Tahoe private equity fund places debt

By Northern Nevada Business Weekly

Z Loan and Investment Inc., a private equity fund led by three residents of Zephyr Cove, raised $375,000 in a private debt offering.

The company disclosed the financing arrangement last week in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The company is licensed as a mortgage lender in Nevada.

The filing listed Wayne Snyder and Michael Sigala of Zephyr Cove as the company's executive officers and promoters. John Schopf Jr. of Zephyr Cove was listed as a director.

Z Loan and Investment is headquartered in South Lake Tahoe.

Lack of incentives keep companies from moving to NV

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada has built its reputation as a low-tax haven to encourage companies to relocate their businesses here in recent years.

But low taxes alone won't be enough to lure companies when rival states offset the low-tax advantage with economic incentives to move, a group studying the economic diversification of the state was told Monday.

John Restrepo, head of the Las Vegas-based Restrepo Consulting Group, told members of the New Nevada Taskforce, that despite the state not having a corporate income tax, a personal income tax or an inventory tax, rivals like New Mexico, Utah and Oregon are still more appealing to corporations because of the quantity and quality of the incentives they offer.

Mike Skaggs, director of the Nevada Commission on Economic Development, added that the state is outgunned budget-wise by Georgia, Indiana, Colorado and Utah, among other states.

It was the second meeting for the New Nevada Taskforce, which was formed by Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki earlier this summer to chart a course for the state's economic development and diversification efforts. Critics have called the formation of the 28-member task force a political ploy by Krolicki, who is up for re-election in November.

Read the whole story

Buildings, programs turning STHS into center of education

By Kathryn Reed

Meandering through the classrooms during the open house of the Stadium View building, an excitement permeated the walls. Students were excited – this from youth not accustomed to going to school before Labor Day; teachers giddy; administrators joyful; school board members relieved; and the public appreciative and awed by the transformation.

Realtor Deb Howard knows the upgrades to facilities and

programs at the campus will in turn help her business. Families moving anywhere almost always inquire about schools. She said on Thursday that the campus, which she has seldom visited since her last child graduated in 1999, will be a selling point for her.

South Tahoe Middle School Principal Beth Delacour couldn't stop smiling. Even though she doesn't want to change schools, she's excited about sending her kids to STHS with all the changes that have and will continue to occur during the next few years.



Proving why the STHS building is called Stadium View. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The $64.5 million facilities bond passed by voters in 2008 has been supplemented with $30 million in matching funds from the state. The bulk of the money is being spent at the high school, though every campus will see upgrades.

Blight is how the City Council views South Lake Tahoe, but it's not how what's happening on Gardner Mountain can be described.

When South Tahoe High School students start classes Monday, the second new building in four months will be theirs to learn in.

Thursday was a day to have a tour from a student of the two-story Stadium View building – appropriately named for the views to the football field; as well as the Career and Technical building that opened in April.

Superintendent Jim Tarwater and Principal Ivone Larson both spoke of how the programs being offered in the new facilities will prepare students for whatever they want to do after high school, be it college or work.

Math is one of the main subjects that will be taught in the Stadium View building. Da Vinci Algebra is a course the faculty created to blend math and art, and taught by instructors in both disciplines. The first in the nation course was just approved by the University of California as an accredited class.

“We want to make it exciting for kids,” Larson said of math as she gave a handful of people a tour of the building.

In the future, math and construction will be woven together.

The point is this generation should never have to ask, “When I will I use this?” when it comes to math principles. They will learn practical applications in high school.

Jamie Greenough, who teaches environmental science, couldn’t stop talking about what she will be able to do with her classroom, the greenhouse that is in the back of the room, the 3-D television that allows students to experience things like a tsunami, and the groundwater filtration system that still needed to be installed.

Connie Hunt was busy that day organizing her room. In the back are two dental chairs just waiting for someone to open wide. The dental program has been integrated with what Lake Tahoe Community College offers to make the transition seamless for those pursuing dental hygiene or dentistry.

What might seem like little touches are throughout. Windows open to provide fresh air. Tables in some rooms are really three put together to make one round table – which gives instructors more options. The AVID room can be one big room or two smaller rooms.

“Counselors were working up to 5 (Thursday) morning on the master schedule. As more students see this, they want in,” Larson said, going from room to room. No two seem a like. Each seems to be specialized. And that’s just how it was designed to be – unique and functional.

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Disgraced ex-Tahoe-Douglas fire chief faces accusations in Bay Area

By Michele Ellson, Oakland Tribune

Last week wasn’t the first time Alameda fire Chief David Kapler faced allegations he misused fire department resources. Kapler was accused of misusing his department vehicle when he was chief of another fire department nearly two decades ago, one of a host of allegations that ultimately led to his resignation from that job.

He resigned as chief of the Tahoe-Douglas Fire Protection District in 1991 after the allegations surfaced that he misused a department-owned vehicle.

Two developers also accused Kapler of soliciting contributions in exchange for the right to build, and he came under fire for

soliciting ski passes, a mountain bike, vacations and other contributions for a program to curb fire department absenteeism, newspaper articles written at the time reported.

Kapler said he was cleared of all wrongdoing in connection with the allegations in Tahoe. He also said his Tahoe-Douglas contract allowed him to take a district vehicle for personal use.

Read the whole story

Classic car show in Kings Beach looking for vehicles

The 3rd Annual John Reichert Memorial Classic Car Show is Sept. 11 from noon-2pm at the Kings Beach State Recreation Area. This event is open to the public; both spectators and those who wish to show their cars.

John Reichert was a member of the North Tahoe Public Utility District Recreation and Parks Commission who passed away in 2008 and was involved in the development of the Friends of the Park Fund. This fund goes to support capital projects in the North Tahoe Regional Park. Current fundraising is focused on raising money for a new children’s playground.

A barbecue benefiting the North Tahoe Public Utility District Friends of the Park Fund will be available during the show.

Anyone wishing to show their car should contact Dave Shelton to RSVP at (530) 583.3787 or tahoed@gmail.com There is no cost to participate, but a count of cars is important to determine the car layout in the parking lot.

10-year-old girl averts being abducted near South Tahoe Y

A 10-year-old South Lake Tahoe girl was able to escape on her bike after a man more than three times her age tried to lure her into his vehicle.

Police officers are calling the Aug. 25 11:25am incident a possible attempted abduction. The incident occurred at the corner of Third Street and Ruth Avenue.

The victim told officers she had been riding her bicycle on Third Street when a white, four-door car pulled in front of her bicycle and stopped. The driver told her something in an attempt to lure her, and then told her to get into the car. The victim fled the area on her bicycle, got to a place of safety and they contacted the police.



Artist's rendering of the suspect.

Officers responded to the area but were unable to locate the vehicle.

The suspect is a white male, about 35 years old, a little more than average weight, shaved head, blonde eyebrows, with a mole

on the left side of his neck.

The suspect's vehicle is described as a white four-door car with a squared-off rear end. The victim believed she saw a Toyota emblem on the vehicle.

Anyone with information concerning this person or related information is should call South Lake Tahoe Detective Doug Sentell at (530) 542.6100.

Space available to ride in Tour de Tahoe cycling event

On Sept. 12, more than 1,800 bicycling enthusiasts from all over the country will participate in the 8th Annual Tour de Tahoe – Bike Big Blue around Lake Tahoe.

This fun ride is not a race, but a tour and is fully supported offering spectacular scenery, fresh mountain air, rest stops with great food and beverage; and is staffed by volunteers from various organizations and professionally managed by experienced ride organizers. The event is supported by a grant from the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

This year marks the first year participation of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation as their National Team Fundraiser Ride to Cure Diabetes.

"We are extremely pleased to host the first JDRF National Team and to be their premiere Ride to Cure Diabetes fundraising event," event director Curtis Fong said in a statement. "With 175 participants coming from all over the country, we expect to raise $600,000 for JDRF."

For more information on joining the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation’s National Team, visit ride.jdrf.com.

Bicyclists will ride two tour options based on their ability level, with all rides starting and finishing from the Horizon Casino in Stateline.

For the “recreational” bicyclists, the Lake Tahoe Boat Cruise and 35 mile Half Ride is offered featuring a sightseeing boat cruise on Lake Tahoe Cruise’s Tahoe Queen paddle-wheeler, complete with a continental breakfast across the lake to the North Shore where participants start their 35 mile bike ride back to the Horizon. This ride option offers challenge as well as beauty with over 1000 vertical feet of climbing along Lake Tahoe’s East Shore. This ride option is limited to 120 participants and 50 family members and guests with a non-bicycling option.

For the conditioned bicyclists, the 72-mile Tour de Tahoe route around Lake Tahoe is not only one of the most scenic, it is also one of the only bi-state bike rides in the country with it’s route in California and Nevada. The 72-mile route circumnavigates the highways around Lake Tahoe in a clockwise direction and offers more than 2,600 vertical feet of climbing.

Online pre-registration is open at BiketheWest.com through Sept. 3. After that date only on-site/late registration will be available.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• Bhinder Shivdeep opened Speed Trac gas station on Highway 50 in South Tahoe this month. It's about a block from U.S. Gasoline, the other station he owns.

• The September/October issue of *Via* magazine delves into trains in the West, with the V&T Railroad in Nevada noted as rails worth riding.

• Kris Vogt is now president of Tahoe-Sacramento region for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.

• Click here to hear Charles Goldman's poem about Lake Tahoe.

• South Tahoe City Manager Tony O'Rourke has changed a simple policy at city offices. Department heads not working on the premise are now allowed a card to get into the main offices. Under the last regime they weren't allowed the same access as their colleagues.

• Cynthia Knight and Dave Klecker on Labor Day weekend are opening The Rural Squirrel in the old Insty Prints building on Highway 50 in South Tahoe. They will be selling furniture, antiques and cabin-esque home décor.

• The League to Save Lake Tahoe this week presented what would be a fifth alternative to the Regional Plan – the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's bible that was supposed to come out in 2007.

McClintock rips apart U.S. Forest Service practices

Publisher's note: ***Rep. Tom McClintock made the following statement to the Regional U.S. Forest Service Management Roundtable hosted by Rep. Wally Herger in Sacramento on Aug. 25. McClintock represents the California side of Lake Tahoe in the House.***

I want to thank my friend and colleague, Congressman Herger, for organizing this meeting and for his invitation to participate in it.

There are four general subjects that my constituents have brought to my attention that I feel are important to raise in this forum.

First, some of the most disturbing stories I have heard locally involve the abuse of cost recovery fees by the Forest Service. This has been a source of great frustration and evinces an attitude within the Service that I believe requires immediate correction.



Tom McClintock

For example, the California Endurance Riders Association had been using the Eldorado National Forest for many years. This time, when they sought a simple five-year 10-event permit to continue doing exactly what they have been doing without incident for decades, the Forest Service demanded $11,000 in

fees.

They paid these fees, but the Eldorado National Forest management nevertheless pulled the approved permit and halted the process on utterly specious grounds. It then demanded an additional $17,000 fee, causing the Endurance Riders Association to cancel what had been a long-term civic tradition that had been a boon to the local economy. In 2010, this outrage was repeated after the group spent $5,800 for the "Fool's Gold Endurance Run" that had been an ongoing event for more than 40 years.

The Polka Dots Motorcycle Club tells a similar story of excessive Forest Service fees that forced them to cancel a ride they have sponsored for four decades. Likewise, the Gold Country Endurance Riders, an equestrian group, had to cancel an event they had been holding since 1993 because of a prohibitive increase in the permit fees.

I seriously question the authority of the Forest Service to exact these fees at all, since federal guidelines do not require them if the surveys or research are done in the "public good." Moreover, it is clear the Forest Service was not dealing in good faith with these groups and that it should refund these fees in full and restore to them the full access to our public lands that they have been accorded for many years.

Second, the Forest Service is charging exorbitant Cabin User Fees to families that have had long-term possession of mountain cabins, based on peak market prices from 2007 and 2008. These inflated prices are many times the actual market price in this distressed economy, forcing many of these families to abandon cabins that they have had for decades and even generations.

Third, my office has been approached by several families that have had long-established grazing permits dating as far back

as 1931, who are now seeing conditions placed on their use that are simply ludicrous.

For example, the Leavell Family has grazed cattle in the Tahoe National Forrest since 1931 and by all accounts has been an excellent and responsible steward of the land. The incidents of harassment that they have encountered from the Forest Service have been unconscionable.

With absolutely no warning, the Forest Service presented them with a letter declaring that they were in non-compliance because of cattle that occasionally stray off the land. Yet in the past, federal regulations have prohibited them from building fences to prevent that very problem. The Forest Service recently charged that the cattle were damaging Aspen stands – allegations that further inspection proved to be groundless. Having failed to make its case on these grounds, the Forest Service then ordered the Leavells to remove cabins they have maintained and paid property taxes on for 79 years.

Also without warning, the Forest Service told the Coughlin family that it was canceling their long-standing grazing permit because of a lack of sufficient feed as determined by a Forest Service biologist. A subsequent field trip utterly disproved the biologist's opinion – so the Forest Service next informed them that their permit is still in jeopardy because of the same wandering cows that it used as pretense in the Leavell's case.

Finally – and most important, since this affects the safety of entire communities in my district – I remain concerned over the demonstrated disinterest that the Forest Service has recently demonstrated in supporting sustainable timber harvests. The expensive and labor-intensive process of twig removal cannot achieve fuel reductions that reduce the risk and intensity of forest fires. We must restore responsible and sustainable thinning of over populated forests called for in the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Restoration

Act of 1998, and which the U.S. Forest Service is now thwarting in our region.

For generations, the U.S. Forest Service maintained a balanced approach to the management of our forests that assured both healthy forests and a healthy economy. Now, it seems to be following a very different policy of exclusion, expulsion and benign neglect of our forests.

My office has brought these concerns and complaints of arbitrary and capricious conduct to the Forest Service's attention without a satisfactory resolution.

Practiced in the marketplace, we would renounce these tactics as predatory and abusive. In the public service sector, they are intolerable.

Combined, these actions evince an ideologically driven hostility to the public's use of the public's land – and a clear intention to deny the public the responsible and sustainable use of that land.

If the Forest Service fails to reverse these policies – and the attitude that has produced them – I intend to use my position on the National Parks, Forests and Public Lands subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee to press for extensive hearings during the next session of Congress into the economic damage these actions have caused.

Federal grant provides academic aid to LTCC students

Lake Tahoe Community College has received a $219,900 grant to

provide academic and other support services to low-income, first generation and disabled college students.



The U.S. Department of Education money is designed to increase student retention and graduation rates, facilitate their transfer from two-year to four-year colleges, and foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of these students.

The first chunk of money is for this coming school year, though it’s anticipated the grant will be for five years.

Program services may include: instruction in basic study skills; tutorial services; academic, financial, or personal counseling; assistance in securing admission and financial aid for enrollment in four-year institutions; assistance in securing admission and financial aid for enrollment in graduate and professional programs; guidance on career options; mentoring and special services for students with limited English proficiency; and grant aid.

Lake Tahoe Community College, when applying for the grant, said it expects to help 140 students with the Student Support Services Program money.

In fall 2008, 80.2 percent of the South Shore college’s total enrollment was eligible for SSS services and 48.3 percent of the fall 2008 entering students who demonstrated academic need were SSS eligible students, the college told the feds.