

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Delano

Delano is a wild and crazy 1-year-old, 8-pound white and apricot Poodle and Terrier mix.

He can jump really high, likes to be underfoot and needs a lot of exercise. He seems to be crate trained, if not housebroken. He loves other dogs and is fine with kids (but will jump on them and is a bit mouthy). He wants to play with cats like they are dogs, so he is not a good fit for sensitive cats, but would be fine with those who will correct him.

Delano was brought to us with several other dogs from a shelter near Bakersfield by Umbrella of Hope, a wonderful rescue group that has brought us many dogs and cats from overcrowded shelters throughout California.

Delano is neutered, microchipped, tested for heart worm, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's

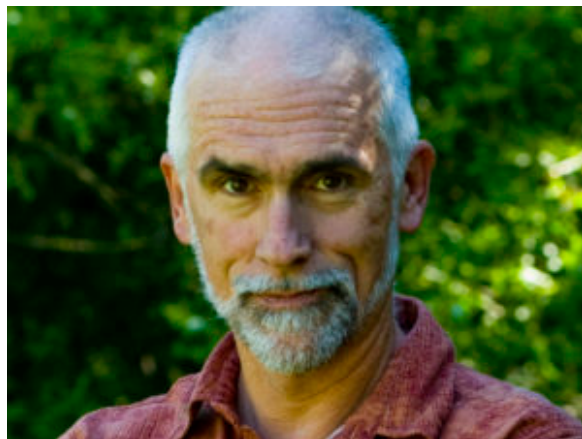
Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet. For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

Hamilton: Background, experience with LTCC

Publisher's note: Lake Tahoe News asked candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Douglas County School District, South Tahoe Public Utility District and Lake Valley Fire Protection District a series of questions. We are running the responses in the order received. All profiles may be found under the Special Projects listing and then the 2106 November Candidate Profiles category.



Dave Hamilton is one of two candidates for the Area 4 seat for Lake Tahoe

Community College.

Name: David Hamilton

Age: 60 (as of October)

Job/profession: Retired college educator

What boards, commissions, or other experience, including volunteering, do you have?: Local organizations: Currently part of core group forming the Tahoe Arts Alliance; president, Tahoe Tallac Association board of directors; 2007 board member from 2004-2014; member Pathway 2007 Forum (TRPA and LTBMU plan updates) representing non-motorized recreation in the Lake Tahoe Basin: 2005-2008; member of Public Lands Working group for Placed Based Planning Workshops, 2007; member board of directors Tahoe Rim Trail Association 2000-2003; member of initial planning committee for Van Sickle Park: 2000; president Tahoe Area Mountain Bike Association 1998-2005; member board of directors, Tahoe Arts Project 1990-92; president, board of directors South Lake Tahoe Theatre Company, 1990-1994

Regional/statewide organizations: member board of directors California Educational Theatre Association, 1993-1999, 2004, 2006-08 representing higher education; president board of directors Northern California Educational Theatre Association, 1993-1995, vice president 1990-1993

Why are you running for the college board?: My first connection with LTCC was taking classes back in 1976. I was first employed by the college in 1977 and I first taught at the college in 1984 then hired as a full time instructor in 1989 working until 2008. I consider Lake Tahoe Community College my college and I have been involved with much of its history. I helped write the original mission statement, participated in many annual planning sessions and three accreditations. Not only is LTCC a vital fixture, but also a

large part of our community's future. As a member of the board of trustees I want to continue serving the college in its important role for our students and community.

Why should voters vote for you over another candidate?: First, I have extensive background and experience with the college. As a faculty member over the years I connected with all types of students, getting to know them and understanding their academic needs. I was very involved with innovation in teaching and learning. In academic service I served as president of both the Academic Senate and the Faculty Association. I worked closely with the business office in the design and construction of the theatre as well as its yearly budget. I also served as a part time administrator gaining experience in administrative operations. I have worked as an administrator outside the district at other colleges, gaining insight to other ways of being successful within the California Community College system. But that experience is only one piece of why I would deserve the vote. South Lake Tahoe is my home town. I first moved to South Lake Tahoe in 1968. I graduated from STHS and have had about 38 full time years here. In that time I have been involved in many community projects and organizations. I have extensive experience in working as a member of a board of directors and feel I am innovative, collaborative and inclusive in that work.

What distinct experience or competency makes you uniquely qualified to lead effectively as an elected official?: Though I have all this experience with the college, it really just amounts to having knowledge and doesn't by itself make me an effective board member. I think what makes me uniquely qualified is that I have spent a large part of my career working collaboratively with groups of people to achieve a goal. Whether it is directing a play, which involves bringing a new group of people together to build a production, negotiating a union contract, working within the boards of

various nonprofits or being a member of the Pathway 2007 Forum which updated the TRPA Regional Plan. I believe I have an ability to help synthesize ideas and discussion into agreement and forward movement. I enjoy group synergy and work hard to establish positive working relationships with individuals and the community.

Public agencies have been under scrutiny the last few years for lack of transparency and accountability. What will you do to ensure both?: I believe the college already does a good job making sure the community is aware of what is going on. Accreditation requires the college to be accountable for how it operates. Though accreditation is only every six years, it ensures the college has processes and policies that ensure it is staying on track. As a public agency under the Brown Act the public has access to all board meetings as well as documents such as the budget, policies and procedures, etc. The college has been good about providing easy access to those documents. As a trustee I would want to make sure the Board communicates with both the public and staff in an open and timely manner. Processes for communication need to be clear and effective. Any decision made should have background and justification available.

What stands out for you in the current budget that you support and that you would change?: The budget process with the college involves many layers. It would be difficult to pick out a specific that is, or isn't, valid without understanding all the background and discussion. That being said, in a general sense and based on the past few years of data, I support the current budget being based on zero growth. The F2F FTE (number of general students) is still dropping and though it has been filled in in other categories it is a good idea to not over-project. The college has traditionally been fiscally conservative in budget projections and I think that is wise in the current climate. I also support the level of reserves and the additional funds for STRS/PERS reserve. In the change

area, one of the things that stands out for me, though it is not in the current budget, is why the college is spending money from Measure F on the bleachers and scoreboard in the gym. To my knowledge they are not currently used much and we do not have any competitive sports that need them. Again, I wasn't in on the discussion, but that doesn't seem like a priority.

Do you support current legislation for \$15 minimum wage?

Please explain: Yes I support it. I think the improvement in living standards would outweigh the effect on employment and increases in consumer costs. In Tahoe it will be felt strongly because we have a lot of small businesses that are barely making it now and they will take the brunt of the change. But at the same time, students coming to LTCC from out of town need to be able to make a living wage while going to school, no matter what job they find.

Do you support Proposition 55? Please explain: Even though Proposition 30 was a temporary tax, I feel that we have been able to absorb it without undue stress to our higher income earners. In addition, Prop. 55 does not extend the one-quarter cent sales tax. The money helps in areas that always need help, schools and health care. Though the state is recovering from the recession, I think it will be beneficial to extend this formula.

Describe three attributes for a successful board:

Collaborative, innovative and responsive. They should be collaborative in making decisions using their collective knowledge in a synergy to make good decisions. They should be innovative in thinking as the college must grow and change with the ever changing environment of higher education. They should be open to new ideas brought forth as well being able to think outside the box. And they must be responsive to the public and staff of the college with open communication and dialogue as well as timely responses to issues and concerns.

What are your thoughts about public employee defined benefits?: Defined benefits have a long and involved history. The college deals with PERS and STRS. Unlike many other government entities, LTCC has not negotiated substantial benefits for retirees beyond the state level benefits. Both retirement systems are significantly out of balance in terms of unfunded liabilities. The process to make both systems fully funded has begun to take more money from both members and employers. LTCC, anticipating these continued increases is placing money into reserves to cover increasing costs. So the question is, is it worth it for the state to continue these systems as they are? Defined benefits have basically disappeared in the general workforce. Many people see them as a taxpayer gift to public employees. This is reinforced by sensationalized examples of the highest end of retirees, the people who make six figures in retirement. But the reality is that the average retiree makes significantly less and a large portion of their retirement is money they have contributed out of their salary. I think overall they are working to get the systems sustainable. As the economy improves and the market goes up, so too will the amount each retirement system has. For the college it is still a way to attract people to jobs. As the LTCC board we only have the ability to augment the retirement systems. And that is the place where we would need to be very careful in how much money that would be in the long term.

Please explain your position on contracting out work normally done by staff: In general contracting out work should only happen for a three main reasons. Either it is temporary work that staff does not have the expertise to accomplish, it is work that would overload staff beyond their ability to complete and/or an outside contractor will save a significant amount of money. Your question indicates work "normally done by staff", which would seem to indicate contracting out different services to a private contractor. It depends on the nature of what the situation is. If it is a long term

situation then the benefits must be examined. An example would be janitorial work. It is often less expensive to hire a service to clean rooms, restrooms etc. than to hire full time janitors. But you have less control and flexibility with a service so you must balance the results with the costs. If there are substantial savings, that money could be put to better use, though on some level, you get what you pay for. An outside contractor does not necessarily have your best interests at heart, as their primary interest will be financial. I think the key is consistent monitoring of outside contracts to make sure you are achieving your goals with them.

What is your 10-year vision for LTCC?: It will be very interesting to see where the California Community Colleges are in 10 years. I believe the system is currently undergoing fundamental changes to its mission and what we see 10 years from now may look very different from what we see today. I would like to see LTCC continue to build a reputation as a destination college beyond the beauty of being in Tahoe. Part of this will be the introduction of new, unique programs such as the current fire science or wilderness programs that provide students training, certificates and/or degrees that will draw students from outside the area. The college will not be able to rely purely on transfer programs. If new programs can build the student population then that will help the college keep the breadth of programs it has now and will make it financially sustainable with faculty and staff making equitable wages. I would also vision greater partnerships with universities and participation in offering Bachelor degrees. The potential for student housing is still a reality. If it is financially sustainable that could also provide a resource to attract and retain students.

What one vote in the last four years that the current board made do you disagree with and why?: Again, without having been in on the planning and discussions I wouldn't want to second guess decisions made by the board. It is also easy to see the

results of a decision in hindsight and thus disagree with it. But I am of the belief that once a decision is reached, whether you vote to agree or disagree, you live with that decision and move on.

How many meetings have you attended this year for the board you are running for?: Over this year, none. I recently finished a one-year assignment as dean business, design and workforce at Cañada College in the Bay Area and was only home on weekends. Prior to that I have been to an occasional board meeting, though when I was Senate President I was at many. The agendas and minutes are posted, so it not difficult to keep up on discussion and decisions.

What do you know about the strategic plan, finances, debt, goals of college?: I have been catching up on the current state of the college. I have read the current plans and budget. Having been connected with the college I have a context for the content of the goals and strategic plan and understand how the college is moving forward.

Being on a board means working as a team. How will you work with the sitting members for the greater good of the community?: As I had stated above, I work well in collaborative decision-making. I already know the members of the current board and have worked with a couple members in different settings. As a new board member I would take the time to strengthen relationships with the rest of the Board and not simply come in with thoughts about what I think should happen. The reason we are all elected is to represent the community and provide a collective voice to help direct the college.

What should be the three main priorities for the board?: 1. Help the college achieve its mission 2. Maintain the fiscal health of the college 3. Represent the public interest.

What have you done to make yourself ready to be a board

member?: I suppose one way I have made myself ready to be an LTCC board member by being involved with the college and the community over the last 45 years. More specifically, I am now current on college policies and procedures as well the recent budget and issues the college has faced.

What is your opinion about career and technical education at the high school level?: CTE is a vital component of our education system. Along with providing a general education, our education system gets students ready for careers they will pursue in life. Many careers in today's world require training but not necessarily in a traditional academic environment. And many of these career paths can begin in high school. By providing hands on career training opportunities (CTE) in high school we can shorten the time needed for students to transition from high school into successful careers. And CTE is no longer seen as simply traditional blue collar jobs or an end in itself. CTE now represents pathways with multiple entry and exit points and also represents high paying careers. An example would be the tech industry. In high school students could get hands on experience in coding and/or graphic design which might transition them to a program at a community college where they could achieve a certificate or degree that would place them into a high demand area where they could earn a significant salary. At some point they might take that work experience and re-enter a training program to further their skills for a next level job or change careers entirely. The work they did in high school would fast track them at the next level, having them career ready with less time and cost. The state is currently providing funding for these pathways through the CTE Transitions program, which connects CTE high school students with degree and certificate pathways in a community college.

What will you look for in a new college president?: If I am elected to the board, the new college president will have been selected and will be starting the same time I do. I have faith

that the current board will have made the best choice based on the profile given in the search announcement. As the new superintendent/president begins I would look for the building of a solid relationship with the board, the college and the community. We are a small community and the more engaged and active the president can be with both the college community as well as our greater community, the better.

Tell us something about yourself that people may not know: Two things: First, I once performed with the San Francisco Symphony at Davies Hall and I don't play an instrument. They did a performance of "The Flood" by Stravinsky which had spoken parts, of which I got to do one. Second, I know Nancy Dalton who is also running. I think she is also well qualified and an excellent person and community member. It will be a win for the college either way.

As a former instructor at LTCC, how can the public believe you will represent everyone and not just staff?: I understand what it means to be a trustee. As a trustee I do not represent the staff at all. I represent the public interest and my job is to work with the entire board to help the college fulfill its mission and to make sure the use of taxpayer money is responsible. The only thing I represent as an individual board member are the people in Area 4. Even when I was an instructor at the college I understood the importance of every element of the college to make everything function well. I had no illusions that my needs were more vital than any others.

Weather apps are not all

created equal

By Graham Averill, Outside

Search “weather” in the App Store and you’ll be bombarded with an endless scroll of options—from radar imagery good enough for meteorologists to an app that shows you a different picture of a kitten every time you check the weather. Seriously. Weather kittens.

But if you’re using your smartphone to plan an adventure, or even just figuring out when you should walk the dog, you’re going to need more than just cute kittens.

We spent a month testing dozens of weather apps on the iPhone in a variety of scenarios. I used them to plan hikes and bike rides in the mountains and surf sessions on the coast in an attempt to separate the good from the bad.

Read the whole story

La Niña no longer seen as likely this winter

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

La Niña may not happen after all.

Federal climate scientists on Thursday dialed back their forecast for the influential weather pattern that is sometimes associated with dry years in parts of the Americas, including California – where another winter of scant rain could wreak havoc on the drought-plagued state.

The Climate Prediction Center, a division of the National Weather Service, projected that the equatorial Pacific probably won't see the abnormally cool temperatures – and the corresponding effects on the atmosphere – that characterize La Niña.

While a La Niña could still emerge this year, its absence leaves a vacuum for forecasters – and fewer clues on whether California will shake free of the drought.

Read the whole story

TTD uses technology to track Tahoe traffic

By Alexandra Spychalsky, Moonshine Ink

Getting anywhere around the lake can be a daunting task on summer weekends. When you're moving so slowly in a car that cyclists are whizzing by you, all you can do is crank up the radio and settle in for a long ride.

As a growing and changing population in Tahoe presents new problems, local agencies are pursuing new technologies to help them better understand our community and its needs. High-tech data collection methods, like those currently being used by the Tahoe Transportation District and Truckee, can reveal trends that were never before quantifiable, and help track compliance with town rules that were previously too difficult to enforce.

TTD seeks to make traveling to and within the basin more efficient and enjoyable. It is now using cell phone data to

gather information on where visitors come from, how they enter the basin, and where they go when they are here.

Read the whole story

Flu shots to be available in S. Lake Tahoe

The El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Nursing will be conducting flu vaccination clinics from Sept. 28 through mid-November for \$10 per vaccine. No one will be denied service due to inability to pay.

It is recommended people 6 months and older get the shot.

Cash or checks are accepted. Parents should bring their child's immunization records.

Dates:

- Sept. 28, Oct. 12 and Oct. 26 from to 10:30am-12:30pm at the Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.
 - Oct. 5 and Oct. 19 from 3-6pm at Bijou Community School, 3501 Spruce Ave., teachers' lounge, South Lake Tahoe.
 - Nov. 4 from 3-6pm at Lake Tahoe Airport, 1901 Airport Road, South Lake Tahoe.
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Mediator in Caesars bankruptcy case resigns

By Tracy Rucinski, Reuters

The mediator trying to resolve the \$18 billion bankruptcy of Caesars Entertainment Operating Co Inc (CEO) abruptly stepped down on Friday, according to a court filing, adding another twist to the complex case.

CEO filed for bankruptcy in January 2015 amid creditor accusations that its parent Caesars Entertainment Corp. and private equity sponsors Apollo Global Management LLC and TPG Capital had stripped it of its best assets.

It was not immediately clear who, if anyone, would take over the role.

Caesars is the parent company of Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Harveys.

Read the whole story

State vet calls Nev. wild horses an emergency

By Associated Press

State officials say the wild horse population is too large to be sustained by the rangeland on which the horses live.

The *Elko Daily Free Press* reports that at a public hearing with the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board, state

veterinarian JJ Goicoechea said the horse population is in a state of emergency today and headed toward disaster in the future.

Goicoechea says both fertility control and the removal of excess horses is necessary.

The Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board is considering treating some horses with contraceptives in order to shrink the herd southeast of Carson City.

Other supporters of shrinking the herd say the horses are taking too many resources, such as water, from the rangeland to the detriment of ranchers.

Teen provides solar to Truckee animal shelter

By Reno Gazette-Journal

Truckee High School senior Bella Bono has been volunteering for the Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe since she was 10, but this year she had an idea – fund and install a solar array for the animal shelter.

Bono started planning the solar installation in April, working with her father, Joe Bono, to get donated materials and services, fundraise for what wasn't donated, and complete a 5.5 kilowatt solar installation at the animal shelter. Bono hopes to have the panels up and running this fall.

The 22 solar panels and other equipment should last about 25 years, saving the Humane Society and town of Truckee an estimated \$42,000 over that time, Bono said, using the Truckee

Donner Public Utility District's net metering program.

Read the whole story

Future looks bright for Tahoe yellow cress

By Tom Lotshaw

In the late 1990s, Tahoe yellow cress, a small flowering plant that grows only on the sandy shores and creek mouths of Lake Tahoe, was teetering on the brink of extinction. Surveys done in 1996 found the plant gone from all of the beaches it had once occupied in Nevada and growing at fewer than 10 sites in California after a lengthy period of high lake levels.

In the years since, populations have rebounded, and today the plant has a much brighter future. That's due in part to a collaborative, basinwide conservation strategy that was launched in 2001 with regulatory and land management agencies, private property owners, and the public all working together to protect a species found nowhere else in the world.

The strategy is working. Last October, after a lengthy review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that Tahoe yellow cress does not warrant listing as a federally endangered or threatened species, saving the basin and its property owners from a new level of federal regulations to protect the unique native plant.



A basinwide conservation strategy has helped Tahoe yellow cress rebound to where it is no longer considered endangered or threatened. Photo/Tom Lotshaw

The Tahoe partnership's work to protect Tahoe yellow cress has "truly exemplified the most basic function of the Endangered Species Act—to protect and conserve ecosystems and the species that depend upon them," the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said. "They have continued to raise the standards for the next generation of conservation and convinced us that Tahoe yellow cress has a bright future on the beautiful shores of Lake Tahoe."

The plant has always had a precarious existence, growing only at the margins of a single lake where it became geographically isolated at some point during Lake Tahoe's 2-million-year history. To grow and reproduce, populations must shift up and down the beach each year with ever-changing water levels. The plant also faces continual threats from beach trampling and beach raking at Tahoe's heavily-visited shoreline.

Public agencies have worked to protect the sandy beaches and the creek mouths where Tahoe yellow cress grows and have also repopulated sites with plantings. But with half of Tahoe's 75 miles of shoreline privately owned, private property owners

are also playing a key role in protecting the plant.

The Tahoe Lakefront Owners Association has worked with its many members for 20 years to help provide sanctuary for the plant, and to get people to recognize that it's a positive thing, not a negative thing, to have it growing on their private property, Director Jan Brisco said.

"I think we're getting closer to having that safe harbor. We've had many people step up wanting to become Tahoe yellow cress stewards and offering their property for surveys or plantings so we can keep the plant alive and thriving along the shores," Brisco said. "Every spring I go out to my members with information to remind them when they are cleaning up to be careful about the plants. We are really excited how well we've done to be where we are today."

Tahoe yellow cress is part of Tahoe's unique natural environment, and a shining conservation success story for one of the many rare and unique plants struggling to survive in California and Nevada.

"It's such a great group of resource managers, scientists, and private property owners who have come together to protect this plant," said Alison Stanton, an independent botanist who has helped guide the Tahoe yellow cress conservation strategy and restoration work since 2002.

Despite the success of the conservation strategy and the more than a dozen partners in the Tahoe Yellow Cress Adaptive Management Working Group, the hardy little yellow plant that calls Lake Tahoe home will always require protection and awareness due to its extremely limited range and habitat.

"It's a unique plant growing at a single lake so the stakes are high for it. Our work is not done. We have to continue to implement the conservation strategy and the stewardship program or we'll find ourselves right back in the same place," Stanton said.

*Tom Lotshaw is the public information officer for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. This story first appeared in **Tahoe In Depth**.*