

Breaking up in Internet age adds a layer of pain

By Nick Bilton, New York Times

The last thing I remember was the tears running in rivulets down my cheek as I confirmed that, yes, I did want to delete the picture on my Facebook page.

Several hours later, I, grossly hung over, was awoken by a flash flood of the rising sun through my hotel room. My face looked like Bubble Wrap after I fell asleep (likely with a thud) on the carpeted floor. And a bottle of whiskey, now empty, lay stranded amid a ruin of scrunched tissues, dried from my tears and snot, which sat in a makeshift shrine around me.

For a moment, as I started to piece together where I was, how I got there and what had happened the night before, I looked over at my laptop, which was clammed-open on the floor, and I felt sick to my stomach, not from the hangover but even worse, from what might be waiting to greet me on the Internet.

“Please God, let them be gone,” I thought. “All of them – gone.”

This had all begun a few weeks earlier, when my wife at the time and I decided to get a divorce. Saying goodbye was difficult, but removing a life we had both lived online for the better part of a decade proved to be close to impossible.

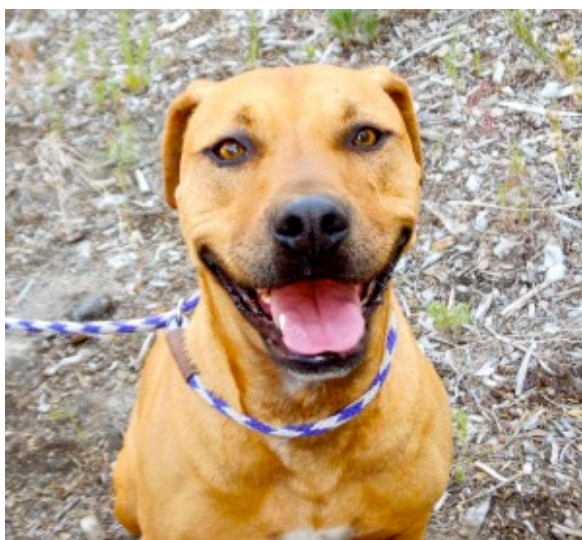
The web was littered with pictures, videos, check-ins, likes and tweets of our every moment. Now that online reality show that I produced, directed and starred in was there to remind me in an almost demonic tone that I was single and that those images weren't going anywhere.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other sites are happy to lure you to post every intricate moment of your relationships online. Yet when things go wrong, these social tombs do nothing to help people easily delete those memories.

If breaking up is hard to do, breaking up in the age of social media is unfathomable.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Baxter

Baxter is a 4-year-old red pit bull who is very quiet in the shelter.

He is house trained and has great manners. He walks nicely on the leash and is very affectionate, and likes well-mannered children and other dogs.

Baxter is not a fan of cats, and needs to be on a runner when left outside as he can jump over 7-foot high fences. Baxter has been at the Reno Humane Society for almost a year and is hoping that a change of scenery to Tahoe will change his luck in finding a new home.

Baxter 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

SLT resolving Redevelopment Agency issues



The vacant lot on Ski Run and Highway 50 looks to Ski Run Marina, from left, Lake Tahoe Vacation Resort, and Red Hut. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe is about to own a highly valuable piece of property in the city – assuming the City Council agrees to buy it.

On the July 15 council meeting the 1½ acres on the corner of Ski Run Boulevard and Highway 50 is on the agenda. It had been acquired by the now defunct Redevelopment Agency in deals with the prior owner of the timeshare complex that is kitty-corner to this lot. Originally that land was to be developed as another phase of what is now a Diamond Resorts owned property.

It is one of several parcels the Successor Agency needs to eventually unload.

“This is one of the last pieces of undeveloped prime real estate (in the city),” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The appraised value is \$800,000, which is what the city would pay. The city has \$1.8 million in undesignated reserves. That pot of money is proposed to be tapped to buy the land.

“This meets the council’s objective to advance economic development. This gives them the opportunity to own a piece of land they have never owned,” Kerry said.

It comes with coverage, but no commercial floor area or tourist accommodation units. It has 88 parking spaces deeded to it from the parking garage next door that is owned by Diamond Resorts.

With the state dissolving redevelopment agencies, a convoluted process is in place for those entities to get rid of land and other holdings they own. Ultimately the Oversight Board will have to approve the purchase. That group’s next meeting is July 25 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

This parcel has been on the market, but no potential buyer

could make it work in the post-redevelopment era. Ideas had been to turn it into a high-end spa or drugstore like Walgreens.

Now the city would have control over what goes there. It's possible the city would sell the land to a developer contingent upon what is built. There could be a lease to buy option as well.

"The next step is to market the property and see what kind of interest there is today," Kerry said.

South Lake Tahoe is sitting on commercial floor area commodities, so developing the site is possible. (In the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has made commercial floor area and tourist accommodation units commodities, and has limited how many of each is allowed.)

Other redevelopment/Successor Agency items are also on Tuesday's council agenda. They involve dealing in part with the \$7 million the city took from the general fund to make the Heavenly Village project a reality and the other is the Housing Agency.

This taking was unbeknownst to the public until long after the money was spent. And allegedly the council – which at the time consisted of Hal Cole, Tom Davis, Judy Brown, Kathay Lovell and John Upton – didn't know either. At least that's what they said at a May 2003 council meeting when the gifting of public funds – aka taxpayer money – was acknowledged by then City Manager Dave Jinkens.

It was in 2004 that then-Mayor Davis signed a retroactive loan agreement between the city and Redevelopment Agency so the general fund would be repaid. There is still \$4 million, which includes interest, that needs to be paid.

Tuesday's agenda item will help speed up that process.

In 2010, the state “borrowed” \$2 million from the city’s Redevelopment Agency. The agency didn’t have the money so it borrowed \$426,000 from the Housing Agency.

Money to pay back the Housing Agency and city will come from revenues of sales of former Redevelopment Agency holdings, like the Ski Run-Highway 50 property, as well as property taxes.

A complicated state process allows those debts to be added back as an obligation of the non-existent Redevelopment Agency. The Successor Agency has to approve these transactions.

Kerry said the multimillion-dollar note owed the city could take upward of 10 years to pay off, but she was adamant the debt would be paid once the agencies vote on all the transactions.

On the Aug. 5 council agenda will likely be the option to refinance the bonds associated with redevelopment. This will lower the debt payment, which could mean the Housing Agency and general fund bills get paid sooner.

Opinion: Grand jury needs to learn meaning of investigation

By Larry Weitzman

Dysfunction is the key word within the title of the grand jury report published June 25 regarding the El Dorado County Charter. Most, if not all, grand juries are suppose to be fact

finders, and although I didn't examine the entire report to see if other areas of the report had fact finding or opinion, the dysfunction section discussed here was mostly opinion or statements with absolutely no factual basis.

This section of the report is supposed to be the basis for Terri Daly's campaign to make her the *führer* of El Dorado County. *Führer* in German means guide or leader, but most people think of *führer* as a dictator, and not a benevolent one. The report reeks with Terri Daly's smell and fingerprints as if she not only wrote the report, but also drafted the Charter changes recommended by the GJ and submitted to the Charter Review Committee. Why? Because the report is full of opinion and statements that have no factual basis, and because of the way the grand jury referred to the CAO within the report. Grand juries are supposed to be fact finders, not opinion writers or editorialists.



Larry Weitzman

Within the six pages are claims for which there is no basis in fact; starting with the "proliferation" of elected officials in El Dorado County. Was that a malapropism or did the GJ not understand what the word "proliferation" means? It sounds like the GJ is trying to find an ant hill in the Himalayas. There hasn't been any new elected office created in the county since the passing of the El Dorado County Charter in 1994. What proliferation is the GJ talking about, the rapid expansion in the last four years in budget and employees in the CAO's office?

Then the GJ concludes there should be no elected officials in EDC except those required by California law (the sheriff, DA and the assessor). Their reasoning is that the county's elected officers, the Board of Supervisors and/or its five members interfere in the administration of county business. Of course they don't cite one example or fact as to what the interference is, how it occurs, when it happened and why and who did it. Nothing, zero, nada.

The GJ says the purpose of the BOS is to create and implement the vision for the future of EDC. What is the purpose of the General Plan? While Section 210 (a) (1) of the County Charter says the BOS shall adopt a statement of goals annually reflecting the quality and direction of the activities of county government, it is hardly a vision and the only purpose of the BOS.

I have news for the GJ, the ultimate county buck stops with the BOS. They share ultimate responsibility of the administration of EDC business and the BOS can change every two years and some BOS members will have different visions and ideas. It will be ever changing because of term limits and that "vision" creation is not even a part-time job, it is, to use the GJ's word, "esoteric" baloney.

Here's a county vision: Better, faster and more service and smoother, better roads all for less money. OK, what is a BOS member supposed to do for the next 8,759 hours left in the year?

As reported in the last Balancing Act, the BOS needs to be involved as Amador County is now saddled needlessly with a \$20 million lease obligation because the BOS trusted and did not question sufficiently what the CAO, Terri Daly, snuck through at a BOS meeting via the consent calendar. Yes, it's the same Terri Daly who is now entrusted with a budget seven times greater than the Amador County budget.

Here are examples of the GJ's conclusions without a factual basis. The GJ states, "Recently the imbalance and potential for abuse of power by elected officials has been brought to the public's attention following the County's Workplace Climate Assessment Survey and ensuing significant criticism of the Auditor/Controller. Whether or not the criticisms directed at the Controller are true..." The GJ makes a conclusion while admitting they don't know if it's true or not. In fact, the Climate Assessment Survey said nothing of the auditor/controller and in fact gave the auditor/controller some of the highest marks in the survey, while giving the CAO's office some of the lowest marks. But the GJ didn't say a word about of the negative remarks or facts derived by the survey regarding CAO or assistant CAO. The grand jury obviously did not study the report. They were not interested in fact finding.

Want more? At the beginning of the very next paragraph the GJ allegedly wrote, "Although the GJ did not investigate the allegations made against the auditor/controller following the County's Workplace Assessment, the GJ received substantial testimony from a number of witnesses...."

If they didn't investigate the allegations against the auditor/controller, they obviously didn't do a proper fact-finding and therefore shouldn't say anything that isn't backed by facts that they again obviously did not ascertain. This GJ report is strictly anecdotal and its recommendations should be disregarded. There is no factual basis for its conclusions. This grand jury report was nothing more than a continuation of a witch hunt, a witch hunt led by the witches themselves.

The GJ's rant isn't limited to certain elected officials, it also disses the electorate when it says "the electorate has no valid basis for evaluating the performance of officials performing the specialized and sometimes esoteric (now there is a word to show just how smart the GJ is) duties of these offices." What, the CAO who wants to select these people

herself is an expert? Yeah, sure. Our CAO has already shown herself to be untrustworthy with some of her appointments and a terrible businessperson. Ask Amador County.

As to the grand jury's idea of a government that is a harmonious love fest, forget about it. If you want a government without disagreement or dissent, try a dictatorship. Everyone is a yes man to the dictator or head of government. That is what makes the American government so different. It is created with checks and balances and competing ideas to most everything and you want that provided for in its structure, such as elected officials facing the voters every four years and that includes the BOS. One thing we don't want is a runaway government and that's what you will get with the grand jury's baseless recommendations. What is surprising is that notwithstanding the Sacramento Bee's very limited investigation and evaluation of the GJ "Dysfunction" report in its July 5 editorial, the Sac Bee agrees that it is not a good idea to "reduce democracy ... for political expediency."

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

2 kids hurt in Donner Lake boating accident

A boat pulling a skier on Donner Lake ran over the tow-line of a Jet Ski, ejecting the children who were riding on the inner tube behind the personal watercraft.

The 7- and 8-year-old suffered minor injuries July 13. One youth was flown to Renown Medical Center in Reno by Careflight as a precaution based on the nature of the collision, but was listed in stable condition with only minor injuries. Both were

wearing life vests.

Neither alcohol nor drugs appear to be a factor in the Sunday afternoon accident, according to Truckee police officers.

“There is no doubt the use of personal flotation devices in this incident reduced the severity of the injuries. Boaters on Donner Lake are also reminded the lake has a counterclockwise rule, meaning boats must travel in a counterclockwise direction whenever they are on plane or towing persons,” Truckee police officers said in a statement.

Anyone with any information on this incident is asked to call 530.550.2323.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Measure F is the name of Lake Tahoe Community College's bond that will be on the November ballot. F is for facilities.

- Fitch Ratings has given Southwest Gas Corp. an A-minus rating.
- Here are the Caltrans roadwork schedules for the week – El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra.
- Jude Wood is now executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe.

- Placer County Human Services Division was awarded a 2014 Achievement Award by the National Association of Counties for its Human Services Center.
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Calif. on edge as peak fire season looms

By Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee

In recent months, as California officials started to calculate the fire danger posed by the state's prolonged and historic drought, they tucked an extra \$23 million into the CalFire emergency wildfire budget for the fiscal year that began July 1, bringing its total to \$209 million.

By July 6 – just days into the fiscal year – the agency already had spent \$13.9 million battling two major blazes, and is now bracing for one of the longest and most difficult fire seasons in memory.

“That’s just the first week, and we still have 51 more weeks to go,” said Daniel Berlant, spokesman for CalFire. “We’re not even to the peak of the fire season yet.”

Berlant and top fire officials have been warning for months that the state faces serious peril from wildland fires this year, as the drought – stretching into a third year – has sucked dry much of the state's brush lands and forests more quickly than in years with more normal precipitation levels.

After it became evident over the winter that California was facing its worst drought in a generation, officials began

taking extraordinary steps to prepare for the fire season. Even as Gov. Jerry Brown declared a drought emergency in mid-January, Cal Fire was hiring seasonal firefighters in the north state, a move that typically occurs in May.

Normally, CalFire would hire 2,400 seasonal firefighters to handle blazes statewide, but this year increased that staffing to 2,700. The department also took a number of other steps to prepare for a potentially catastrophic fire season, including awarding a \$5.4 million contract for a DC-7 air tanker that already has been deployed to the Monticello and Butts fires and augments CalFire's fleet of 50 aircraft.

President Obama on Tuesday sent a letter to Congress seeking a \$615 million emergency appropriation request to fund firefighting efforts; California is expected to ask for the bulk of the federal reimbursements, given predictions for where wildland fires are most likely in coming months.

The latest map from the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise shows that forecasters believe California, Nevada and Oregon face the gravest threats.

Read the whole story

Wild animals part of library's summer programs

Douglas County Public Library is presenting a free wild animal show July 29.

There will be two sessions – one at 5:30pm and another at 6:30pm in the C.V.I.C. Hall.

Children will learn about wild animals from around the world and hear their stories. Animals may include a monkey, alligator and bird of prey.

The program is presented by Wild Things Inc., which provides homes for animals that could not survive on their own in the wild. They also share these animals as educational wildlife ambassadors.

The C.V.I.C. Hall is located at 1602 Esmeralda Ave. in Minden.

Wine tasting allowed at Calif. farmers markets

By Willa Young, Los Angeles Times

Skip the peaches and cheese, farmers market guests can now sample wine at farmers markets all over California.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed a measure into law Tuesday that allows farmers markets to conduct wine and cider tastings. The bill, AB2488, was approved by the Assembly and the Senate of California unanimously. Wineries and cidermakers can apply immediately for a permit through the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

The wine and ciders must be produced from fruit grown and bottled by the winery and the tastings must be done by the permit holder, a family member or an employee. Also, wine sellers may not sell more than 5,000 gallons of wine annually and may not serve an individual customer more than 3 ounces a day. These provisions are in place to keep the tastings responsible and controlled.

Pet insurance complaints prompt legislation

By Daniel Rothberg, Sacramento Bee

Stuart Waldman did all he could to help a dog that had been in his family for eight years. Treating the Anatolian shepherd came at a high cost: \$17,000. When Waldman rescued his next dog, he decided, he would buy pet insurance.

“God forbid anything happen again,” the Los Angeles resident and former Assembly aide said. “We wanted to be prepared.”

At least that was his thinking at the time.

“We have been completely unimpressed ever since,” Waldman said. “We get claims rejected constantly because of a pre-existing condition. In fact, we’ve never had a claim that has gone just straight through. They always reject it. We always have to appeal.”

Waldman doesn’t necessarily regret paying for coverage, still hoping his dogs are protected for the “big thing,” but he wishes buyers could more easily access information before enrolling.

While only a sliver of American pet owners hold policies – 1 percent – the niche insurance has become an increasingly tempting option. Veterinary care can be costly, experts say, with more sophisticated medicine on the market and owners who

treat their pets like members of the family.

Unlike human health care coverage, insurance for dogs, cats, even hedgehogs, falls into the category of property insurance. Providers have considerable leeway to place coverage limits and can carve out exclusions for pre-existing conditions or hereditary diseases.

Read the whole story