

Heller opposed Trump in '16, now feels closer to president

By Debra J. Saunders, Las Vegas Review-Journal

WASHINGTON — Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., readily admits he “wasn’t one of the biggest supporters” of President Donald Trump during the 2016 election. “I didn’t know him. He didn’t know me.”

But now that the two know each other better, Heller told the Review-Journal, they have a “much closer relationship.”

Perhaps no other candidate running for re-election in 2018 has more to win and more to lose because Trump is in the White House. Heller vehemently opposed Trump in 2016 and is the only GOP senator running for re-election in 2018 in a state won by Hillary Clinton.

Read the whole story

The importance of doing absolutely nothing

By Aaron Gulley, Outside

In these days of constant work and connection, taking time to do nothing is one of the most difficult agenda items. But it’s more important than ever.

In Artemis, our Airstream, Jen and I have put thousands of miles of road beneath us since August, crisscrossing the

Rockies again and again. We never planned to travel so much, but engagements kept arising that we couldn't pass up and before we knew it we were ping-ponging from place to place with nary a down day. This breaks one of my cardinal rules of Airstreaming—go slow—but we all know that, once we're spun up, Newton's first law is difficult to combat.

Thinking back a year and a half to when we began this life on the road, we were full of hope for simplicity, slowing down, and more time outdoors. We've enjoyed plenty of that and found lots of remote office campsites in national forests across Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado. But I'm also amazed at how quickly road life can accelerate out of control. Between meeting up with friends in half a dozen distant spots to camp, appointments for service on Artemis, trade shows and other work opportunities such as testing the new Basecamp, and a few travel assignments thrown in, I've felt like road life has been just as harried as when I'm at home—perhaps more so with the trailer to manage. Too many nights this fall, after full days of travel and logistics, I've found myself at the computer until 3am to get through my To Do list.

Read the whole story

Letter: Fed up with VHRs in S. Lake Tahoe

To the community,

I bought a home in the 1600 block of Venice Drive in the Tahoe Keys in 2005 and moved to beautiful Tahoe. I knew nothing about VHRs.

There are at least eight of them on my block. Most full-time owners have moved away because of them. This New Year's all of them were full and all of the renters lit firecrackers, cherry bombs and rockets off for 20 minutes.

I hate living in this town.

The Napa City Council call us the South Lake Tahoe vacation home rental ghetto.

I want to move, but I can't sell my home without loosing \$300,000 to \$400,000. People are not buying here because of the VHRs no matter what the rental agents and Realtors are saying. The renters are coming here to party and the owners and agents are renting there R1 zoned homes to make money. They care nothing about the people who live here.

The city has to make more changes against VHRs, but I think I am stuck here where I hate living because of all the noise from them.

Joe Sinnott, South Lake Tahoe

Controlled burns planned for North Shore

Weather permitting, the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team may conduct prescribed fire operations this week on the north end of Lake Tahoe.

Smoke may be present. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

When weather and conditions allow, prescribed fire operations

are conducted to reduce overgrown vegetation, which helps decrease the severity of future wildland fires, protects communities, reduces the risk of insect and disease outbreaks in our forests, recycles nutrients that increases soil productivity and improves wildlife habitat.

The TFFT coordinates closely with local county and state air pollution control districts and monitor weather conditions carefully prior to prescribed fire ignitions.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, the TFFT posts road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, sends email notifications and updates the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Explosion on West Slope reportedly a drug lab

Two people were injured New Year's Day when a suspected butane extraction lab exploded on the West Slope.

An explosion was heard about 3:25pm on Pony Express Trail in Camino.

Joshua Jamison, 39, was treated for burns to his face. A juvenile was also transported to the hospital for possible smoke inhalation and was later released. Two other juveniles in the residence were not uninjured.

Deputies believe an illegal butane extraction lab was set up in the bathroom of the home. They said the lab was being used to produce concentrated cannabis. There was extensive structural damage to the home as a result of the blast. Many

interior walls were cracked or moved and multiple exterior walls were pushed off of the foundation.

El Dorado County building officials deemed the home unsafe to occupy.

No arrests have been made at this point.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SnowGlobe turns S. Lake Tahoe grass fields into dirt



Fresh sod was laid on this field last fall. This is what it looks like after SnowGlobe. Photo/LTN

Updated at 8:04pm:

By Kathryn Reed

Just weeks ago the brand new sod fields in South Lake Tahoe were green and a dormant brown color. Now it's raw dirt.

What happened? The three-day music festival SnowGlobe.

"I am horrified by the condition of the field. We were told that SnowGlobe was going to invest \$1 million on a covering that would protect the field. Clearly that did not happen," Councilwoman Brooke Laine told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Lake Tahoe News on Jan. 2 emailed all five councilmembers for a comment about the field, as well as Ray Jarvis whose department at the city is responsible for the field, and concert promoter Chad Donnelly.

Donnelly, who rarely communicates with *LTN*, did not respond to the email, nor did Councilmembers Jason Collin and Austin Sass.

Councilmembers Wendy David and Tom Davis issued a joint statement: "In our deliberations on the SnowGlobe contract, it was of concern to us what damage might occur to the fields. Per your question, we can see that there was an impact to the new fields. There was considerable discussion prior to the final contract and it addresses these concerns."

This was the seventh year for the festival, which is always Dec. 29-31. This was the second year at the new fields. Prior to 2016 it had been on the synthetic soccer field at Lake Tahoe Community College. In 2016, it was on the new ball field, but at that time it was just dirt. The sod was laid last fall.

The contract with the Colorado-based promoter says, "Promoter shall reimburse the city, within 30 days of receipt of city's statement of costs, for city's documented cost of repairing any damage to the property caused by the promoter. In addition to any costs and expenses described herein, and unless otherwise specified herein, promoter shall bear the sole risk

and pay all costs and expenses of whatever kind and nature which arise from this agreement and rental.”

So, while any damage to the field will be the responsibility of the promoter, the fact is right now it is not a grass ball field, but instead a muddy mess. And with rain in the forecast, it is only going to get worse.

It means locals whose tax dollars paid for the field don't have a place to recreate this winter; at least not until it snows or there is always the mud.

“To a certain extent, the appearance of the fields may be worse than the actual damage. For instance, directly in front of the main stage where thousands of festival-goers were dancing it's pretty likely there is damage to the turf. However, when standing in the same spot from which (the photo was taken) the field looks the same all the way to the main stage yet the impacts are very different,” Jarvis, director of Public Works, told *LTN*. “As people were dancing in front of the main stage the grass was getting pushed down, forcing fine soils up through the grass. The dirt also moved around the site as attendees moved to other areas away from the main stage, which creates the appearance of more extensive damage than what is likely real damage.”

LTCC's contract with Donnelly was only good through this past concert. That elected board and staff are distancing themselves from SnowGlobe, with little of their property used for the event.

The statement the mayor and mayor pro tem provided to *Lake Tahoe News* further states, “We do not plan or intend to replace the turf each year so we will be watching how the turf recovers and what repairs are needed as a result of SnowGlobe this year. After determining what level of restoration is necessary, additional turf protections may be needed for the future.

“As a council and as a city, we continue to look at the noise and the field impacts and how to further mitigate both in the future, listening to residents and businesses in regards to this event. SnowGlobe is a large, economically successful event for our tourist based economy, positively impacting lodging, restaurants, grocery stores and all of our visitor based businesses and their employees.”

Donnelly wants a 10-year contract for SnowGlobe as well as the opportunity to bring other events to this same location at other times of the year.

For now, the city electeds have agreed SnowGlobe can come back in 2018, but beyond that they want to see how the field holds up. That assessment usually comes in the spring after the snow melts. Right now there is no snow. Time will tell if any grass sprouts back.

Donnelly initially told city staff he would spend nearly **\$1 million on a cover**. The council on Jan. 2 found out he didn't buy a cover, but instead spent about \$100,000 to rent one. But the cover clearly did not span the entire field.

It was always going to be questionable if such a cover would help or harm the field. The grass was going to be matted down by equipment, structures and more than 10,000 people each night dancing on it. The hope was the field would spring back to life by using the cover.

Right now there doesn't look like there is much life to the field.

Burglars on spree at S. Lake Tahoe parking lots

Parking lots in South Lake Tahoe on Tuesday keep being hit by burglars.

The suspects started at 10am Jan. 2 at iHop where a black leather tote ad MacBook were stolen.

Then a vehicle was broken into at Denny's. A small purse with more than \$400 in it was taken.

Police officers are at the Raley's near Stateline now, just before 2pm, getting information on the smash and grab at that parking lot.

"It appears they are going through parking lots and when they see something worth taking they smash the vehicle window," police Lt. Shannon Laney told *Lake Tahoe News*.

His advice is simple – don't leave valuables in a vehicle.

If the vehicle was locked, these crimes are automatically felonies.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

SLTPD busy with law breakers during holiday

South Lake Tahoe police officers responded to fewer call this New Year's Eve, but made more arrests compared to a year ago.

The 60 calls on Dec. 31 resulted in seven arrests, though that does not include SnowGlobe incidents. Most of the calls (14) were disturbance related.

The arrests included four for public intoxication, one for possession of controlled substance, one for a warrant and drugs, and one driving under the influence.

For the 2016-17 holiday, there had been 43 calls, with 10 arrests.

At SnowGlobe on New Year's Eve there were 18 arrests: 10 minors in possession of alcohol, six possession of controlled substance, one furnishing alcohol to a minor and one public intoxication.

Multiple agencies are at the three-day music festival. El Dorado County sheriff's deputies made zero arrests at the concert.

Arrests on Dec. 30 at SnowGlobe:

ABC: Seven arrests for minor in possession, three arrests for possession for a controlled substance, one arrest for a fake ID, one arrest for furnishing alcohol to a minor.

SLTPD: Two trespassing arrests, one minor in possession, one resisting arrest.

Arrests at SnowGlobe on Dec. 29:

ABC: Three minor in possession and one open container in a vehicle.

SLTPD: Five for trespassing, four for minor in possession.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Dozen arrests at Stateline on New Year's Eve

Douglas County sheriff's deputies arrested 12 people at Stateline on New Year's Eve.

Violations included possession of a controlled substance, sales of a controlled substance, drug trafficking, domestic battery, battery on a peace officer, resisting and obstruction of a peace officer, warrant arrests, parole and probation violations, traffic violations, and civil protective custody.

About 5,000 people swarmed into the casino corridor at midnight.

Deputies called this a quieter than usual New Year's Eve.

Countywide there were 49 arrests from Dec. 29 at 6pm to 8am Jan. 1.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sonny Bono – 20 years since he died at Heavenly

By Bruce Fessier, Desert Sun

Twenty years ago this week, Sonny Bono went missing at Heavenly Mountain Resort.

He was a Palm Springs icon, born Salvatore Phillip Bono to a Sicilian peasant and a second-generation Italian-American whose marriage was arranged when his mother was 14. In Washington, D.C., he was the Honorable Sonny Bono, Republican member of the House of Representatives for California's 44th District. But, to everyone else, he was Sonny.

He and his fourth wife, Mary, often went skiing around Lake Tahoe. Sonny had grown close to the late Bill Harrah, owner of the Harrah's Hotel and Casinos, when he and Cher were TV's biggest musical stars of the 1970s. Harrah's Lake Tahoe was like a second home to him.

Congress was on break, so, Sonny and Mary went skiing with some friends to usher in 1998.

Read the whole story