only important from a team standpoint, but from a vindication standpoint too. Last year on the same course he finished third in the first run, only to crash spectacularly near the finish of the second run.

"I felt the pressure to finish here today because our team is going to run out of World Cup spots unless we make up some points," said Engel, who almost repeated last year's incident near the finish of Thursday's first run.

"I'm so happy I made it through," he said after his first run. "I had really tired legs down here and I got a little back seat, but managed to pull it off."

In the second run, Engel attacked the course. Following the flat middle section, he charged the bottom with a smile on his face. "I'm really happy that my best split was down the last pitch, which has troubled me before," he added.

U.S. to crack down on legal marijuana



Stores like NuLeaf in Incline Village could be targeted by the feds. Photo Copyright 2018 Carolyn E. Wright

By Kevin Johnson and Trevor Hughes, USA Today

WASHINGTON — As part of a crackdown on legal marijuana, the Justice Department is set to roll back an Obama administration policy to not challenge state laws that allow people to use pot for medical and recreational uses an official familiar with matter said Thursday.

The move represents a dramatic shift in marijuana enforcement policy. The official, who is not authorized to comment

publicly ahead of a formal announcement, said details of the new policy to reverse a 2013 Obama administration directive of non-interference would be outlined later Thursday.

Read the whole story

VHR moratorium in Tahoe basin before EDC supes

El Dorado County may enact an ordinance placing a moratorium on vacation home rentals in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The agenda for the Board of Supervisors' Jan. 9 meeting in Placerville includes the proposal for such an urgency ordinance. It would mean no more VHR permits for the unincorporated portions of the county located within the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The justification for the ordinance is to "preserve public peace, health or safety."

If the board decides to go this route, the first reading of the ordinance would be scheduled for Jan. 23. It will require a four-fifths vote.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

First Barton baby of 2018 arrives



Jessana and Julia

Jessana Joyce Walker is Barton Memorial Hospital's first baby of 2018.

She was born Jan. 2 at 8:03am; weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces and measuring 19.5 inches.

Her parents are Julia Gomez and Javier Walker of Markleeville. The couple named their daughter Jessana as a blend of their mothers' names. Jessana is a second generation Barton baby; her mother was also born at the South Lake Tahoe hospital

Barton Health presented the parents with a wagon filled with gift items donated by local businesses and organizations.

In 2017, 322 babies were delivered at Barton.

January 2018 snow survey

The first snow survey of 2018 at Phillips Station near Lake Tahoe was dismal.

Outdoors: 7 things to watch for in 2018

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

It's a new year and by now, hopefully, you've ushered the relatives out the door and taken down the holiday décor.

Now it's time to look ahead to 2018 and think about things to come.

We're not in the prediction business because, as anyone who lived through 2016 and 2017 can tell you, predicting things is rough business.

But we can take a look at the landscape and anticipate what will be hot outdoors and environment issues in 2018 and explain why they're important to all of us.

Read the whole story

West may never look the same after wildfires

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

As hotter and bigger fires blaze through the West and yet another year passes with a disastrous toll, America's wildlands are having a harder time bouncing back. Some spots, from the singed valleys of Wine Country to the steep slopes of the Sierra, may never look the same.

The fiercer fires are killing more of the vegetation needed to provide seeds for regrowth, and scientists are learning that even when new trees sprout, many are struggling with the warmer and more extreme weather wrought by climate change.

While wildfires have historically benefited the natural landscape, cycling soil nutrients and clearing space for new plants, for example, scientists say more burned areas are likely to end up devoid of trees and populated instead with weeds and grasses. This new vegetation is even likelier to burn, setting in place a vicious cycle of only more fire and less forest.

Read the whole story