Forest Service meeting to explain Fallen Leaf Lake trail plans

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will host a meeting Sept. 19 to explain answer questions about its plan for trails in the Fallen Leaf Lake area.

The Fallen Leaf Lake Access and Travel Management Plan seeks to improve the recreation experience for residents and visitors, while protecting its natural, cultural and historic resources. LTBMU is asking for public input on the plan and alternatives developed in response to public comment.

Under the plan, the LTBMU would expand and improve public parking and access and install water quality best management practices at existing and proposed parking sites. The project would improve the trail system to provide access to popular destinations, while reducing congestion and user conflict.

Many trails would receive BMP upgrades to meet current Forest Service standards, while others are proposed for decommissioning. A primary difference among the six alternatives is how they would address the existing bridge over Fallen Leaf Lake dam and the Taylor Creek stream crossings, the issue that drew the most public comment.

The meeting will be from 6-8pm at the Forest Supervisor’s Office, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe.

The draft environmental assessment is available online or call (530) 543.2694. The Forest Service will accept comments through Oct. 12.

SLTPD K9 Duke retires, handler moves to EDSO

South Lake Tahoe police Officer Tony Broadfoot is trading in a blue uniform for a brown one as he becomes a deputy with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department.

Broadfoot has been one of the longtime K9 officers in South Lake Tahoe.

His partner Duke will be retiring.



While Duke is a police dog, he is friendly with the firefighters, too. Photo/LTN file

Ed foundation admits taking money from known felon

By Kathryn Reed

"After several days of no comments, I feel that it is time to make a more detailed statement about the rumors that have been published as fact," Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation President Nancy Rollston wrote in a Sept. 9 email to her board and others.

The press release that was sent to only one media outlet on Sept. 10 – and *Lake Tahoe News* was not that outlet – confirms what *Lake Tahoe News* has already published. And that is that disgraced South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman Angela Swanson was at a meeting where Rollston took a donation of $1,128 from Gino DiMatteo.



But the nonprofit education group does not explain the odd dollar amount that was delivered in cash in a bag.

DiMatteo was arrested Aug. 31 on charges of bribing Swanson and various drug related infractions. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges. Swanson has not been charged.

DiMatteo is a felon. *Lake Tahoe News* last week asked the city attorney, city manager and police chief the following questions: *Can you please give me Gino's application for his pot shop? Was a criminal check done? What did it turn up? I thought if anyone had a criminal background, they couldn't open a pot shop if they had a criminal background. Where is*

the truth in that?

No one from the city has answered any of those questions.

El Dorado County Deputy District Attorney James Clinchard, who is prosecuting the case, continues not to return phone calls. So, Swanson's future is unknown.

The press release says a foundation officer was interviewed by district attorney's investigators Aug. 31. The other officers besides Rollston are Pradip Patel-vice president, Jerry Bindel-treasurer, Debra McHugh-secretary, and Chris Campion-past president.

The press release says, "Although Angela Swanson was present, she did not accept the contribution." Swanson is on the ed foundation board.

That does not exonerate her under the letter of the law.

The press release says the foundation was given the money June 13. The alleged bribery, according to the complaint that was released Sept. 4, took place on or between June 5-13.

In a statement, Swanson has said she did nothing "intentionally" wrong.

However, it was Swanson who initiated the transaction.

DiMatteo and those who have been on the receiving end of DiMatteo's generosity have publicly stated at multiple City Council meetings how he has given money to multiple organizations and individuals in town.

DiMatteo as owner of City of Angels 2 was before the City Council multiple times either advocating for his industry or seeking votes from the council related specifically to his now shuttered business. Swanson has always been a strong advocate for medical marijuana, having a family member who she has told *Lake Tahoe News* is not ill who has a card to get the drug-

medicine.

Swanson did not return a phone call.

Tahoe Fat Tire Festival lineup solidified

Mountain bikers from all over are expected to be at Squaw Valley Sept. 20-23 for the return of the Tahoe Fat Tire Festival.

The festival is being brought back by the Truckee Trails Foundation and Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association in an effort to promote the Tahoe area and to create a fundraising event to support trail projects.

Presented by New Belgium Brewing, Barefoot Wines and the North Lake Tahoe Convention and Visitors Bureau, the festival will include five race events, a mountain bike stage race, group mountain bike rides, skill clinics, vendors, movies, trail work classes, and music. Squaw Valley will be opening its bike park and trail network for the four days of the festival.

The festival kicks off that Thursday night with the short track race through the Village at Squaw Valley. Friday brings the hill climb race from the village to High Camp. Saturday will be the Sierra Cup Regional Championship Series Cross Country event and the Nor-Cal State Downhill Championships. The festival wraps up on Sunday with a Super-D race featuring more than 2,000 feet of descending.

During the festival, there also will be group rides on and

off-site, beginner and intermediate skill clinics, a mountain bike film festival, and trail work classes.

For more information and to register, go online.

McDonald’s to open vegetarian restaurants in India

By April Fulton, NPR

McDonald’s, home of the iconic Big Mac, is going vegetarian. Well, at least in India, where 20 to 42 percent or more of the population (depending on how you count) eschews meat, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

According to AFP, McDonald’s will open its first vegetarian-only location next year near the Golden Temple, a pilgrimage site sacred to Sikhs located in the city of Amritsar in northern India. There is no meat allowed in the temple (or smoking or alcohol, for that matter.)

This isn’t exactly the first time McDonald’s is breaking into the Indian market.

“At the moment, India is still a very small market – we just have 271 restaurants in India, and across the world, we have nearly 33,000,” a spokesman for McDonald’s in northern India, Rajesh Kumar Maini, told AFP.

But it’s a growth opportunity for the chain, the spokesman says.

The reasons for going meatless in India are obvious: Cows are sacred to Hindus, and the country’s Muslims don’t eat pork.

That leaves a lot of chicken and vegetables to be served in McDonald’s existing Indian restaurants.

McDonald’s in India already has a menu that is 50 percent vegetarian, according to Yahoo News. At 28 rupees, or 50 cents, each, its McAloo Tikki burger– which uses a spicy, fried potato-based patty – is the top seller, accounting for a quarter of total sales. And you won’t find a Big Mac in India, just a Maharaja Mac, which involves chicken patties, notes Business Insider.

The company is also planning to open another vegetarian location near the Vaishno Devi cave shrine in Kashmir, a Hindu pilgrimage site that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors a year.

So how’s the new all-vegetarian version of McDonald’s going to play in India? We can only guess, although from China to France, the mega chain has a history of successfully adjusting its brand abroad to suit the locals.

Gaming win up in Nevada; stagnant on South Shore

Stateline casinos did not continue their winning ways in July. With June seeing a 17 percent spike, July was flat at $30 million in revenue.



The Nevada Gaming Control Board on Sept. 10 released the latest numbers, which showed revenues increased in July by 17 percent compared to July 2011. Nevada casinos brought in just more than $1 billion in July, which compares $860 million a year ago.

The Las Vegas Strip is what made the difference. There revenues were $597 – up nearly 28 percent compared to 2011.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



• The League to Save Lake Tahoe is part of this year's Chase Community Giving program. This fall, Chase is granting millions of dollars to organizations all over the country, and the League is among the groups on the list. But to win a grant, people need to go to the Chase Community Giving Facebook page and type "League to Save Lake Tahoe" in the search box to cast a vote.

• Two more South Lake Tahoe businesses want their signs to be considered unique so they don't have to replace them – Tahoe Valley Professional Building and Burger Lounge. Planning commissioners will discuss the matter Sept. 13 at 10am at Lake Tahoe Airport.

• An Ironman Lake Tahoe volunteer meeting is set for Sept. 17, 7pm at the North Tahoe Event Center, 8318 North Lake Blvd., Kings Beach. The event is in September 2013.

• The first flake of snow hasn’t even fallen and Northstar is sending press releases that the resort will open for skiing on Nov. 16.

• River otters unite.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Russell is a pretty typical Jack Russell terrier – very cute, very friendly, and very energetic.



He is house trained, crate trained and has good manners. He likes other well-mannered dogs nad has lived with cats and small children. Russell enjoys long walks and car rides. He came to the shelter because his owners’ new grandchild is allergic to him.

Russell is neutered, microchipped, 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 online to see photos and description 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

Opinion: Gary Johnson should be the next U.S. president

To the community,

In the movie “Searching for Bobby Fisher” there is a moment where Joshua Waitzkin offers his opponent a draw. The opponent, looking at what he thinks is a tactically superior position spurns the offer, “why would I do that”. Joshua, having clearly seen his path to victory, replies, “You’ve already lost, you just don’t see it yet.”

I think there are very few who will see Gary Johnson as having won the current presidential race. For that matter, there are actually only a minority of people in this country who even know of his candidacy, including the owner/publisher of this e-newspaper. But Gary Johnson is the kind of guy who will find a way to surmount obstacles. This presidential candidate has climbed Mount Everest, so if you can find a bigger obstacle than that: Bring it on. Gary has a long history of achieving his aspirations.

I am most impressed by his business history. Gary started out as a one-man handyman business in college. He grew that business to over a thousand employees before deciding to go and do other things. Gary understands business, especially what we really need in this country, small business.

After selling the business he turned his hand to politics. He ran for governor of New Mexico. As governor, he took a state that had a serious budget deficit when he entered office, and by the time he was termed out eight years later left the state with approximately a billion dollars in its coffers. And he cut taxes 14 times.

But he’s not just an adventurer, businessman, politician – he’s a real thinker, too. And he thinks about things like: If this is the land of the free, why do we lock up more people than anyone else in the world? And why do we lock people up for drug use when it would make so much more sense to treat it as the medical/psychological/economic issue that it really is? Legalize marijuana, regulate it, tax it and top the drug wars. In fact, stop all the wars.

Sounds good on the surface, but you’ve still never heard of him? Check out more online.

OK, sounds good, but he’ll never get elected? That is exactly where the title of this piece comes from. Because really, it’s “we the people” who are poised for an epic win. Gary has no corporate sponsor. When he becomes president, he really will be “the peoples president” because it really will be because of people like you and me who get him elected.

Gary needs to be in the debates. You can help put him there. Do we believe in fair play and the guy with the best ideas should win in this country or not? Help Gary get his chance to make his case for us on the presidential debate stage.

Donavan Spencer, Porterville

Grego: Expand recreation, reduce unemployment, make TRPA accountable

Publisher’s note: ***This is one of five Q&A profiles of a South Lake Tahoe City Council candidate running in the Nov. 6***

election.

Name: Bruce Grego

Age: 59

How long have you lived in South Lake Tahoe?: 45 years



Bruce Grego

Work/volunteer experience: Work History: I grew-up helping operate my parents' motel for 30 years between 1967 to 1997; practicing attorney in this community since 1980.

Volunteer experience: In the 1970s, active with groups opposed to TRPA; about 1974, participated in a committee to support a local initiative to require an elected city clerk and city treasurer; in the late '70s participated in a city of South Lake Tahoe planning committee known as the 20-20 Committee (a citizens' planning committee addressing issues for the next 20 years); for about eight years in the 1980s I was a member of the city of South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission; was appointed by the City Council in 1989 to complete a term of a vacant City Council position; 2008, I was elected as a member of the city of South Lake Tahoe City Council and I am currently a member of said body. During my time on the council I have been appointed to a number of governmental bodies, such as the Tahoe Transportation Commission and LAFCO, and I have attended City Council meetings on a regular basis.

Why are you running for City Council?: To continue with the work I began four years ago and to address the many challenges

that face us in the coming years. Also see my comments throughout this response.

What is your vision for South Lake Tahoe, the South Shore and the entire Lake Tahoe Basin?: Better roads and sidewalks, more recreational opportunities for our citizens, local control of land use, and expansion of our economic base.

What are the three best things about South Lake Tahoe?: Our people, our community and our environment.

What three things would you like to change in South Lake Tahoe and how will you go about changing them?: 1. Land use continues to be a key factor in determining our future. TRPA continues to dominate our land use policies in our community and in this basin even though no one is elected to the board. In March 2011, I alone began to engage the Nevada Legislature about the future of TRPA. On March 15, 2011, I attended a subcommittee of the Nevada Legislature and called for TRPA to be locally elected as opposed to appointments; I told the Nevada sub-committee that TRPA has caused our community to be stagnate and left with a 1969 design infrastructure unable to compete with other recreational areas; that we have been denied our civil rights; and I proposed, that without changes, that Nevada deny any funding of the TRPA. From that speech I was invited by state senators and assemblymembers to become involved in the passage of Nevada Bill SB271. I eventually was able to obtain the endorsement of the South Lake Tahoe City Council; and I contacted both our Congressman Tom McClintock and then Assemblyman Ted Gaines to endorse this bill, which they subsequently did. I wish to continue this effort for another four years. SB271 calls for Nevada's withdrawal from TRPA if TRPA fails to reform. I intend to see that substantial changes occur. Without flexibility in land use, positive changes in our community cannot easily occur.

2. Reduce unemployment. We are tied to the national economy, however, further promotion of special events, broadening our

economic base, and maintaining city services should continue to be our focus. Also, as stated above, sensible land use policies can promote the development of new businesses in our community.

3. Expand recreational activities for our youth. The renovation of the recreation center should be a priority for the city in the next four years.

What would you do to balance the budget?: I have voted for a balanced budget for the city of South Lake Tahoe for the last four years. The city of South Lake Tahoe continues to have a balanced budget. We must spend within our means.

What would you like to see in a recreation master plan?: More recreation opportunities for our youth, more parks, and another dog park. Find funding to renovate our Recreation Center on Rufus Allen.

Promoting recreation was touted two years as a means to stimulate the local economy. Nothing has been done in that time. What will you do so that same sentence can't be said two years from now?: This is a leading question, it assumes nothing has been done. I disagree with your conclusion. Since I took office, Lakeview Commons at El Dorado Beach and Bonanza Park have been established. There is no doubt that Lakeview Commons has been successful and a model for other such development. The ice rink has been leased to private parties with the objective of making it a world-class facility.

What types of recreation do you enjoy in Lake Tahoe?: Probably not enough … with operating my own business and attending to council duties. I like helping people. I enjoy solving problems, and making sure justice is done. I like what I do. On a more personal level, I like attending special events, attending the Shakespeare Festival and Treat Street, shopping at our local flea market and collecting Tahoe memorabilia. I also enjoy fishing with the grandchildren.

How will South Lake Tahoe be different in four years after the end of your term?: I cannot promise to remake the entire town in four years; only the promise that I will continue to keep our city in the right direction. Always looking for opportunities to better our community. I will continue to work for reasonable land use policies controlled by the people affected by those policies; continue with road improvement that we started this year; continue to push back against the agencies; continue to seek solutions to complete Project 3, the Hole.

Being on the council requires working with four others. Give readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: The last two years have clearly demonstrated that I have worked well with the other councilmembers. We have voted together often, and we have disagreed without being disagreeable. Example: see the two or more televised council meetings each month that I participated in that involved every issue that faces our community. I work well with my colleagues in the other governmental agencies that I have been appointed to by the City Council, such as the Tahoe Transportation Commission and LAFCO.

An example of a difficult situation. Even though I have opposed the operation of marijuana dispensaries in our city, when this issue first was addressed, the council created a subcommittee of two councilmembers to work with citizens for and against this issue for the purpose of proposing an ordinance regulating the dispensaries. Bill Crawford and I made up this subcommittee, and for many months we, with other appointed members, had public and open discussions with marijuana supporters during the process of making recommendations for a proposed ordinance to the council. I fulfilled the charge by the council, even though I fundamentally opposed the continuation of the dispensaries. And even though Bill Crawford and I had disagreements on the council, we worked together on this subcommittee.

What are your opinions about the following issues and/or entities?:

• **Loop road** – First of all, in responding to this issue, I am including in this response issues relating to the Project 3, the Hole at Stateline, and the South Shore Vision Plan. What is the most fundamental concern that affects these three issues, and this election? It is electing persons to the council that are independent and whose sole allegiance is to the people of South Lake Tahoe. Why? In the past large developments have occurred at the expense of small business and our community (small business employ many local people). The South Shore Vision Plan and the current Loop Road proposal seeks to remove additional businesses in our community as well as many residential properties, and redirect traffic. Consider the past: a) Randy Lane was able to destroy blocks of small businesses and financially impact the city's tax revenue based upon a development proposal not adequately funded. Until I was elected in December 2008, no one at the city was aware that Randy Lane had not purchased the properties within the Project 3 (the Hole) free of debt, and acquired said properties with mortgages; this among other things, prevented a consolidation of the properties that was a prerequisite for development. b) PADMA, the common interest maintenance entity for Heavenly Village mandates approximately $130,000 annual contribution from the city of South Lake Tahoe in perpetuity because the city owns the sidewalks and the restroom and signed an agreement to such effect; c) Heavenly Valley has an agreement with the city that their ski tickets sold at Heavenly Village would not be taxed for about 20 years. Why are these sweetheart deals being made? Not because these corporations are bad (there are good people that work for them), but because the persons you have been electing have not been independent and/or have not been able to resist the continued advocacy and lobbying effects by such corporations. In spring 2009, Randy Lane sought from the council support to sell public bonds for the purpose of funding Randy Lane's project

in the sum of $25 million. I opposed this request because it made no financial sense, and it would have impaired the city's future credit standing. Ultimately, the entire council rejected his proposal for a $25 million "loan". I demonstrated the independence required to have a seat on the council. I have opposed efforts by special interest groups for projects that are not in the interest of our community. One of the current issues facing our city is the Loop Road. I do not support this proposal for the following reasons: the use of eminent domain/condemnation to achieve the ownership of the loop road corridor, the destruction of small businesses and residence in our community, and the redirection of traffic away from our city's business centers. I believe we need to revitalize the Stateline area though a vision type plan, but no plan will be approved by me unless the benefits are fairly distributed, and the city's interest are protected. Another issue: Presently, some of the major investors are seeking to acquire other holdings in Project 3, the Hole at Stateline. The council has sought to encourage development at the Hole, and has spoken to developers and property owners alike. We have to make sure that any permits issued for the project address all concerns, including, and most important, that the new developer/owner has sufficient resources to proceed. Independence, reviewing projects on their merits, and looking out for you is a summary of my history and voting record on the City Council in the last four years, and will continue to be my objective, if you grant me another term.

• **Hole at Stateline** – see above.

• **Tahoe Valley Plan** – No question … I support the Tahoe Valley Plan that calls for consolidation and concentration of commercial land uses. The revitalization of the Y is equally important to the Stateline.

• **Giving money to any chamber or tourism bureau** – I support the current practice, that with the exception of some special events, the city does not provide funding for these bureaus.

They provide an important service to our community, but this is not the role of our council. But it is equally important to note: that we have increased contributions by city employees; we have reduced the number of employees by 30 percent; we continue to keep a balanced budget; we continue to maintain city services to the public, and the general duties of this city is much greater than most (i.e. addressing land use issues with TRPA and other agencies in the basin). My point is that making any additional contribution to the chamber and tourism bureau will take money from essential city services, and I cannot support that.

• **Benefits, including pensions, for city staff** – See above. Based upon the pattern set by prior councils, our contracts with the labor units for city employees are not annual contracts. Nevertheless, the council has obtain concessions on those contracts, making employees more responsible for health care and pension costs, and I am determined to bring such contracts in line with what we can afford.

• **Tahoe Regional Planning Agency** – see above.

• **Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board** – At the first strategic conference of the council in 2009, each member of the council proposed goals and objectives. My proposed objective was that the City Council have a "foreign policy" – not to deal with other nations – but to interact with our neighbor governments and to reach out to Sacramento and Carson City. We have not only been able to impact TRPA, but for the first time in memory, Placer County, El Dorado County and the city of South Lake Tahoe have joined together to oppose Lahontan's water quality proposals (BMPs).

• **South Shore Vision Plan** – see above.

• **Lake Tahoe Airport** – I believe we should support commercial operation at the airport.

Why should voters vote for you over someone else?: Proven

record of accomplishments. Independent, not tied to special interests. A decision-maker. Not afraid to take a position not supported by the rest of the council. I do look “outside the box”.

Four years ago you said you would change how the TRPA Governing Board is elected. You haven’t done so. Any comment?: I still support an elected board by the people in the basin. I believe that land use, water quality issues, transportation, and other environmental issues should be decided by elected local governments, and not bureaucratic, appointed boards of special interest groups controlled by staff with no understanding of economics or the needs of our community. Our community’s 1969 stagnate design is a “tribute” to the misdirection of TRPA and other land use agencies in the basin. We have been locked in to old infrastructures and obsolescent. Four years ago, many commentators and many citizens questioned whether I could fulfill the promise of trying to establish an elected TRPA board or, for that matter, impact the direction of the TRPA in any manner whatsoever. I hope that you recall that in 2009, I, standing alone, proposed a resolution demanding an elected board, and no one else on the council would second my motion. Or when I, on March 15, 2011, standing alone at the Nevada Legislature took the initiative to attack TRPA’s land use policies, and demanded a cut off of all funding to the TRPA. Look at the situation today. As a direct result of the passage of SB271, where TRPA’s very existence has been threatened, TRPA has finally engaged local government, and the proposed regional plan update addresses some of the important concerns of local government. We are even going to have a test case for drive up windows for pharmacies. Look at the situation today, not only was I able to have the City Council (the only California elected body to support SB271), but we are, the City Council, actively engaged in addressing TRPA regulations and addressing other environmental regulation. There is no doubt that TRPA finally began the process of a long past due Regional Plan update, if

not for SB271. There was no concerted effort by the City Council to “push back” against the agencies prior to my election to the council. We have a very different perspective on the council today on land use issues than four years ago, and I believe that I caused this difference to occur. The accomplishments to date are just a beginning. We must do much more to bring sensible land use policies in the basin and keep the pressure on TRPA.

Is there a person or business you would not take a campaign contribution from?: Yes.

Tell readers something about yourself that they may not already know: I have a mole on my left knee. My point is, citizens have observed me over the last four years, and have contacted me to discuss concerns and to show support of my decisions on council. I have been transparent. You have seen how I have made decisions, and you have seen my concerns for you. It is important in this election that you examine the history of the new candidates for office. Can they make decisions, have they worked for industries that have or will seek “sweetheart” deals from the city, can they be independent, and how long have they participated in public affairs? I ask for your support in November.