

Cancer League selling See's Candy as fundraiser

South Lake Tahoe Cancer League's annual See's Candy sales begin Dec. 1.

The nonprofit sells boxes of candy through Dec. 24 as its major fundraiser for the year. The money raised helps Cancer League provide rides for are cancer patients to their appointments and stipends to help with daily expenses during treatment.

The store is open from noon-5pm near Starbucks in the Raley's center at the Y.

Community tells LTCC board theater is a must



Nearly 70 people listen Nov. 29 to why Lake Tahoe Community College may disband the theater arts program. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

The drama that was staged before the Lake Tahoe Community College trustees Tuesday night was complex, passionate, sorrowful and heartfelt.

It's like today is intermission and the audience is left not knowing how many acts there will be in the future. That's because the script is not finished.

This production of sorts was actually the college administration's opportunity to present to the board and public why the theater department may be disbanded following this academic year. It was also the public's first chance to speak directly to the board.

"This program does great work. That has never been the question for us. We know the productions are of high quality," Michelle Risdon, interim vice president of Academic Affairs, said. "We are looking for change in this program. Whether the

program is discontinued or not it has to change.”

Most people were unaware until **last month** that the college was even considering doing away with theater arts as a credit program. Not enough people are taking the classes to make it a viable program, according college officials. They stressed how few people actually get a degree.

Many of those who spoke Tuesday during the 2½ hour special board meeting pointed out that getting a degree is not satisfactory criteria. Many shared their experience of taking courses that have benefitted them despite having no desire to act. Actors spoke of how they have been able to hone their craft.

Susan Boulanger, head of the department, was repeatedly praised for her teaching acumen. She sat in the audience, near the back. While she showed emotion as various people spoke, she remained silent, unable to direct this spectacle.

All of the 21 people who gave testimony Nov. 29 want theater in some form to exist at LTCC. Administrators also want the college to have theater, but as a true community theater model and not an academic model.

Stephanie Arrigoth, professor at Western Nevada College and producer-director of the Western Nevada Musical Theatre Company, suggested LTCC’s program would be viable with fewer productions, developing online courses and having fewer sections of classes so enrollment would increase. She also suggested the possibility of renting the theater out to other groups in a hybrid model.

What the board wants is still unknown.

A task force of community members will be assembled to hash out options. Enrollment numbers from winter and spring quarters will be evaluated. The president – who will be new and has yet to be hired – will make a recommendation to the

board, then the board will make the ultimate decision.

Opinion: Blue lives matter

By Ted Gaines

A handful of California families will find it hard to celebrate the holidays this year because they lost their fathers and brothers to senseless violence.

On Oct. 19, sheriff's Deputy Jack Hopkins of Modoc County responded to a disturbance call and was shot and killed in the line of duty. He was only 31. On Oct. 6, Los Angeles County sheriff's Sgt. Steve Owen was shot dead responding to a burglary. The two deaths are a somber reminder that for our peace officers, their lives are on the line every time they are on patrol.



Ted Gaines

Each of these losses, hundreds of miles apart in our vast state, was a tragedy. But the same month, something far more sinister played out here, showing that America and our law enforcement have entered a new, more dangerous and shameful era that threatens the foundation of the lawful and civil society we enjoy.

Two Palm Springs police officers, Lesley Zerebny, 27, and Jose

"Gil" Vega, 63, were murdered in a planned attack allegedly committed by John Hernandez Felix. These deaths did not occur during the commission of another crime, they were the crime. Felix reportedly set a trap for the officers and ambushed them, shooting them down in cold blood. It was not a one-off event.

In late November, a San Antonio policeman was ambush murdered as well. And, devastatingly, this summer's hateful and violent anti-police protests culminated in the sickening assassination of five innocent police officers in Dallas. I only wish that the list were complete, but it's not.

Driven by the media's hysterical coverage of any shooting death that fits their political narrative of minority oppression at the hands of police, we're trending into and upside down world where the protectors are viewed as predators. That's wrong. It's the open, politically inspired murder of police that is the real "hate crime" epidemic.

In this overheated environment, it's little surprise that year-over-year law enforcement firearm-related deaths are up 67 percent in 2016.

This growing hostility toward the police is terrible for the men and women who serve to keep us safe, and it's changing the way they police, with distressing effect.

The "Ferguson Effect" describes a retreat from effective, proactive policing that has been one driver of a multi-decade crime decline that is in danger of reversing. It's a term rooted in the Ferguson police shooting of strong-arm robber Michael Brown, where the infamous and false "hands up, don't shoot!" became the big lie slogan of rioters, activists, and a complicit, left-wing media and political cabal.

Police around the country, fearful of becoming a media story, or tired of the jeering, snarling mobs that now surround and confront them in the course of their duties, have predictably

began interacting more cautiously and less frequently with the public, to dire effect.

In Chicago, for example, police stops were down 90 percent in the first part of 2016, compared to 2015. Shootings in that city have skyrocketed. Heather MacDonald, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, blames the crime spike in Chicago (and other cities – it's not a Chicago-specific phenomenon) on the abandonment of "broken windows" policing that sees police actively intervening in small, low-level public enforcement crimes. This retreat leads to disorder and emboldens criminals to commit more serious crimes. It's a troubling shift in nationwide policing.

To make it worse, California is undertaking an unprecedented de-incarceration effort that is putting tens of thousands of criminals back out on the streets before their sentences are complete and making it more difficult to put offenders behind bars.

"Realignment," 2014's Proposition 47, and this year's Proposition 57, all send a strong message to California criminals that the state is not interested in punishing them for their crimes.

It seems simple to understand that if you introduce more criminals into society, the result will be more crime. True to form, California violent crime jumped 11 percent in the first six months of 2015, compared to 2014. Expect crime to spike even higher.

This is the worst possible time for the police to step back because they fear attacks, shaming or other fallout from simply doing their jobs to preserve law and order and keep us safe. The environment that has inflamed and emboldened sick criminals to murder public safety officers must change. It's a dangerous job where officers make life-and-death decision in a fraction of a second, and they deserve wide latitude from the

public and our deepest thanks.

Are there abuses of police power and individual officers who use bad judgment? Of course. And it's incumbent on us to hold those bad actors accountable. But it's foolish to attribute sins of the individuals to the whole profession.

FBI Director James Comey said in October that the "narrative that policing is biased and unfair ... threatens the future of policing." Comey should not have stopped there. A media-fueled degradation of respect for law enforcement threatens much more than the future of policing, it threatens the safe, civil society that we take too much for granted.

Honor our police.

State Sen. Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra and Siskiyou counties.

'No Vacancy' signs vanishing from U.S. highways

By Paul Lukas, Bloomberg

You've been driving for a good chunk of the day, you're pulling into an unfamiliar town, and you need a place to stay for the night. Happily, there's a comforting sight just ahead—a motel with an illuminated "Vacancy" sign, the "No" thankfully darkened.

The "(No) Vacancy" sign, a beacon of hospitality and/or disappointment, has greeted road-weary American travelers for

generations. But just as paper maps and toll booth clerks increasingly seem quaint relics of the analog age, the classic “(No) Vacancy” sign may soon become another victim of shifting travel habits and market forces.

“We don’t really have any customers who want that type of sign anymore,” said Alex Lauretano of the Lauretano Sign Group, a leading sign manufacturer for the hospitality industry. “At one point they were useful—but not anymore, with online booking.” Julie Hall, a spokesperson for AAA, which inspects and rates motels, confirmed that vacancy indicators are on the wane and also cited online booking as a key factor.

Read the whole story

Holiday music at South Lake Tahoe Library

The Sierra Strings Trio (violin, viola, cello) will perform for free at the South Lake Tahoe Library on Dec. 3 at 11am.

The trio will play traditional and unusual songs of the season. Join them for a sing along and refreshments.

The concert is sponsored by Friends of the Library. The library is at 1000 Rufus Allen Boulevard.

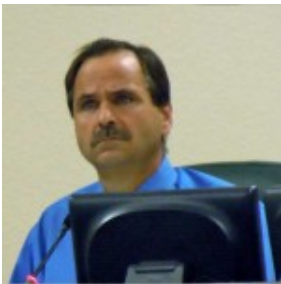
For more info, call 530.573.3185.

Ex-EDC Supervisor Nutting loses appeal

By Kathryn Reed

Ray Nutting, the El Dorado County supervisor who lost his seat because of criminal wrongdoing, today lost his appeal regarding that case. He believes the charges were always politically motivated.

The 55-year-old's troubles started in 2013 when he faced four felony counts regarding more than \$70,000 he received from the state to clear brush from his 350-acre ranch in Somerset. A jury found him not guilty on those felony charges.



Ray Nutting

In the end, Nutting was convicted on misdemeanor charges related to taking loans from a county employee and a contractor who does business with the county, and for failing to document the loans. His punishment was probation and being removed from office.

The money was to be used to bail him out of jail.

He challenged the lower court's decision in the Third Appellate District on five counts.

The appellate court made its decision public Nov. 29 – denying each of Nutting's contentions.

"... none of the three lenders deposited the bail money with the county," the decision reads. The money was given to Nutting's wife with the intent to use it for bail and for it to eventually be repaid. That is why the funds are deemed a loan. Had the money gone directly to the county, Nutting would not have been convicted of violating his duties of an elected official.

"Our argument is the jury should have acknowledged the money as bail money," Nutting told *Lake Tahoe News* on Tuesday.

The court document says, "The only intent required to violate the Government Code sections at issue here was the general intent to receive a personal loan from a county employee or contractor who does business with the county. What the parties to the loan intend the borrower to do with the money is irrelevant."

In the appeal Nutting tried to persuade the judges "that the exchange of money between him and those who gave him the money was a trust arrangement or a bailment."

The appeals courts dismissed that argument because Nutting had never made that contention before. Without the Attorney General's Office or district court able to weigh in on that theory, the appellate court said it could not respond to it.

With that said the court went on to say, "In any event, the theory does not help him." Then the justices cited case law to prove their point.

Nutting said, "I don't know if this is the end or what we are going to do."

He learned about the decision when *Lake Tahoe News* called and had not yet spoken to his attorney.

This same appellate court in July 2014 upheld that June's decision of Superior Court Judge Timothy Buckley which said

Nutting should be removed from office.

Nutting had also **sued former colleagues** last summer for harassment. He eventually dropped that case for what he said were more pressing family issues.

Purses stolen from restrooms at Stateline casinos

Douglas County sheriff's deputies are looking for a woman they believe stole women's purses at two Stateline casinos.



Law enforcement is looking for this woman.

Photo/Provided

The department just today is notifying the public about the Oct. 22 thefts.

In both incidents the victims went into the women's bathroom – one at Harrah's, the other at MontBleu – and a few minutes later could not locate their purses. This was between the hours of 6 and 8pm.

Deputies said camera surveillance shows a black female adult wearing a black jacket and blue jeans entering both restrooms with a large black handbag that appears empty. When the woman exits it appears that the black handbag is full.

Both victims had cash, credit cards and passports taken.

A reward is being offered to anyone with information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of the suspect. Call DCSO dispatch at 775.782.5126 or Douglas County Secret Witness at 775.782.7463.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Bread & Broth in need of volunteers

Bread & Broth, an all volunteer organization whose mission is to ease hunger on the South Shore, needs volunteers for a variety of jobs..

There are openings in the B&B 4 Kids program to help with packing weekend food for local schoolchildren on Thursday at 3pm at St. Theresa Grace Hall and for drivers interested in picking up the food bags on Thursdays and delivering to schools on Fridays. The food donation pickup crew is in need of volunteers to pickup food from local donors on Monday and/or Friday mornings.

The Second Serving team has openings for volunteers who are interested in helping with the soup and simple entrée dinners on Friday at the Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian church from 3:30-6pm.

Monday Meals at St. Theresa Grace Hall is looking for cooks and dinner setup/serving crew members.

In leadership positions, the Monday Meal and Second Serving team coordinators are looking for individuals to assist with the meal setup and serving team coordination. Administrative openings include communications chairperson and B&B 4 Kids grant writer.

If you are interested in any of these positions or need more information regarding volunteering opportunities, go **online** or email Myee Avecilla at mavecilla24@gmail.com.

Early rain builds hope for outdoor recreation in '17

By Tom Stienstra, San Francisco Chronicle

The start of rainy season and its effects on the outdoors next year already are showing promise.

The little-seen numbers from water agencies show there is a good chance of a great 2017 for camping at lakes and streams, and boating, rafting, fishing and water sports.

Over the weekend, I reviewed reports made by about 25 water districts to the state Department of Water Resources and federal Bureau of Reclamation.

Read the whole story

Revenue plummets in October at Stateline casinos

Stateline casinos went the opposite direction of the state in October, with casino winnings dropping from the previous year.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board on Nov. 29 reported an 11.1 percent statewide increase over last year to \$986.2 million.

For the South Shore, the numbers were down 22.2 percent to \$14.2 million.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*