

Letter: EDC snow removal leaves sour taste

Publisher's note: *This letter was sent to El Dorado County and Lake Tahoe News.*

To the community,

While the storms have been relentless and I understand the many needs you have to address, there is no excuse for poor practices while doing the job of plowing.

We live on Wailaki Street in Tahoe Par 60. Last week I called to report of a driver not lowering the gate on the blade when hitting driveways. A number of driveways were left with a 3-foot berm. Our neighbor is a director in the Planning Department for the city of South Lake Tahoe and had come home for lunch and completely cleared his driveway. As his wife came home shortly after, she found the large berm in front of the just cleared driveway and she got high-centered on it. It left her car halfway in the road. It took a number of neighbors to push her car into the driveway and a nice job undone for them.

While I got a return call from the county Transportation Division, I had just boarded a plane for a trip and referred the lady that called to please talk to my wife and I gave her the number. My wife never received a call.

The word must have gotten out because in the latest pass through our neighborhood, the driver had lowered the gate for other driveways, except for ours. My son had just worked so hard to keep the area clear of snow and the plow driver undid all that work in mere seconds. We have my wife's elderly mother living with us and we need to have access in case of any medical emergency. This sort of retaliation by your employees is not to be tolerated.

My son took pictures of the driveways to show comparison of those cleared yet ours was buried. I will provide them if you need further proof.

We can appreciate the scale of the work in this series of storms, but good practices during the execution of that work goes a long way when trying to gain public support.

Jeffrey L. Spencer, executive director Sacramento Transportation Authority

3-event challenge at Sugar Bowl

A three-event series designed for skiers and riders of varying ages, ability levels and interests, the Sugar Bowl Silver Belt Series, presents a new kind of challenge. The events include downhill, an uphill touring event, and a banked slalom.

Those who complete all three events will earn a silver belt buckle.

The Silver Belt Series will kick off Jan. 28 D Money's Dozen and will be followed up by the Quad Crusher on Feb. 25. The series will conclude on March 12 with the Shred the Love banked slalom. Registration for each event will take place on-site at the resort the day of the event.

D Money's Dozen requires participants of all ages to ski or ride the 12 favorite off-piste runs of Daron Rahlves, Sugar Bowl athlete and the most decorated male American Downhill and super G skier in history. (Note: A family-friendly/kids version of the challenge will also be available for those

interested in staying on groomed trails.) Lift ticket or season pass required for participation in each event.

For more info, go **online**.

Storms tap Caltrans' Tahoe budget

By Alexa Renee, KXTV-TV

So how are the recent storms affecting the Caltrans budget?

"We budget for this annually," said Deanna Shoopman, chief spokesperson for Caltrans District 3. "It's not something new."

Caltrans keeps a maintenance budget which covers cleanup after storms, according to Shoopman.

The total budget for District 3 this fiscal year is about \$44.3 million, according to Caltrans. District 3 has spent approximately \$31.5 million, not including the recent storm damage. The storm cleanup will include the costs of massive sinkholes, fallen tree cleanup, road repairs, snow removal and much more so the costs will likely exceed the \$44.3 million budget.

Read the whole story

Trump decisions could have major effects in Nev.

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

There are a lot of “what if’s” for Nevada following the election of Donald Trump.

Trump’s policy decisions on China, health care and infrastructure spending could have major consequences for Nevada, according to speakers Tuesday at the Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce’s Preview Las Vegas networking and forecasting event at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Mike PeQueen told the crowd of about 1,900 business and community leaders that he believes it will be a good year ahead filled with “a lot of surprises because of the new presidential administration.”

Read the whole story

Truckee enlists residents’ input on recreational pot

Truckee is hosting a series of workshops to discuss how the town wants to regulate all things cannabis.

Because the use of marijuana was legalized last November, the town will be making changes to its zoning regulations, permitting processes and taxation practices.

Officials want to know what residents think about cannabis

regulations.

The community workshops are Feb. 9, March 9, April 13 and May 11; 6-8 each night at the airport.

An **online survey** is being used to gather input, too.

Kings Beach open house to focus on future

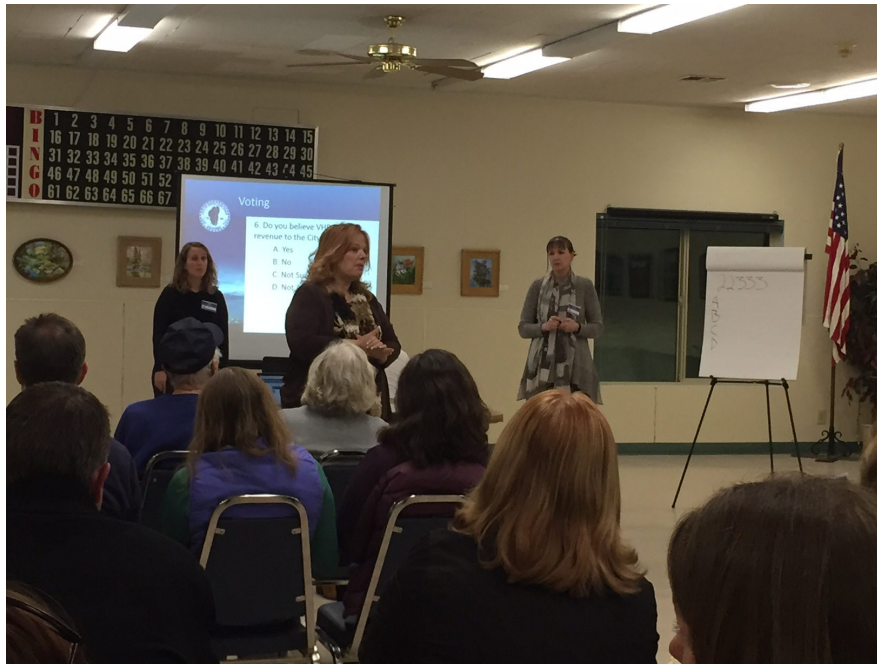
North Tahoe Business Association is hosting an open house on Feb. 16, 5:30-7pm at North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

This is an opportunity for community and business people to network and provide input on how to make Kings Beach a better place to live, work, play and visit at interactive stations.

NTBA is a nonprofit, member-based organization founded in 1979 that works to improve economic vitality and quality of life in the communities of North Lake Tahoe.

RSVP by Feb. 13 to info@NorthTahoeBusiness.org or call 530.546.9000.

Little consensus on VHRs in S. Lake Tahoe



South Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry addresses questions about VHRs on Jan. 25.
Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Wednesday night's vacation home rental workshop became more about whining than an information gathering opportunity.

People were becoming angry when the majority didn't agree with them. Those in the room were upset that those voting online often had different answers. Then there were the people who claimed they were not being listened to because they didn't get their way.

South Lake Tahoe is in the throes of an economic study about vacation home rentals. Jan. 25 was the second workshop conducted by consultants Michael Baker International, the group tasked with compiling all the data.

The consultants will be looking at perceptions people have as well as the facts. The preliminary report is expected to be released this spring, with another workshop after that and then the final document to be out in the summer.

From there it will be up to the City Council to decide if any

policies are changed.

VHRs have been a regulated entity in the city since 2003. It has been contentious ever since then, with tweaks to the policy coming seemingly every year. The lack of enforcement, neighborhoods becoming party zones, regional regulations and the increasing inability to find long-term rental housing have triggered anger toward VHRs to the point some would like a moratorium or outright ban.

On the flipside is those who want to stay somewhere other than a hotel – whether it's here or elsewhere. Then there are all the people who have a job related to the industry. And there is the money involved.

Ten questions were asked Wednesday. The more than 40 people at the senior center were polled as well as people online. Statistically this survey is not valid, but it did give an indicator of what people are thinking. What isn't known is who was voting online. Those at the meeting were predominately residents, most over 60, and almost all Caucasian.

The answers by people at the meeting are hard numbers, while the online responses are percentages. The number of respondents online for each question were not given. It was possible for online voters to have also voted in person.

The majority believed VHRs expand the lodging options for tourists and provide jobs.

When it came to whether VHRs strain public services, those at the meeting said yes, while those online said no.

When it came to saying whether VHRs in residential areas are an inappropriate use, 21 people at the meeting said yes, 16 said no. The online percentage – 22 percent said yes, 71 percent no.

The question about whether VHRs have a negative impact on the

character of a neighborhood also differed between the in-person vs. online response. Yes said the majority physically present, no said those remotely.

Those in person believe VHRs decrease the supply of affordable housing, while those online said the opposite.

VHR owners were asked what they would do if they could not use their property in this manner: 11 percent would make it a long-term rental, 53 percent would leave it vacant, 28 percent would do something else, and 8 percent said "not applicable". No one at the meeting answered the question, signaling that no VHR owners were in attendance or that they didn't want to make themselves known to a crowd that was clearly against them.

After the questions were asked and answered the conversation was more directed to city staff.

Letter: Vet lashes out at American Legion

To the community,

My letter to the editor is provided to all of my friends and neighbors in the area asking for advice and assistance. This is my true story.

My name is Mike Williams, I graduated from El Dorado High in Placerville in 1971. I was drafted to serve my country in the heat of the Vietnam War at 18. I would have never thought that at the age of 19 I was taking arms and legs off our service men and women. I was stationed at Balboa Naval Medical Center as a corpsman. I know that I have held the hands of over 300

soldiers who never made it. I hope no one has to go through what I had to and see what I've seen.

Sorry about my grammar and storytelling; this is my first time at this, and I'm upset as I'm writing this letter to all of you. Forgive me.

To the point I was a homeless veteran a few years ago in the streets of Sac. I got beat up under the rose garden outside the state Capitol. I should have died from my street beatings, and the cold wet rain but thank God it's all over and today I'm safe and have a place to live. I'm a changed man forever and have a heart to really help our veterans so I decided to form a business to help and employ our veterans. Today I'm CEO of a company called Veteran's Pride Foods. The reason for my company is to help veterans by giving them a job working at my Hot & Sausage cart located across from Poor Reds at George's Pit Stop in El Dorado. Please drop by and see me during lunch time. I'm there from 11:30 to 3:30.

As a past homeless veteran, I'm always looking to help veteran groups in need and looking for veterans to employ. After reading about the nation's largest veterans support group in town, the American Legion 119, I became a member. The reason I joined was to ask for their support in my efforts to help our veterans and wanted to tell them my story and to make a presentation to the board to assist in a fundraiser and event at their hall. The event was to raise money to support the American Legion 119 and to support and employ our veterans.

I arrived one hour early to look around and also meet other veteran members and introduce myself.

I had no idea there would be a full active bar and that most all of the board members were drinking and getting drunk before the board meeting, but I went with the flow and gave my request and presentation for approval anyway. During this time I found it very strange that no one asked a question and no one seemed to care. Why? I was disrespected and shamed!

After the meeting and as I was walking out the door I asked a fellow veteran is this the way business is done in the American Legion? He told me to not make waves and just go with the flow and I'm sure they will get back to you soon. Nice guy, he thanked me for becoming a new member. So I left expecting a reply very soon.

Three weeks latter I finally got a call from a member of the board stating that the board voted no to allowing me to use the hall and that they didn't want to support me or my company's efforts to employ and help our local veterans. I asked him why. He told me that they didn't want me to use their kitchen. I said what? I told him that I never asked to use their kitchen and told the board that I'm catering the lunch from our own commercial kitchen. He knew that as did all the other board members. I was so upset so I told him that I wanted to see the minuets and try to get a straight answer. I was told to forget it and move on, don't make waves. Today I still don't have the board minutes and I don't like being treated like I'm some idiot. I'm the reason they exist. Read their website.

I'm not going to take this lying down and I'm not going to forget it and go away. I don't care what they say. Did all of you know that the American Legion raises millions in donations to help veterans and homeless veterans just like me? ... and pay no taxes!

The American Legion 119 is a scam and run by a bunch of drunks. I'm asking all of you to never give money to support their scam bar and lie and never support the American Legion 119 in any efforts to raise money stating that they are in business to support our veterans. They are not!

Join me in exposing this veteran club bar asking for money to help our veterans and then drink it away. Let's expose them for what they are. I want to audit them and I bet you that they have never taken a veteran off the streets.

Who am I? Just a poor past homeless veteran trying to help our veterans. Shame on me. I bet I have paid more in taxes than they have to helped more veterans. Did you know that the veteran suicide rate has increased 32 percent in 2016 and 30 or more veterans kill themself everyday?

Bless all of you who took the time to read my letter. God bless America and our veterans. I can use some help to fight these scammers. Got any ideas? I would really like to sue them for what they are doing and what they have done to me.

Thank you,

Mike Williams, Cameron Park

TRPA approves area plan for Placer County

Even though Placer County's Tahoe Basin Area Plan already faces a **legal challenge**, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board on Wednesday voted to approve it.

The vote was unanimous, though board member Belinda Faustinos had to leave the Jan. 25 meeting in Kings Beach early. However, she had expressed her support before she exited.

The approval also means the Tahoe City Lodge is green lighted. The lodge will include 78 condos and 40 traditional hotel rooms. The four-story structure will front Highway 28.

The area plan is the guiding planning document for Placer County's portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin. It has criteria for affordable housing, addresses traffic, parking management strategies, and wayfinding signs.

The lawsuit filed by the California Clean Energy Committee contends the environmental analysis is not adequate, in particular CEQA – the California Environmental Quality Act. Still, the approved document is the law of the land until a court says otherwise

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Missing snowboarder found near Mt. Rose

By KRNV-TV

Volunteers with Washoe County's search and rescue teams have found a snowboarder who was reported missing in the Mt. Rose area Wednesday night.

The boarder started at Incline Peak, according to the sheriff's office, and his car was parked on the Mt. Rose summit.

The sheriff's office reported just before 9pm Jan. 25 that the boarder was found safe and in good health.

[Read the whole story](#)