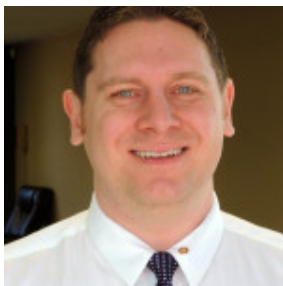


Money Matters: Time to be one community

By Nic Abelow

'Tis the holiday season. No matter your political, religious, economic, or cultural beliefs, the reality is we are all in this together. The holiday season is a time to reflect and cherish the important people in our lives. Also, it is a time of giving and many are in need of those gifts.



Nic Abelow

We are in this together. We are all on the same ship traveling through space. By coming together we can make this place better.

Did you know that in our local community we have more than 400 nonprofits and volunteer organizations? These are the people who have made a commitment to better our local community. They commit tens of thousands of volunteer hours every year to make this place tick.

Sometimes we need to just realize that others have different perspectives, and that is OK. Sometimes we need to keep a more watchful eye and look out for our fellow neighbors. Sometimes we need to just get up, and get out and lend our services to our great community.

I wanted to provide a simple list of ways all of can do a

better job of making our home a better place to live and visit:

- Promote local businesses
- Participate in holiday food drives
- Sponsor or coach a youth sports team
- Attend a local charity event
- Offer your skills by volunteering.

The only way we will live in a better place in the future is for all of us to become more involved today. I encourage you to get up, get out, build friendship and fellowship, and make Tahoe a place we all want to call home.

Nic Abelow is a LPL financial advisor with Abelow, Pratt & Associates Financial Advisors and Wealth Management. Abelow is a board member of the Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe and the Tahoe Regional Young Professionals.

Another large mule deer illegally killed



This trophy buck was
illegally killed.
Photo/Nevada Department of
Wildlife

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Wildlife officials are seeking information on a large mule deer illegally shot and left to waste in Lincoln County.

It's the second time since late November officials have turned to the public for help identifying leads in a deer-killing case.

The most recent case involves a mule deer found dead with the head partially removed in Rose Valley in hunt area 231 on Nov. 28.

Read the whole story

Nev. 6th-fastest growing private sector in country

By Associated Press

Nevada has the sixth fastest-growing private sector in the country in another sign that the state has rebounded from the recession.

The Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation said Tuesday that the state's job growth rate was 3.2 percent at the middle of 2016.

That puts Nevada's rate behind only Utah, Idaho, Florida,

Oregon and Georgia.

State economist Bill Anderson said the news is significant considering Nevada had the lowest growth rate in the country in 2009, when it was -10.1 percent.

Nevada's growth rate has been as high as second-fastest in the nation in 2014 and third-fastest in 2015.

Lawmaker: Trump win brings Yucca Mountain closer to opening

By Bristow Marchant, Tribune News Service

With Donald Trump moving into the White House and former Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid heading back to Nevada, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., is optimistic the Yucca Mountain nuclear-waste repository soon could be back on the federal government's agenda.

The South Carolina Republican told the Columbia Rotary Club on Monday that the president-elect's transition team has distributed a survey to Energy Department personnel about the long-delayed facility in southern Nevada that could host nuclear waste now held in South Carolina — something Nevada's Reid, the Senate's minority leaders, long opposed.

"We've already put \$1.5 billion into permanent storage there," Wilson said, adding he hopes the retiring Reid "goes (home) to his just reward in Las Vegas."

Read the whole story

Ex-SLT firefighter pleads guilty to child porn

By Kathryn Reed

Nearly two years after being arrested on child pornography charges, former South Lake Tahoe fire Capt. Mark Wygant was in federal court in Sacramento on Dec. 16 to plead guilty to one charge.



Mark Wygant

A plea deal brought the original six charges involving sexual exploitation and attempted sexual exploitation of minors down to one charge of transportation of child pornography.

He will be sentenced at a future date. Wygant faces between five and 20 years in prison. Since his arrest in January 2015 he has been held in the Sacramento County jail.

"I am pleased that Mr. Wygant pleaded guilty to his crime and the punishment will now be in the hands of the criminal justice system," Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*.

A flash drive was found in an unassigned locker at a city fire

station containing more than 5,000 images of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct and more than 50 video files depicting child pornography, according to court records.

The crimes began in March 2011 and were ongoing until at least December 2014.

The 46-year-old resigned from the department in February 2015. During his employment with South Lake Tahoe he was living with his family in Chico.

Ganong top American at Val Gardena SG

By USSA

VAL GARDENA, Italy – Once Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) got up to speed, he laid down a solid run to lead to U.S. men in Friday's Audi FIS Ski World Cup super G.

"The skiing was really good once I got into it," said Ganong, who finished the day in 18th. "But the start is kind of what got me."

Norway's Kjetil Jansrud, who has been on fire so far this season in speed events, won his second super G race of the season over countryman Aleksander Aamodt Kilde. Canada's Erik Guay rounded out the podium in third – his 24th World Cup podium finish.

Other American finishers included Steve Nyman (Sundance, Utah) in 25th; Brennan Rubie (Salt Lake City) just missed World Cup points in 31st; Tommy Biesemeyer (Keene, N.Y.) 42nd; Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) 47th; Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley)

48th; Ryan Cochran-Siegle (Starksboro, Vt,) 51st; and Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) 53rd.

NLTRA executive director calling it quits



Sandy Evans
Hall

North Lake Tahoe Resort Association is in need of a new leader.

Executive Director Sandy Evans Hall tendered her resignation, though it is not effective until July 1.

"My time here has been invaluable," Hall said in a statement. "In addition to career accomplishments, I have thoroughly enjoyed our local landscape by paddling the entire shoreline of Lake Tahoe, hiking all of the Tahoe Rim Trail and 180 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail."

She is returning to Colorado where she has family. Hall came to Tahoe in 2010.

Casino industry gradually charging for parking



Stateline casinos – for now – are leaving their parking lots open to everyone. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

What happens in Vegas doesn't always stay in Vegas.

When it comes to the casino industry Las Vegas is a trendsetter. And the latest trend is charging for parking at casinos.

“Paid parking is a topic we have recently been discussing at STAR. It’s not something that has a lot of understanding yet, but the point is over this last summer both Hard Rock and MontBleu began charging for parking periodically,” Mike

Bradford with the South Tahoe Alliance of Resorts told *Lake Tahoe News*. "This action is something that historically was considered verboten. Now I think there is growing recognition there is probably a place for it."

Among the five Stateline casinos there is vast acreage covered in asphalt as well as multistoried parking structures. Today, it's usually free to park – even in valet, though tipping there is the norm. People not patronizing the casinos even park in those lots. Skiers are regularly at Harrah's to avoid the high-priced city owned garage at Heavenly Village.

The overflow of concert-goers for the Harveys summer concerts is what led Hard Rock and MontBleu to charge people last summer.

"What ended up happening is customers were using our parking lot and going across the street so it was displacing our casino guests," Marimille Dacia, MontBleu marketing director, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We charged \$20 cash and then gave \$20 credit to (use in the casino), so if you used our facility, you got your money back."

MontBleu charged during the outdoor concerts and the celebrity golf tournament. Dacia said at this time there is no plan to charge for parking on a regular basis.

No one from Hard Rock Lake Tahoe returned calls.

The MGM properties in Vegas were the first to charge; implementing the policy earlier this year. Last month, Caesars Entertainment, which owns Harrah's and Harveys, announced it was going to institute paid parking at its Southern Nevada properties.

"Our priority is to ensure that our hotel guests, local residents and Total Rewards loyalty members have an improved parking experience," Bob Morse, president of hospitality at Caesars Entertainment, said in a press release. "Guests who

stay, game and shop at our resorts have said that parking spaces and valet services have become increasingly scarce, so we believe that implementing a paid parking program while also investing in LED parking guidance systems will help address these issues.”

For now, at least four of the Stateline casinos do not intend to charge for parking on a regular basis. But the powers that be are keeping an eye on their counterparts down south.

“It is private property. The open parking in back is intended for guests of our properties, so if we wanted to do something, it would be within our rights to do so,” John Packer, spokesman for Harrah’s-Harveys, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Bradford, who operates the Lakeside Inn, said while his lot will remain free for now, the bigger discussion by STAR has been looking at the possibility of generating income from the lots for the greater good of the community.

“As we ultimately talk about how to fund local transit and how to make it work, parking is one of the pieces of that puzzle,” Bradford said. “There is no immediate direction to formalize that approach, but the evolution of forming that is possible.”

Letter: Warm room helps more than homeless

To the community,

Our community needs the temporary shelter that the warm room provides – not just for those homeless guests who use it, but for everybody else, too. Dickens’ Ebenezer Scrooge could tell

you why.

The warm room is open to keep people from freezing to death in the winter. It is open from mid-December to mid-April when temperatures are dangerously cold. The warm room is basically a big room with about 30 cots, a table with non-perishable food, donated items (clothes, boots, toiletries), and a toilet and sink. One staff member supervises and a crew of volunteers helps operations. Social workers volunteer their time and expertise to counsel guests to find jobs, housing, mental health counseling, medical assistance, or other needs. Local businesses and service groups are invited to donate time and resources to help with anything from haircuts and showers to job placement and blankets.



Annie Davidson

The warm room is not comfortable. Guests sleep in one room together, sharing everything from noises to smells. Food and donations are limited. There is no shower. To stay, each guest must adhere to rules to maintain safety for the group as a whole. Guests cannot leave once they come in for the night, and they are expelled for breaking rules about drug/alcohol use or violence.

Some folks in South Tahoe are against the idea of a temporary shelter here. Their views focus on the idea that if the people find a shelter, they will stay here when they would otherwise leave. These critics of the warm room argue that the guests bring bad things to our community – and it's the warm room that is keeping them here. Just like Scrooge in the beginning

of “A Christmas Carol”, they suggest that it’s someone else’s problem to care for others.

As a volunteer last year, I saw the operations of the warm room firsthand: cleaning cots, vacuuming, stocking and cleaning the food table and donations, talking with guests and staff, listening. Helping out, I learned that I need the warm room as much as the guests do. I learned how much I need to be reminded that homelessness is complicated and those who are homeless are people, just like you or me. I learned that, by helping out, I gain compassion for others and receive kindness back a hundredfold. I learned about being grateful for the blessings in my life and how sharing blessings is at the heart of any strong community. I learned that telling people to go away when they are down and out will never solve our collective problems. For all these reasons, we all need the warm room.

You can help, too. Join the volunteer team or donate toiletries or non-perishable food. For more about the warm room project of the Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless, go **online**.

And may God bless us, everyone.

Annie Davidson, South Lake Tahoe

Maloff donation to WHS increases to \$3 million

South Shore philanthropist Lisa Maloff this week increased her donation to Whittell High School by \$500,000, bringing the total to \$3 million.

The Douglas County School District board on Dec. 13 accepted the donation.

It was announced in **July** that Maloff would be writing the check to improve the football field and track at the Zephyr Cove school.

The price to do the work turned out to be more than district officials estimated. The increased donation will allow for the necessary work to be completed. This includes making the stadium ADA compliant, putting in turf, improving drainage, adding a six-lane synthetic track, building an announcer's booth and concession stand. The triple jump and long jump pits will also be improved.

The plan is to go out for bid this winter, with construction starting as soon as the snow melts.

"We probably will not be able to use the field next season so we will have to make arrangements to have home games at different facilities," DCSD Superintendent Teri White told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Maloff is the widow of Bob Maloff. He co-owned and operated Lake Tahoe Inn and Timber Cove Lodge in South Lake Tahoe. Plus, he had other significant real estate dealings. Promoting wellness, activity, and fitness in the community have long been goals of the Maloffs.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*