Letter: Meyers plan transparency questioned

Publisher's note: ***This letter was sent to El Dorado County CAO Terri Daly on June 15. It is reprinted with permission.***

Dear Ms. Daly:

I am writing to you on behalf of California's South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce President George Alm and the board of directors and residents and business owners in Meyers.

I learned within the last day that the county is scheduling a "public" meeting on June 26, 2014, to discuss the draft Meyers Area Plan. The party in question who informed me received the card from the business owner of her property. It began, "Dear Meyers Area Resident." The card came from county offices at 924 B Emerald Bay Road, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150. The party in question did not receive a card at her residence and other Meyers residents, I am told, have not received a similar notification. The card asks those receiving it to return comments on their online Plan to the "address above" or to MeyersAreaPlan@edcgov.us. I can send you a copy of the card notice received if you wish? I was told that the *Lake Tahoe News* online media outlet received the same advertisement, and Ms. [Kathryn] Reed was good enough to place a notice in her fine publication. However, this notice is not "legal" notification.



Dave Jinkens

In regard to this scheduled meeting, please let me bring up a few comments and concerns. As the chief administrative officer of our county, I know you will be interested in them, and I hope you know that our chamber and Meyers residents only what is best for the entire community. We know that you have many matters of county business to address, and the details of our concerns on this particular matter may not be ones with which you are familiar.

1. Public Notification Process – It is my understanding that the county did not publish a "legal notice" of the meeting: The notice given was not sent to all residents some of whom have been involved in Meyers planning issues for many years: The notice thus appears to be sent to select groups; and the notice and date of the meeting does not give enough time to review the draft plan and come prepared with informed comments and questions. In addition, members of the public who signed up for the email list to be notified about the plan have not received any email notifications.

The draft plan is apparently available online, but for some people they may not use computers and thus the draft is inaccessible. I know of no hard-copy available to the public at any public location which over the years is a customary practice of local government. In addition, for persons with certain types of disabilities and sight impairments who have access and use computers, reading large documents online are difficult and hurt their eyes. I am one of the latter people. I have requested a hard copy, and I will pay for it.

A major issue in this particular planning process has been and remains the perception of a lack of transparency, meetings on plan components with less than inclusive notice, a limited number of special interest parties invited to meetings with County officials, reported consensus on plan components where no vote was taken or manually recorded and meetings of the MAC held on the topic where no Brown Act advertisements were made. In my long experience in local government, I must admit being

perplexed by the process used and the lack of broad-based community involvement for a Plan that will lay out the future of the historic Meyers community for many years in the future.

Because of the lack of community notice and verified community involvement, the current process and projected outcomes have generated suspicion, mistrust, and alarm by members of the Meyers community. As requested by the South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce in previous correspondence, approval of any plan should only come after commonly accepted public notice for land use matters are made, a "validated" survey of the entire Meyers community on major plan components taken, serious public engagement with the entire community, and time is taken to allow the district's new supervisor to be part of the final approval process.

The absence of a legal notice for a major community planning meeting as the one to take place on June 26 is of grave concern a customary local government practice.

2. California's South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce Letters – On May 2, 2014, and May 21, 2014, letters were sent to the Board of Supervisors discussing the concerns with the timing and process for adoption of the Meyers plan. The letters were sent in support of Meyers residents and Meyers business owners and operators. To date, the follow-up letter of May 21, 2014, to the Board of Supervisors did not receive a reply of any kind from either the Board or staff. In addition, since the South Tahoe Chamber has also communicated directly with county staff on behalf of Meyers residents and business owners, yet we too did not receive a notice of this meeting as well as no reply to our May 21, 2014, letter

Conclusion

I am respectfully requesting your help, assistance and involvement in this matter to ensure transparency in decision-making for Meyers residents and a process that ensures true

public engagement and participation in the planning for Meyers future as proposed in this email and the South Tahoe Chamber's previous letters. Our Chamber does not question the motives of anyone in this process. We simply believe that the suggestions we are making on behalf of Meyers residents and business owners will improve the process and the outcome.

I am copying the members of the Board of Supervisors as a courtesy on this important land use matter since previous correspondence has been directed to the board. Copies are being sent to TRPA officials as well. We all would appreciate your help and assistance with this matter. We want the process and outcomes to be a success for all parties.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dave Jinkens, South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce volunteer board member

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Family confirms identity of dog found in Tahoe forest

By News10/KXTV

The family whose golden retriever disappeared in the Tahoe National Forest 20 months ago says it has proof the dog recovered in a Sierra campground last weekend is theirs.

"It's just an unbelievable story and we're still in shock," said Erin Braun, who said she never doubted the dog they

brought home on Father’s Day was Murphy, who disappeared on a camping trip at Hell Hole Reservoir in October 2012.

But Braun’s husband, Nathan, was less certain because of subtle physical differences. He was hoping a DNA test would confirm the identity.

After the family determined a DNA test was not possible because of an insufficient sample, they were reminded by a veterinarian in Truckee of a distinctive scar Murphy carried on her right elbow as the result of a deep gash that was sutured about three years ago.

Read the whole story

Squaw hosting farm to table dinners in August

Squaw Valley is offering a new series of farm to table dinners this summer.

Dinners will be hosted at Cushing Pond, located just next to KT-22, as well as in the resort’s newly landscaped garden setting at Olympic Valley Lodge. Thehe family-style dinners will take place at 6pm on Aug. 2, Aug. 16 and Aug. 30.

Cost is $35 per person. Each upscale picnic dinner will feature locally and sustainably sourced food prepared with a creative twist. Specially paired beers and wines will be available for purchase, along with a large selection of non-alcoholic beverages.

Reservations are required; call chef Tiffany Swan at 530.452.6081 or email farmtotable@squaw.com.

Project launched to keep sage grouse off threatened list

By Las Vegas Sun

The Obama administration is launching an effort to accelerate protection of sage grouse along the Nevada-California line with $31 million in spending commitments through 2024 to help ranchers and others improve grouse habitat.

A top official in the Agriculture Department told the Associated Press that Friday's announcement may represent the best, last chance to keep the Nevada and California population of the bird off the list of threatened species.

Jason Weller, chief of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, says that while the multiagency effort targets California and Nevada, it ultimately will benefit the overall habitat of the greater sage grouse in 11 western states.

Read the whole story

Proper muscle strengthening is key

By Caroline Barichievich

Whether you are a water skier, paddleboarder, mountain biker,

or hiker, you may engage your hip and core muscles more than you know.

Experiencing pain in your lower back, hip, knee, or foot? Perhaps it’s your gluteus medius, a significant, but lesser known muscle.

The gluteus medius muscle supports humans to walk on two legs and sustain long hours of play. It is located on the side of your bum between the bony protrusion on the hip to the top of the pelvis. It’s the muscle that keeps the legs from dropping in and what stabilizes the pelvis when standing on one leg. It also helps activate core muscles and maintain hip and knee alignment.

If the gluteus medius is weak and cannot control the leg from dropping in toward the other leg, this can cause pain throughout the leg. Pain can spread from the hip to the knee joint and has been linked to iliotibial (IT) band problems, tendonitis, and foot pains.

To avoid potential pains and enjoy an injury free summer, the following exercises will strengthen the gluteus medius muscles.

Wall Press: Standing with one side against a wall, lift the inside leg against the wall up 60 degrees and push for five seconds. This exercises the opposite leg by pushing the knee, hip and ankle against the wall.

Side Leg Lift: Lie on your side with the upper arm on the floor (balance your head on extended hand) and the lower knee bent for stability. Keep the top leg straight and slightly behind you while keeping your back straight. Lift the higher leg upward approximately 30 degrees while maintaining the hip slightly back and the toes pointed forward for a count of two up and two down.

Side Plank Lift: Rise in a side plank position with your legs

extended. Balance on the side of your foot and elbow, with hips lifted off the ground to achieve neutral alignment of your trunk, hips, knees, and ankles. While balancing on the elbow and feet, raise your top leg up in the air for a count of two up and two down. Maintain plank position throughout all repetitions.

Single Leg Squat: Place a chair six to twelve inches behind you. Stand on one leg and slowly squat, lowering the buttocks to touch the chair for a count of two and then extend back to standing for a count of two. During this motion, your extended leg should stay in line with your other thigh.

For every exercise, perform three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions on both sides. You should feel the muscle tighten in your bum, not on the side of your knee or front of the thigh.

If pain persists, contact your physician or a sports medicine specialist.

Caroline Barichievich is the physical therapy supervisor for Barton Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine.

Free produce for families in need

The Food Bank of El Dorado County will be in South Lake Tahoe on June 25 from 10-11am to host a free farmers market.

It will be at the American Legion Hall on Highway 50.

People struggling to make ends meet and live in the South Lake Tahoe area may receive the free fresh produce. The Food Bank will provide one allocation per household.

The Food Bank’s hunger study surveys, which are still being submitted and tabulated, show an increasing need and desire for more fresh produce in South Lake Tahoe.

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

Chateau duplicating Heavenly Village retailers

While retail was supposed to open at the Chateau on July 1, that date has been pushed back to at least mid-July. Construction is still going on and all the storefronts have not been leased.

So far, the tenants are the same as what’s across the street at Heavenly Village. Powder House and Up Shirt Creek are each taking two units in the new center that fronts Highway 50 near the state line in South Lake Tahoe.



The round building will be the new McP’s. Photo/LTN

Those are the only two companies to take out applications for interior tenant improvements with the city.

The other known occupant is McP's, which was the plan for the last seven year. Only now the restaurant will be much bigger and is also slated to in part be a nightclub.

No company has taken out sign permits, according to city officials.

Lew Feldman, who represents the owners of the Chateau, did not return a phone call. So, the exact date when stores will open is not known, nor is it known what else will go in at the site.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Half of U.S. homes at risk from natural disaster

By Constantine von Hoffman, Money Watch

More than half of all U.S. homes are located in areas prone to tornadoes, earthquakes or hurricanes.

About 71 million housing units, or 55 percent of the nation's total, fall into the high risk category, with 10.6 million of these, or 8 percent of the total, classified as very high risk, according to a report from RealtyTrac.

The report is based on historical and predictive data from the U.S. Geological Survey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration regarding the likelihood of a given county being hit by a 5.0 magnitude or greater earthquake over

the next 50 years or highly destructive hurricanes and tornadoes.

“It’s fairly obvious from looking at the map that these high-risk areas tend to be places where a lot of people want to live, like along the coast,” said Daren Blomquist, vice president at RealtyTrac, which provides real estate data. “While we’re not expecting this to cause a mass exodus from those areas, at least when home buyers are looking at a house they should take it into consideration along with the other factors that can affect home value.”

Higher-risk areas around the country – such as San Diego and Riverside counties in Southern California, Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York, and the Boston metro area – generally have higher home prices than lower risk regions. Median home prices in the eight counties adjudged as being at low risk for natural disasters averaged $161,000 in April, while prices in the 12 high-risk counties averaged $377,483, according to RealtyTrac.

Read the whole story

Placer County Library part of vets tattoo exhibit

Placer County Library is part of a drive to create an online exhibit of tattoo art displayed by California veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

War Ink is a proposed multimedia exhibit that will feature 30 veterans from throughout the state. The stories surrounding their tattoos will be recorded by the StoryCorps Military

Voices Initiative, a nationally acclaimed platform for veterans, service members and military families to share their stories. The project seeks to honor the voices of veterans, amplify their experiences and let them know the nation is listening.

Veterans interested in the project should contact Jason Deitch, the project's curator and scholar, at jasonadeitch@gmail.com or 510.593.8423. Deitch, a former combat medic and sociologist, created the project along with Chris Brown of the Contra Costa County Library.

The initiative is an opportunity for veterans to tell how their tattoo art serves as reminders of experiences they and the people they served with had in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Placer County Library will display War Ink online beginning on Veterans Day.

Time to register for Sierra Nevada Alliance conference

Reservations are being taken for the 21st annual Sierra Nevada Alliance conference, Sept. 6-8.

Tim Palmer, award winning author of 24 books, conservationist and landscape photographer, will be the keynote speaker.

The conference is at the North Tahoe Event Center in Kings Beach.

For more info and to register, go online.