

Phone scam targeting EDC jurors

El Dorado County Superior Court is warning people of a scam.

Past or prospective jurors are never contacted by phone regarding failure to serve jury duty. All communication is done via U.S. mail or personal service.

No court jury staff or El Dorado County sheriff's staff will ask past or prospective jurors to pay a fine or provide financial details including; credit card numbers, bank account(s), Social Security numbers or other personal information.

People who receive a telephone call from someone identifying himself or herself as a court employee or an employee of the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office regarding a failure to appear for jury service, should call the Jury Commissioner's office at 530.621.7469.

Officers on the prowl for drunken drivers

Between now and Sept. 12 law enforcement officers in Nevada, including Douglas County, are making a concerted effort to reduce the number of impaired drivers.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies will be making efforts to achieve zero fatalities during the end of summer season. Drivers and riders are encouraged to know the law for blood alcohol levels and abide by the following guidelines:

- Designate a sober driver before drinking.
- Use a taxi, call a sober friend, family member or use public transportation.
- Call 911 if a drunken driver is seen on the road.
- Take the keys or assist in making other arrangements for someone who is about to drive who is impaired.

Impaired drivers have consistently been the most common cause of motor vehicle crashes resulting in injuries and deaths in Nevada, according to officials.

Sammy Hagar gives to Tahoe food bank

It wasn't just fans of Sammy Hagar who were impressed with his recent performance at Harveys.

He gave a \$2,500 check to Food Bank of El Dorado County.

Food Bank representatives Don and Debbie Abney went back stage where they had the opportunity to talk to Hagar about hunger in El Dorado County.

The next food distribution in South Lake Tahoe will be Sept. 28, 10-11am at the American Legion Hall, 2748 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

For more information on how to give or get help, call 530.621.9950 or email info@foodbankedc.org.

Wallace: Leadership means listening

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.*



Tamara Wallace is running for one of two seats open on the South Lake Tahoe City Council.

Name: Tamara LeAnn Wallace

Age: 46

Job/profession: Retired businesswoman/chamber exec

What boards, commissions, or other experience, including volunteering, do you have?:

2010-14

South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission

2003	South Lake Tahoe Lodging Board
2002-03 (LTUSD)	Citizens' Financial Advisory Committee
1996-98 Tulare Sunrise Rotary	President-elect, Charter Secretary
1999-2008 Club	Past-president, member, Lake Tahoe Kiwanis
2004 Lake Tahoe	Volunteer consultant, Leadership
2000-Current	Coach, South Tahoe Wrestling
2003-05 Club	Past-member, STHS Cheerleading-Parents
2007-Current Community Church	Teacher, Vacation Bible School, Tahoe
2016 Sierra Community Church	Volunteer, Vacation Bible School,
2004-05	STAT (South Tahoe Athletic Teams)
1997-99 Work)	Teacher, KAPOW (Kids and the Power of
1994-96 Tulare Battered Women's Shelter.	Volunteer, fundraiser, co-creator,

Why are you running for City Council?: This is a way that I have wanted to serve my community for many years. However, I have been ill for a long time, so was our oldest son. We also adopted a special needs child. I devoted my time to my family for the last few years because that was where I was most needed. From 2010 to 2014, I was able to serve on the Planning Commission. Through that I was further convinced that the City Council was where I wanted to be. Now that my health has been

improving for over a year, our son's illness is completely at bay and our adopted child is 5 years older, I am now ready to serve in this capacity. I believe that the council must serve, not rule our community. Further, I have been fortunate enough to have a few really incredible mentors in my life, one of whom recently passed. He taught me many things, including: working with public-private partnerships, how to disagree without being disagreeable and that economic development in a community is a high tide that raises all ships.

Why should voters vote for you over another candidate?: My life's experience has just led up to this point. I have been working and volunteering in a community setting for the last 27 years either through fate or design I have been able to work for and with people who believe in their communities. Those who have sought their entire lives to improve where they and their family live. This example has been invaluable to me. I believe that I have become one of those people. Four out of five of my children still live here (I'm still working on the fifth). Every one of them grew up trying to make a difference in their town. Citizens in this community, too many times, have had to go back and reverse what the council has done. I want to be a part of getting it right the first time.

What distinct experience or competency makes you uniquely qualified to lead effectively as an elected official?: I participated and graduated from a six-year program called the Institute for Organization Management (UCLA and USD). This was an in depth, immersive program that included executives from organizations such as the Trial Lawyers Association, the California Lumber Association as well as chamber of commerce executives, executives from every type of association and organization. We were taught budgeting, business law, media relations, building coalitions, strategic planning, business ethics, how to effectively use technology and effective listening, to name a few. As a result, I made a network of friends and colleagues all over the Western United States, as

well as Washington, D.C., who are involved in forming public policy in their communities.

My specific plan for leadership is to listen. Listen to the voters, listen to the experts and listen to my heart. I'm experienced, but not infallible, there are many people who may know more than I do about any given subject. I plan to listen and follow my own moral compass. I intend to vote on the issues the same way each community member would vote if they were given the same information as I, and are trying to do the right thing for the right reasons. These are the guiding principles by which I live and intend to serve as an elected official. There will be hundreds of issues to discuss with the public, fellow council members and staff, so the process by which I arrive at decisions is how I would like to be judged. By using proven techniques of public policy decision making I hope to improve my skills and to become a part of a good decision making body.

Public agencies have been under scrutiny the last few years for lack of transparency and accountability. What will you do to ensure both?: I've taken classes and seminars on government ethics, including the FPPC rules and the Brown Act. If I and the council follow these guiding principles, it should ensure an open and honest meeting process. Something specific I would watch for is to make sure any closed session meetings would be noticed with the most specific language possible so the public can know what's happening, as much as legally possible. One of the main reasons the Brown Act was written is to avoid what are commonly referred to as "daisy chain meetings." Those are when council members discuss items in a linear fashion (one member to another, to another and so forth) without all being in the same room under a "noticed meeting." That is still considered a meeting and the public is excluded. This is against the Brown Act guidelines.

Accountability can be measured through the wise use of the public's dollars.

What stands out for you in the current budget that you support and that you would change?: My answer to both parts of this question is the same: road repairs and public safety. I support each of these and wish to increase the amounts each line item receives as much as humanly possible.

Do you support current legislation for \$15 minimum wage? Please explain: That is a state/federal legislative issue and not one that the City Council will likely vote on. I believe that we need as many high paying jobs in our community as possible and the best way to get there is to attract businesses that pay well, in addition to reducing taxes and regulations that keep businesses from paying those higher wages. Every dollar taken by government is one less dollar paid to an employee. Businesses have only so much income. For instance, Australia has a \$25 minimum wage, their prices are reflective. Part of the problem is the difference between "minimum wage" and "living wage." A living wage is, by definition, what a person makes that can support them/their family. However, a minimum wage is just that: the minimum amount that a person is paid for certain types of entry level jobs.

Do you support Proposition 55? Please explain: Again, this is more of a state issue. Maybe I should run for state Senate or Assembly – ha,ha!

I support education. My daughter is a teacher, my husband is a substitute teacher and former school board member, and my son is school district employee working on his teaching credential. I believe in public education. The part of Prop. 55 that disallows any funds going to administration is good. The language that allows the local boards of education to have discretion is also good. However, I support small business and the limits (\$250,000 single filers, \$500,000 joint filers and \$340,000 head of household) are right where most small businesses lay, or would like to. Please remember these are gross dollars, not net. As I stated above, the more taxes that

a business has to pay results in less available to their employees and in their own communities. It doesn't have to be an either/or situation, by improving businesses they in turn pay more taxes on that increased volume which then benefits the government.

Describe three attributes for a successful council: Honesty, respect, teamwork. I believe this is self-explanatory.

What are your thoughts about public employee defined benefits?: I think that the PERS system is a good one. So I hope that the PERS administrators disengage in their fiscal shenanigans. So when benefits are promised to an employee that should be considered a solemn promise. I also like some of the "cafeteria-style" benefits programs that allow employees, public or otherwise, to choose where their retirement dollars are held.

Please explain your position regarding contracting out work normally done by staff: If a job can be done better and/or more efficiently and for less dollars, then I am all for contracting out some services. For instance, there are often jobs that are not ongoing. If a position is created within the city to accomplish that job, when the job is completed the city is beholden to an employee for the long term. So, it makes sense to evaluate short term position tasks. However, sometimes a current employee has a better understanding of a situation and can perform the job most efficiently. Sometimes an outside contractor is better able to do this. As a situation presents, it should be taken on a case by case basis. I'm for whatever saves the taxpayers the most money in the long run.

What is your 10-year vision for South Lake Tahoe?: I see a community that my granddaughters can grow up to raise their own families. I see a community that when our youth go away for school, they are economically able to come back. I want a community with decent housing that families can afford and one

that is safe and has a well-staffed police force. I would like to have a community that has good paying jobs and good schools. I envision a community that has a built environment that is as beautiful as the natural environment. I see a community that is so beautiful that when people come to visit, they refuse to leave. I desire a community that is governed by people who make decisions for the right reasons, not for what's politically expedient. This is the community that I hope to bring about and leave to my children and children's children.

What one vote in the last four years that the current council made do you disagree with and why?: Charging for parking in neighborhoods and tourist areas. This was repealed via Measure P in 2014.

Citizens and businesses already pay for the use of the parking spaces and streets through their taxes. Why should they or their customers then pay to park in the spaces and on the streets they have helped purchase. It's really that simple.

How many City Council meetings have you attended this year?: I have been to two or three meetings in the last year; however, I watch almost every one of the meetings on the public service channel. It was off the air for a while so I relied on either going to the meetings or talking to those who attended. Over the past 18 years, I have attended countless council meetings. In addition, as a planning commissioner, I attended council regularly. I also receive emails from the city clerk regarding ongoing issues at/in the city.

What do you know about the strategic plan, finances, debt, and goals of the city?: Quite a lot in the macro. I am currently trying to get more into the micro of these issues. For instance, with regards to finances, debt and budget, the city's debt service is in the 22-25 percent range and if they bond the funds that may become available with the sales tax initiative it will increase to over 30 percent (these are ball

park figures). In addition, the original redevelopment is still hanging over the city's head. There is still significant transfer of property tax from other entities to help pay down this debt, the utility district's portion is around \$500,000. More debt should be taken on with great trepidation and seriousness, if taken on at all. I may be off by a little, but am studying diligently so as to be able to hit the ground running, if necessary.

I have read all the information that was made public with regards to the city's goals and strategic plan as they were decided on. However, again I am studying these issues in more detail now that I am asking to be a member of the council.

Being on the council means working as a team. How will you work with the sitting members for the greater good of the community?: The community expects their council members to get along if possible. For years now there have been personal arguments that I have watched with disgust just like other citizens. One drama that I have seen is the fight over who will be mayor. The strong city manager style of government in our city is such that the council is the "what" and the city manager is the "how." However, as small a city as we are somehow whoever is selected as mayor, who is there simply to chair the meetings, gets a big head. They then try to implement their singular agenda for the city. That causes friction among those who also wanted to be mayor. It also causes friction when the "mayor" gets too heavy handed with the other council members and especially the staff. I personally refused to chair the Planning Commission a couple of times because: first of all, I was too new to that board and did not think I should lead until I understood all the issues. Secondly, I did not need the accolades. We are small fish in a small town. We should not think of ourselves as rulers, but rather as servants. The other reason councils argue is that they have honest disagreements over the right policy to follow. That is OK and I think healthy. That is why

they have five council members and not just one. There is a way to disagree without being disagreeable. Listening without interrupting, asking questions instead of making accusations and not grandstanding in front of the public are common sense ways to avoid embarrassing arguments.

What should be the three main priorities for the council?:

Long-term financial stewardship of the public's money: Each council should try to leave the city and next council in better financial shape than they found it in. That would include not taxing the businesses and projects to the point that they decide to live/build elsewhere. That is especially important since we have another state next door that can compete for our businesses and families. I have refused to accept the City Council salary of just under \$1,000 a month. Hopefully that will set a good fiscal example. We are not rich. But we have lived for many years within a budget. I do not put others down for accepting the salary. However I was one person who felt that after making the employees cut back that doubling the council's own pay was not a nice statement that was made to the public and the employees.

The second would be leaving a legacy of infrastructure such as improved roads, buildings and public facilities that match the beauty of our natural environment.

Provide a safe community with decent housing prices for all who live here. In essence, we need to create a community that draws our children and their children back to a place they can afford that feels safe from crime and natural disasters such as the Angora Fire.

What have you done to make yourself ready to be a council member?:

This question is a little like question No. 4 above regarding my experience on boards. I will refer you to all those boards and commissions listed in that answer. However, I will expand my answer in another way. I haven't just been interested in the City Council. I have attended school board

meetings, scores of community forums, utility district meetings, county Board of Supervisor meetings, TRPA meetings, lodging board meetings, forums like the housing forum put on recently by TRYP, and many more local meetings. At the state level, I have attended meetings in both Nevada and California. I went to the same high school as former Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn in the central San Joaquin Valley. We had mutual friends. As the main staff person for Leadership Tulare I set up meetings and tours of the California state Capitol where we met with our elected representatives and then later came back to work for or against bills that affected our businesses. At the federal level, I have flown to Washington, D.C., about a dozen times. The subjects of the trips varied from attending congressional hearings on MTBE in our Tahoe groundwater and Senate hearings and private meetings with Sens. Boxer, Reid and Feinstein regarding the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act as well as meetings with Congressman Gibbons who later became the governor of Nevada and Congressmen John Garamendi and John Doolittle on issues regarding the United States Forest Service. One of the most important efforts that I supported was to have our California state Sen. Tim Leslie, his aide Michael Applegarth and several local fire chiefs from around the lake put on a forum at LTCC with Sen. Feinstein and Congressman Doolittle about preventing wildfires. Unfortunately the bureaucratic wheels moved too slowly at Lahontan and TRPA so we were not yet ready to prevent the Angora Fire that happened prophetically just a short time after Sen. Feinstein loudly declared that the agencies had better get out of the way or they would be held responsible for a terrible conflagration! I was also invited and attended an international conference sponsored by Green Peace in Moscow, Irkutsk and Lake Baikal Russia on how to create a thriving business economy in an environmentally sensitive place. We traveled with Ed Gee from the USFS in our group. We also met with a group of bankers from Russia regarding how to fund business ventures without involving the government. We still have some contact with the people we met. I regularly

receive emails from lobbying firms from both sides of the political spectrum in the U.S. capital on strategies mostly for the Western States and the very complex issues that are interwoven around water and land use. Finally my experience working with Economic Development and land use planning gave me a good understanding of how to create proper visually appealing yet profitable business districts. As a member of the Western Association of Chamber Execs that is made up of seven states including Hawaii. We learned how California's economy was interwoven with many other countries, almost as if it was a separate country, because of our being one of the largest economies in the world at that time. Many of the trips started out with controversies. I saw how compromises and mutually beneficial agreements can be worked out without shouting and back stabbing. Some of the trips were when I was an invited observer and others were where I was a needed participant. For instance I worked as part of a group who wanted to build a "build to suit" industrial complex that revolved around using agricultural products (50 of which net approximately \$5 billion in the aggregate in Tulare County alone) and milk since our area had more dairies and cows than the entire state of Wisconsin. I drew the short straw on the trip to Italy, France and the Netherlands, but was our emissary to Oregon and Washington to attract different users of Tulare Ag products. Our industrial park was highly coveted, in the sense that we used very savvy financing techniques to build it. It has become a prime location for manufacturing butter, creams, including a Haagen Dazs ice cream plant, food packaging materials and many more. All of the tenants brought in primary year round jobs. They also worked to support each other and the community. What we didn't do was tax the new businesses and charge fees which would have caused them to look elsewhere.

What role should government have in housing for residents?: I must be honest and tell you that I believe, based upon my life experiences, that government has a tendency to mess up more

things than they fix. It was TRPA, in reaction to the table games and the 1960 Olympic Games who have made our town a museum of the 1960s. By freezing building, the supply dropped and the demand increased causing a rise in prices. It was done mostly out of true concern for the environment but the science as to what was really causing water and air pollution at the lake was not accurate then. "There is science and there is political science." As studies were done over the past 50 years there was often a finger on the scale tipping the study results toward not allowing homes and businesses to be built. In the mid-1970s about 200 homes were being built per year on the South Shore. When the CTRPA (the precursor to TRPA) hinted that they might soon stop all building, over 2,500 homes were thrown up in a very short amount of time with little regard for stream sediment or any other environmental degradation. So then the agency was able to say, "See, we told you there were too many houses being built, we've got to stop all building!" In the urge to find a way to stop the building the agency came up with items (now called commodities) that could be metered out to control building. These imaginary commodities were things such as sewer units, TAUs, square footage formulas and many other things. Decibel levels, while a real measurement, were used in such a way that their scientific studies found that commercial jet airplanes just happened to need to be at just a few decibels below what a commercial jet could possibly stay under. It took longer to get a permit to build a garage than it took to win World War II. Now, in my opinion, government needs to get out of the way. I believe that there can be a positive meeting of the minds among all the governments on the South Shore to lower or eliminate the fees for builders who will build homes that are dedicated for single family, owner occupied residences. That also meets all environmental thresholds. The project is the fix. None of us is smarter than all of us. That is certainly true in my case. But, if we can generate enough public pressure on TRPA, STPUD, Lahontan, the county supervisors, city building department and many more agencies then we will be able to lower costs. That

will raise the supply which will allow our children and families to stay here in our beautiful city.

How can the city partner with the school district to improve high school graduation rates?: [Superintendent Jim] Tarwater and the board of education have gone a long way toward that goal by building trade school programs that teach students how to be mechanics, welders, accountants and dental technicians, to name a few. Not every student plans to go to a four-year college or university. In addition, our society and our community need the trades. One idea that I have heard is to reinstate the ski hill they have below the football field. Students who could ski during P.E. would most likely stay in school during the winter. Other students could learn how to become lift technicians/mechanics. In other words, making school fun for upper classmen as well as being useful for getting a job in this town. I also believe that Mt. Tallac High School and its amazing staff have done wonders with getting at risk students to complete their education. Kudos to them!

How can local government support and expand job creation and small local businesses?: As it is right now when a person wants to open a business here, some – not all, of the planners and counter people do not see themselves as advocates but rather almost like police officers. Time after time, I have been told by new business startups that they have been put through the wringer in order to get started. The fees are sky high and the agencies don't foresee problems in order to help point them out so it takes them longer and costs them more. This is especially true for seasonal businesses, for instance an ice cream truck or bicycle shop. Fees should only be the amount that it costs the city to process the application. In some cases the fees are charged based on 10-12 hours of staff time, when the same work could be done in the private sector in as little as two or three hours. In addition, the city should provide a checklist of items that must be done and how

to do them for new residents/ business people. Our agencies are scattered all over our town, in places that no one would ever expect them to be. We should have a list of available locations where businesses could possibly lease/buy and pitfalls to watch for. Simply put, the city should treat them like a relative that they always liked and who wants to start a business. No Catch-22 situations should be allowed. It has been ironic to see former planners from local agencies who decide to go into consulting or private business. Only then do they realize what the time delays and costs can do to a business that has signed a lease and is having to pay out money without any income. I am very familiar with how to make businesses feel welcome and how to assist them. It was my former job to assist and encourage economic development. It was a very enjoyable thing to be involved in and it is gratifying to go back and find the businesses I recruited still in operation.

If you believe in the one South Shore concept, what would you do to further make this a reality? If you don't believe in blurring the state line, why don't you?: In many ways there is one South Shore. The birds, bees, deer, fish and bears do not know that there is a state line. Fires, earthquakes and storms don't see the line either. However, with human beings there is a state line. The economy and the governments draw a distinct line. We do not have gaming on the California side of South Lake Tahoe. Our wedding license laws are different. Our business license fee in California is different than the gross margins tax in Nevada. Nevada doesn't have a state income tax and California does. The Nevada side has more large corporations than the California side. Most of the school children are on the California side. The state Legislature meets every other year in Nevada and California's almost never stops meeting. The drug laws are different. Probably most important is tax dollars generated on one side of the line and paid for by the citizens of same, should not be used to benefit the other side. We pay a lot of taxes in our society

and the state/county/city we live in should/must benefit from the proceeds.

What are your views on:

a: Vacation home rentals: What I believe is the issue with VHRs is lack of enforcement. The VHR code on the books for many years was simply not being enforced. When that issue came to a head, the City Council chose to update the code with stronger penalties, higher fees, etc. Now it has become apparent that no enforcement was added, which was the main problem to begin with. What I believe the council should have done (and still can do), in addition to beefing up enforcement, is deal with the underlying issue – zoning! If we were to zone the different neighborhoods with maximum densities for VHRs, long-term rentals and owner-occupied homes, this would solve most of the problem. However, if there is not a strong enforcement arm to the new zoning rules, it will fail just as other pseudo solutions have. It has been found that our under-staffed and over worked police force is simply unable to provide enforcement for VHRs, I would suggest an outside security force that can respond in a timely manner to the non-violent issues and they could contact the police for issues with greater need for their services. (i.e., noise complaints would go to the security force/service, domestic violence and vandalism would be directed to the PD).

b: Loop road: My opinion on the loop road is this: I think we can accomplish many of the items that would be addressed by redirecting the highway, without spending \$100 million-plus. We want a more bikeable, walkable area – lower the speed limit to 25 mph, which is a nationwide standard in business districts. As for traffic congestion, I don't believe that the loop road will solve this issue in any of its incarnations. However, one community member wisely suggested synchronizing the traffic light system; I believe this would be a huge improvement to congestion. Based on the current option being discussed, I don't see how moving a congested highway away

from the business district and into a neighborhood with families is a good alternative. Not to mention, our community is in a housing crisis and although TTD has said that they wouldn't break ground until housing is replaced, they have also said that they are also allowed to negotiate with the displaced families and individuals for rent subsidies, in lieu of replacement housing. This is a much easier option for them, not to mention a quicker one. What makes us think that they won't push for the subsidies and forego all new housing just so they can break ground as soon as possible? They have already been accused of being less than honest in North Shore with regards to the housing element there. There is some speculation that their housing solution involves moving the displaced families/individuals into a remodeled Kingsbury Middle School. How can they think this would be a viable option? Imagine being the descendant of a family that built a cabin in the area affected. This cabin houses not just your family, but your history. Your only two options are to move across state line and live in a converted school, or take your subsidy and possibly find another home that simply does not have your history in each nook and cranny. Apart from this, I simply believe that the voters should be making this decision. The council needs to decide how to define "the city," is it the staff, the council themselves or is it the citizens who live here? If they believe it is the citizens, then they should let them decide. Fifteen hundred voters signed to demand this issue be put on the ballot, why then would the city not let them have their say. I say again, council members are servants not rulers.

c: City streets: City streets need to be completely redone every 40 years, ideally much more quickly in snow country. When all is said and done with the money available and possible new funding sources, this is not even close to being feasible in the city's current financial situation. The average mile of road costs \$1 million to redo. We have about 400-plus miles of roads in the city. If we were to use the

\$100 million from the loop road (which will only build about one mile for that project), we would be a fourth of the way there (\$1 million = 1 mile, \$100 million = 100 miles, one-quarter of the city's streets). It would certainly have a greater impact on the citizens. Even if the sales tax measure on the Nov. 8 ballot passes and the money is bonded (which would increase the city's debt service to an estimated 30 percent), there would only be about \$40 million to overlay the 400 miles of roads in the city. At this point we are on a collision course. This can has been kicked down the road for too many years, but I would be surprised if this continues, especially if I am lucky enough to be elected.

d: Relationships with other public agencies: There has appeared to be a problem in this area also. While I'm not privy to all behind the scenes negotiations, I have seen a couple of public disagreements with other agencies that have not worked out well. One breakup has been the joint powers authority (JPA) that was created to provide superior and consistent safety services. I'm not going to describe each side's points on this breakup and public disagreement. Another dust up was when the city decided unilaterally that they could simply charge a franchise fee to the South Tahoe Public Utility District in the estimated amount of \$500,000 per year. This was dropped quickly because it is not legal. The point is that getting along with others should be a goal of the organization from the top down. A wise man once told me, "By the time you have met the third jerk of the day, go look in the mirror." I think there is needed improvement when it comes to inter-agency spats.

e: Recreation: Our locals are recreation nuts, especially the millennials. But all of we locals ski, hike, workout and play every sport we can and just as important, so do our guests. I'm assuming that you are asking about the recreation TOT tax on the ballot. The lodging association is a proponent probably for two reasons. One would be to not have the city gobble up

TOT for a non-beneficial reason that doesn't help the industry. The other would be that sports dollars can be huge. For instance our small South Tahoe Wrestling Club hosted a state tournament. Seven hundred wrestlers and their families came for three days. That tournament alone filled many motel rooms and restaurant seats. The proposed rec center will be built to host many other types of tournaments. My personal preference would be to have a private company be in charge. That being said, Lauren Thomaselli, the current Recreation Department head, is as good as anyone out there. But, she will eventually retire. It has been proven all over the country that private for-profit operators do a better job overall in operating ice skating arenas, and other recreation facilities. One last thought. We do have private gyms that would have to compete with a government subsidized center. Perhaps some of the things they do best should be left to them.

f. TRPA defined commodities: They are made up out of thin air and are an end justifies the means item. Of course we want to protect our lake. I have certainly been a major supporter of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act. However, it is time we all were honest with each other. The TRPA and enterprising developers can use the sale of these commodities such as tourist accommodation units (TAUs) to make money.

g. Transient occupancy tax measure: I am a past secretary of the lodging board. The issue of TOT increases often came up. The state and national associations have verified studies that prove as the TOT costs went up, the number of guests went down. For instance the city of New York raised TOT to 18 percent. Tourism dropped so hard and fast that they had to rescind the tax. I point this out because there is obviously a point at which a city can overtax the guests. As an operator/manager of several small properties, I saw the sticker shock. It is not a bottomless well. As I said above, the lodging association does believe they will see a benefit from this tax because of the sports teams coming here with

their families. I believe the tax will pass because the public likes taxes that another person will pay. That being said, I think that the threshold has been reached after this. If we continue to go back to this well, then we will start to see diminishing returns.

h. Sales tax measure: I sure wish that previous councils had done more to fix the roads in the past. They have joked that the utility district and other entities that do work in the city streets are the city's road repair program. That is because when any other entity digs even in a fairly small portion of a road, the city has them repair as large of a section as possible. The public may think that Caltrans and the city are doing the work. Our city streets are in terrible disrepair. It is very disappointing that those who want funds for affordable/workforce housing and those who have lost their Volkswagen in a pothole are pitted against each other on this ballot. Both things are desperately needed.

i. What do you want the additional sales tax money to go to?: In a previous answer I pointed out that all the governments could lower their fees in order to stimulate lower priced homes for renters. That can't be done for road repairs. So if I have to vote for a tax rather than raise income to the city by increasing sales for businesses. I would say put it to roads. I'm still looking for my Jeep in a pothole on Eloise Street.

Tell us something about yourself that people may not know: In keeping with my long wordy answers to your many questions, I think two things might be not known. My great-great-grandfather, Joseph Alexander Grassel, was a soldier in the German army just as things started heating up in the Third Reich. I'm told he was in the secret police (not to be mistaken for the SS). He and his fellow soldiers were asked to start persecuting the Jewish people starting with the more wealthy shop owners. He took a stand and refused to persecute those families. Joseph Grassel was soon arrested and put into

a box car and sent away into the very same type of prison that he had refused to send the Jewish people to. The prison was one of the more famous death camps. It was called Dachau. Joseph died there. Some of his possessions were reported to have been kept. On Sept. 11, 2001, while visiting Washington, D.C., I decided that I was going to go to the Holocaust Museum's archives in Alexandria, Va., to try to retrieve his things. But first we had a meeting with Congressman Doolittle. On the way to the Capitol building that morning we heard that a plane had flown into one of the twin towers. At that point we didn't know what type of plane nor did we have any idea what kind of damage was caused. But our cab driver knew. He even suggested that it might be Osama Bin Laden. Just as we were shaking the congressman's hand the second plane hit the second tower. The congressman believed we were at war and his aides immediately whisked him away. Weird World War II air raid type alarms were going off. The guards were standing, arms at the ready, in every hallway. Our group of four was scared down to our toes. We worked our way out of the building and found a retaining wall about 70 yards in front of the Capital. We could hear the slow whine of a jet engine. We got down behind the wall and waited for what we were sure was going to be the blast from the collision. Other tourists copied what we did. It became quiet. We stood up and then the plane hit the Pentagon where we had been the day before. We then walked about 15 blocks across D.C. to our hotel. We heard other blasts that car radios said were government targeted buildings blowing up. Later we learned that the blasts were from sonic booms from our Air Force jets flying at top speed to protect the city. It didn't feel real. We drove by the Pentagon the next day to see that the plane had caught on fire again. It took some time to get word to our kids and parents that we were OK. We often thank God for those brave passengers of United 93 that went down in Pennsylvania. They fought the hijackers and saved our lives.

You have said that the majority of the council has tried to

silence the minority. Please explain this and use specific examples: Actually, that is not what I said. I'm copying here exactly what I wrote.

"When a staff member is mistreated or abused by an elected person there are legal mechanisms in place to deal with it. They are very clearly defined for a reason because in the past the majority has tried to silence the minority. Before I am possibly misunderstood again, I don't believe that is the case here."

My point was that the majority silencing the minority is why the laws were put into place.

Opinion: Why is pot still a Schedule I drug?

By Nathaniel P. Morris, Scientific American

On Aug. 11, the Drug Enforcement Administration announced its decision to keep marijuana classified as a Schedule I drug. The federal government has historically referred to this category as the "most dangerous" group of substances, including drugs like heroin and bath salts.

As a resident physician specializing in mental health, I can't make much sense of this.

Every day, I talk to patients about substance abuse. Whether evaluating patients in clinic, in the emergency department, or on inpatient units, my colleagues and I screen patients for substance use. It's a vital component of any clinical interview, particularly in mental health care, and helps us

understand patients' habits and their risks for medical complications.

Read the whole story

Ban on gun sales to marijuana card holders upheld in Nevada case

By Sudhin Thanawala, AP

A federal government ban on the sale of guns to medical marijuana card holders does not violate the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, a federal appeals court said Wednesday.

The ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals applies to the nine Western states that fall under the court's jurisdiction, including Nevada, California, Washington and Oregon.

It came in a lawsuit filed by S. Rowan Wilson, a Northern Nevada woman who tried to buy a firearm in 2011 after obtaining a medical marijuana card.

The gun store refused, citing the federal rule on the sale of firearms to illegal drug users.

Marijuana remains illegal under federal law, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives has told gun sellers they can assume a person with a medical marijuana card uses the drug.

The 9th Circuit in its 3-0 decision agreed that it's reasonable for federal regulators to assume a medical marijuana card holder is more likely to use the drug.

In addition, a ban on the sale of guns to marijuana and other drug users is reasonable because the use of such drugs "raises the risk of irrational or unpredictable behavior with which gun use should not be associated," Senior District Judge Jed Rakoff said.

The 9th Circuit also rejected other constitutional challenges to the ban that were raised by Wilson.

An email to Wilson's attorney was not immediately returned.

Mussel dogs sniff out aquatic invasive species

By Deke Farrow, Modesto Bee

Nemo, Noah and Popeye.

Their names may not carry quite the coolness of some of their current and former canine colleagues in local law enforcement – Cash, Volk, Samson, Zeus – but the decidedly marine monikers fit perfectly what this trio is trained to do.

They're the Mussel Dogs, and they guard reservoirs, lakes and other waterways against intruders that, while not criminals, are killers.

Quagga and zebra mussels are invasive species that cannot be eradicated once they infest a body of water, said Denair resident Debra DeShon, who founded Mussel Dogs in 2008 and has

three canine-and-handler teams.

Read the whole story

3-night movie festival at Homewood

The Triple Threat Adventure Film Festival will be at Homewood Mountain Resort Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

The festival will include three nights of films featuring rock, dirt and snow.

All movies to be shown at Homewood's North Lodge on a 27-foot outdoor air screen.

Reel Rock Film Tour 11 will kick off the weekend showcasing rock climbing features and shorts that encompass some of the sport's biggest stories, athletes, worldly explorations, first ascents and more.

Featured films move to the dirt on Saturday with mountain bike movies by Anthill Films, including "Strength in Numbers," "NotBad," and this year's "Not2Bad."

Sunday evening will start with a showing Level 1's new film "Pleasure." Shot on location around the world, Level 1's film encompasses joys that are found in skiing and features pros such as Will Wesson, Sami Ortieb, Tanner Rainville, Wiley Miller and more.

The festival will wrap up with a complimentary screening (no ticket required) of the new Travis Rice/Red Bull film "The Fourth Phase."

Film Festival tickets are available in advance for \$20, \$25 at the door, with kids' tickets \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. Tickets provide access to all three nights. Access to the outdoor theater begins at 6:30pm, with movies scheduled to begin at 7pm. Chairs will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis; guests are encouraged to bring their own low back chairs as well.

For more information or to purchase tickets, go **online**.

Snowmaking technology allows skiing in summer

By Allen Best, Live Science

In early July at Boreal Mountain Resort, temperatures reached 91 degrees, which is not uncharacteristically here. The real surprise was that the ski area near Lake Tahoe was making snow.

Boreal is the site of the first North American demonstration of a relatively new technology called Snowfactory. The process parallels that of an industrial ice maker – essentially, a large-scale version of the ice maker in the door of many household refrigerators.

An ice maker takes water chilled with a heat exchanger and sprays it onto a surface. The cubes are created by imposing the ice onto a grid. In a unit about the size of a trailer, such as the type pulled by 18-wheeler trucks, Snowfactory uses the same process to produce flat flakes that are collected on a panel and fed into a conveyor belt. The flakes are then blown through a pipe up to 600-feet long to the desired

location on the ski slope.

Read the whole story

Disability doesn't limit Truckee surfer



Jeff Andrews, who is disabled, doesn't let that stop him from surfing. Photo/Provided

Jeff Andrews of Truckee took first place in the assisted division of the 10th annual Adaptive Surf Competition during Duke's OceanFest in Honolulu last month.

The 27-year-old in 2014 was an avid snowboarder in Tahoe. In an accident at Sugar Bowl in March of that year, Andrews suffered an injury to his spinal cord, leaving him without the use of his legs and limited dexterity in his hands and arms.

Since the injury, Andrews has spent thousands of hours concentrating on his rehabilitation. He works out daily at the CR Johnson Healing Center, a fitness and wellness facility operated by Truckee's High Fives Foundation. The nonprofit has awarded Andrews a series of grants toward his recovery goals,

including personal training with world renown healer, Alejandra Monslave in Maui.

While in Hawaii in March 2016, Andrews began surfing regularly. With an injury such as his, Andrews requires the assistance of another waterman who helps push him as the wave approaches. He remains on his stomach in the prone position but can maneuver the surfboard moving along with the wave.