

Rice: Stateline revitalization No. 1 issue in district

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the three candidates for District 4 Douglas County commission race, which covers Lake Tahoe, to answer the following questions. Two of the three responded.*



Wes Rice

Name: Wesley Rice

Hometown: Minden

Age: 75

Occupation: Deputy constable

Education: Mount San Antonio College and L.A. State University

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: I was on the Douglas County Lake Tahoe Library board, chair of the Round Hill General Improvement District, trustee Douglas County Lake Tahoe Sewer Authority, chair of the Nevada Republican Rural Caucus. I am a member of the Navy League, the International

Footprinters Association, as well as being a member of the American Legion.

Why do you want to be commissioner?: I want to continue to support my community and all the citizens of Douglas County by assuming a new role of leadership at a higher level.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I retired as a lieutenant with the Pasadena Police Department as the head of the detective section. I spent 15 years as senior deputy patrolling Lake Tahoe for the Douglas County Sheriff's Department. I have served 12 years as a trustee for the RHGID. I am a trustee on the newly reorganized Douglas County Lake Tahoe Sewer Authority. I have been the Rural Caucus chair for the Nevada Republican Rural Caucus for 14 years. I have been on the executive board for the Douglas County Republican Central Committee since 1996. I have been endorsed by Congressman Mark Amodei, state Sen. Jim Settlemeyer, Assemblyman Jim Wheeler, Sheriff Ron Perini, the Douglas County Sheriff's Association, the Douglas/Carson Valley Farm Bureau, Former Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki, Constable Paul Gilbert and the Nevada State Republican Party Chair, Michael McDonald. I have the experience, the integrity and the support to do the job.

How are you going to resolve pension issues?: At the moment we have no pension disputes in Douglas County.

What are the attributes you would look for in a future county manager?: The ability to take direction from the county commissioners and carry out their directives and policies.

When would you want a permanent county manager to be hired?: Not an issue in Douglas County.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Douglas County needs to promote affordable/attainable housing.

Homelessness is not, so far, an issue in Douglas County. We do need to zone for multiple housing in appropriate areas. Those who are born and raised in Douglas County should be able to find employment and affordable housing. The retirees moving here from California are driving up the cost of housing making it difficult for locals to reside here.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?: California side or Nevada side? On the Nevada side it would be problematic. Where would the county seat be located? Would people want to drive to the North Shore to conduct business? Incline or State Line? The process would be fraught with logistical problems.

What entities would you not take money from?: So long as there were no strings attached, anyone. My voice and vote are not for sale.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 4 and how do you propose to resolve it?: We need to help revitalize the Stateline area. I support building the proposed convention center.

What is your opinion about recreation marijuana?: As a 50-plus year veteran of law enforcement, I think that nothing good will come of the legalization of marijuana. We have enough societal problems as it is. Driving under the influence will become a giant problem. When people drive into Nevada, they do not realize that any detectable amount of marijuana in the system is prima facie driving under the influence.

Do you believe vacation home rentals should be allowed in the valley? Why or why not?: Vacation rentals should be allowed but only if regulated and there needs to be an avenue developed so that when a property becomes a problem the county can fine or revoke the owners' ability to continue as a VHR. The problems with VHRs at the lake should be resolved before venturing into the valley.

What changes would you make to the VHR ordinance affecting the lake?: I think \$1,000 fines are a bit excessive. On the Douglas County side, we need some form of regulation and enforcement.

How does climate change play a role in how you would make decisions affecting the county?: Solar farms have been banned in Douglas County and wind farms are probably out of the question. I would support reasonable changes to the TRPA regulations.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I was widowed at the age of 35. I was left with four daughters who I raised alone for three years. After three years I married the wonderful lady I have now been married to for 38 years come this August. She helped me raise and turn our five daughters into wonderful human beings who have now given us 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Kandel: Ready to tackle Douglas County's issues

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Kristi Kandel

Name: Kristi Kandel

Age: 31

Hometown: Stateline

Occupation: President of a real estate consulting company, I&D Consulting Services Corporation.

Education: Bachelor's degree

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: I've participated in a variety of community groups throughout Ohio, Florida, California and now Tahoe. Currently in Tahoe I'm a member of the Tahoe Regional Young Professionals, attending Lake Tahoe Business Referral Network meetings and recently volunteered at the Earth Day event that the Alpine Watershed Group held on April 2. I'm looking forward to investing even more of my time in our local organizations this summer.

Why do you want to be commissioner?: I've been very put off by politics the past decade. It feels like politics in the U.S. have become an insurmountable mountain with our leaders acting like puppets to their political parties and corporations that

fund their campaigns. However, just shutting up and not participating is not the solution. Not being actively involved in our future is not acceptable. It is our civic responsibility to become engaged citizens of the community in which we live. I'm running because I am done sitting on the sidelines. I'm running because I know I can be a positive contributor to our community. I'm running because I want to set an example with the younger generations to show them that each and every one of us has the ability to create positive change. If we are willing to accept that responsibility and take action.

Over my 10-year career in the real estate industry, I've been fortunate to work with hundreds of local governments and utility providers, and agencies throughout the country. I am constantly surprised and rejuvenated by the gems I encounter along the way. The passion that some local leaders have for their community is contagious. Their passion is my constant reminder that we are all capable of, and responsible for, stepping up and doing our part. It is now my turn to engage and give back to my community. The vast experience I've gained from working with hundreds of diverse communities throughout the country will be a tremendous asset to Douglas County. I'm passionate about working with our residents and local government to bring positive ideas and contributions. I will help build a solid path for the implementation of those ideas to create a County that our children, and our children's children, will be proud to actively participate in and call home.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: Change is occurring throughout our Nation. We are seeing many more of our young citizens waking up and understanding that the time to take action for our future is now. It is truly inspiring to see our younger citizens engaging in their communities and working with our seasoned leaders to build a bright future for generations to

come. Throughout my career, I've worked with other professionals who are typically 20-40 years older than myself. We have been able to successfully collaborate on hundreds of redevelopment projects throughout the county where we all benefited from exchanging a wide range of experiences and perspectives. The experiences that I will bring will greatly benefit our government officials and residents of Douglas County. My experience with hundreds of local governments and utility agencies throughout the Country in such a short time is invaluable. I look forward to sharing what I've learned while working with those agencies as experience is our greatest teacher. I am honored to be considered to represent Douglas County to ensure that we maximize our full potential as a community for generations to come.

How are you going to resolve pension issues?: This is a complex topic. In short, we should complete a thorough financial evaluation to fully understand the impact of any decision to our community, evaluate and understand how other communities in our state are currently addressing pension issues and then work together to find a viable pension solution for Douglas County.

What are the attributes you would look for in a future county manager?: The attributes I'd look for in a county manager would be the same as any leadership position. Some of those qualities would include:

- Honesty and integrity
- Confidence
- Inspire others
- Commitment and passion
- Good communicator
- Decision-making capabilities
- Accountability
- Delegation and empowerment
- Creativity and innovation
- Empathy

Leadership is the most critical part to the success of any organization. The right leader will have the proper vision for how to navigate the complex challenges of our community which is pivotal to our success. Our county manager must have a strong understanding of how to guide our local government offices to help cultivate a positive and empowering environment which allows all county employees to contribute and grow. This type of leadership is vital to building a strong and thriving local government and the betterment of our community.

When would you want a permanent county manager to be hired?:

When the right person who is qualified for the position is found. However, we shouldn't allow ourselves to be indecisive waiting for just the perfect candidate to emerge. If we waited for the perfect moment, or the perfect opportunity, it will never come. We need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of our candidates and assess which one might have the skills to grow into the position and to become our next leader. Creating stability in our leadership positions will trickle down through all government departments and will create a positive and thriving culture in our government offices. However, we must understand that selecting our next county manager is only part of our process and responsibility. We must ensure that we provide our new county manager with the proper tools and support to do their job effectively. We cannot handicap our leaders and then expect unattainable results. We must set realistic short, medium and long-term goals to give our next county manager the best opportunity for their success and the overall success of Douglas County.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: These topics are too often looked upon as if they are black and white with a single and potentially simple solution. Regarding

homelessness, I've spent quite a bit of time volunteering in multiple states. Over the years I learned to stop trying to solve the hurdles I perceived for the homeless and instead I started to listen and understand their real issues. Once I stopped trying to force my solutions on them and started listening I was able to gain clarity on how we could actually help the homeless in our communities. Solving homelessness is not something that happens overnight, nor can it be solved by just throwing money at the situation. A "simple" housing solution with taxpayer dollars does not exist or government would have solved this problem by now. Homelessness is a much larger social issue impacting every community. I'll work with our local government to help create programs that will actually facilitate positive change, show our residents that we do care about them and provide hope to everyone. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link and as Mahatma Gandhi said, "A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members."

Affordable housing is another complex issue that will not be solved simply by building a high-density apartment complex. We must first understand where the demand for affordable housing comes from. A large portion of our lake economy is from tourism. As a result, there is a great need for people to work in the lower paying hospitality jobs that tourism and global demand for those positions create. However, due to our proximity to the Bay Area and Southern California, the local home values are not representative of actual living wages in Douglas County. The homes are owned and occupied by our retired residents, professionals working remote or self-employed and second-home owners who are actually saving money due to the tax advantages that Nevada provides. Additionally, second-home owners have found that by utilizing their homes as vacation rentals they can help recoup some of their added costs while preserving the ability to use their homes a few times a year when work permits. Whereas, renting their homes full-time would not allow them to personally enjoy their

homes and take advantage of everything our community has to offer.

Like most issues, once we decide to truly understand the root cause of these problems we can then work together to create solutions that work for everyone. I have several ideas for how to create an affordable housing paradigm shift and I encourage you to check out my website for more information.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?: Conceptually this is a very interesting idea since the lake and valley both have many different challenges with little overlap. However, in practice this is actually a much larger undertaking than it would seem. I would not pursue merging the California and Nevada counties as it would deplete many of our resources to make this happen without providing an adequate return. I would take the same approach for merging only the Nevada counties. Due to the complexity of working with multiple counties and two states neither of those ideas seem to be viable solutions considering other immediate and more pressing issues Douglas County currently faces.

I would be interested in forming a focus group to look into the benefits and challenges that we would face in just separating the lake portion of Douglas County from the valley. If the results of the focus group indicate that it would be advantageous to continue pursuing this path, then I would support a more in-depth evaluation. Ultimately, we will need to determine that the creation of a new Lake County would position and allow for both communities to be successful on their own.

What entities would you not take money from?: I've never agreed with the amount of money spent on campaigns to elect our officials, and will not be accepting donations in this election. I will be using the District 4 commissioner race to help build awareness on the amount of money that is poured into campaigns throughout the country rather than being

donated to the betterment of our communities.

Winning at all costs is no longer acceptable. It is our civic responsibility to evaluate outdated processes and to reform political practices. Today, the citizens of the United States are no longer fighting to have a voice. We all have a platform due to the emergence of social media outlets. We can no longer afford to simply vote every four years and expect our elected officials to fix our problems. It's time to use our voices to take action and bring reform to antiquated practices. It is time for us to join together to completely overhaul campaign finance reform starting in our community.

In support of the Kristi Kandel District 4 Commissioner campaign, we would love to see your donations go to some of the amazing local organizations working hard to preserve and share the Lake Tahoe paradise in which we live:

<http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/>

Home

Home

<http://clean-tahoe.org/membership/>

Home

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 4 and how do you propose to resolve it?: Utility infrastructure. Our district faces very unique infrastructure challenges due to costly physical and environmental barriers to upgrading our aging infrastructure. Currently, our wet and dry utility systems are only “upgraded” when they break, creating a very reactive environment that is not healthy or sustainable. I will pursue

available state and federal grant programs to upgrade rural water/wastewater systems and will do my best to provide our residents with a better solution than the ones provided by our elected officials to date. We will create focus groups with residents and work with public works to provide a detailed analysis of the impact of the merger to better understand the economic impact to each district.

Resolving the aging infrastructure will also result in more feasible solutions for other challenges our district faces regarding affordable housing and vacation rentals.

What is your opinion about recreation marijuana?: It was voted in by our residents. As the governing body it is now our responsibility to make sure we create and adopt the appropriate codes and enforcement to oversee the new marijuana industry. Like any new technology or industry, we should take additional steps to educate ourselves and our residents of the uses and impacts of marijuana. Knowledge is vital to creating a community that is well educated on the actual facts and effects of marijuana instead of how mainstream media and propaganda have portrayed marijuana for over 50 years. My firm belief is that we have a much larger, and very deadly, prescription drug issue that needs to be addressed at our local, state and federal government levels.

Do you believe vacation home rentals should be allowed in the valley? Why or why not?: Douglas County should provide equal opportunity to all residents regarding vacation home rentals. The same permit requirements for homes at the lake should apply to homes in the valley. The VHR ordinance is currently being reviewed by the commissioners and Planning Department and it should provide the mechanisms necessary for proper code enforcement. It is my hope that this ordinance update will ensure that the quality of life and rights of all Douglas County residents are protected. Regardless of where their homes are located or how residents choose to use their homes.

What changes would you make to the VHR ordinance affecting the lake?: As a vacation home owner and real estate professional, I thoroughly reviewed the VHR ordinance in Douglas County as well as several other communities prior to purchasing a home in Douglas County. The current Douglas County ordinance does not address all of the issues facing VHRs in our community today and should be updated to reflect an understanding of today's challenges and opportunities. Much like Uber and Lyft have successfully disrupted and transformed the taxi industry, VHR online hosting platforms have disrupted and are transforming a very old housing industry in a much needed way. As such, clear code enforcement parameters should be adopted which will ensure the quality of life and rights of all Douglas County residents are protected. A large portion of our community is sustained by tourism and with the proper enforcement tools the current issues surrounding vacation rentals should start to subside. Code enforcement, creating an environment that facilitates bringing higher-paying jobs to our community and retraining our residents on the latest technologies to assist them in switching industries should go a long way towards reimagining the future of our community.

How does climate change play a role in how you would make decisions affecting the county?: Our Lake Tahoe community currently does an excellent job of trying to reduce our environmental footprint. It is our civic and social duty to be conscious of our actions, and inactions, both as individuals and as a community. I will work with the local government and residents to help Douglas County become the leader in Nevada for reducing our environmental footprint.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I grew up in a small Ohio town of 2,500 people, three stoplights and no fast-food. We had 10 pizza places and what felt like 100 churches. My family was fairly poor and for a portion of my childhood the six of us lived in a pretty small

trailer. At 17 I graduated high school and immediately enrolled in college summer sessions. I proceeded to complete a four-year bachelor's degree in three years. At the age of 20 I took the belongings that could fit in my car and I moved to Florida to start my career in the business world. I managed the Florida office for a national sign company for 3½ years while working on projects worth \$1-3 million annually. It was during that time that I became close with the CVS Pharmacy real estate and development team as well as their preferred developer in the southeast region. In the fall of 2010, and at the age of 23 I started working for that development company. By the first quarter of 2011 I had convinced my new company that I was the best option at our organization to relocate and open our Orange County office. One of our primary clients, Family Dollar, had decided they wanted to expand to California and my company had agreed to take the risk and try to develop in arguably one of the most difficult states in the U.S. In the industry we joke that if you can develop in California, the Northeast and parts of Florida you can be a developer anywhere. From the ages of 23-27 I was the development project manager for 30 new construction projects a year from San Francisco to Calexico. I was working 60-80-hour weeks and in those 3½ years obtained more real estate experience than most people do in a lifetime. While it was never easy, company resources and support were scarce and often I felt like I was fighting alone for our company's survival in California I would not trade those experiences for anything. Without persevering through those challenging circumstances I would not be where I am at today or more importantly be the person I am today. At the age of 27 I decided to join another developer in Newport Beach so that I could gain experience on larger 5-30 acre developments. It took all of three months for me to realize that development is development regardless of the project size. I immediately began planning for my next career move. I had decided that it was time to fulfill the dream of starting my own company. In the spring of 2015 I officially quit my cushy development job

and set course on a path that changed my life forever. As of April 2018 I've now completed three very successful years as a business owner, own a couple properties, recently adopted an amazing 9-year-old dog and get to live in paradise.

On paper I have beat the odds and accomplished the American Dream. However, I know I'm just now getting started. Money and possessions have very little value in the grand scheme of life. Life is about the human interactions we have on a daily basis and the relationships we cultivate. It's the way we treat our neighbors and choosing to make decisions that are best for our entire community and not just what's best for ourselves. It's about working together to build an accepting and understanding community that leans in instead of leaning out. It's about taking responsibility for our actions and the impact that our choices have on those around us. It's about creating and impacting a future that we will never see but we know our future generations will inherit. I can promise you that if I am elected as your District 4 commissioner I will hold myself to these standards every single day.

Study: Runoff boost from forest thinning

By Matt Weiser, Water Deeply

A century of fire suppression has left Western forests overgrown. That has interrupted nature's regular fire cycle and means that when fires do happen, they become catastrophic because there is plentiful fuel to burn. It also means forests are sucking up more water than they did historically.

How much more water? That's always been difficult to estimate. But making this calculation could go a long way toward fixing the overgrown forest problem. If we know how much water could be freed up by thinning forests to reduce fire danger, it could create a new financing mechanism to do the expensive work of cutting trees and staging controlled burns.

A team of scientists from the University of California and the National Park Service now has some answers. In a new study, they combined sensors that measure evapotranspiration – how much water trees exhale – with satellite images of “greenness” on the landscape to estimate the additional freshwater runoff that could be created by thinning overgrown forests.

Read the whole story

Curtzwiler: Meyers needs better representation

Publisher's note: Profiles for the four El Dorado County District 5 supervisorial candidates will be running on May 6 and May 7. The election is June 5.



Kenny Curtzwiler

Name: Kenny Curtzwiler

Age: 62 on May 11

Occupation: Retired military/contractor

Education: Two years college

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: None

Why do you want to be supervisor?: I have always been active in the community and feel that I can direct a positive change in the forefront rather than behind my articles.

This is a nonpartisan position. How will you conduct your duties in a nonpartisan manner?: I am a registered non-partisan. I will listen to all sides of an issue without party influences or party loyalty.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I have been a 41 year residents and already am involved with community issues.

How are you going to resolve the CalPERS issue?: Solving CalPERS can only be done at the state level.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Affordable housing a city issue and not the responsibility of the county. That said the county should be interacting with the city and private groups to not only address the issues behind affordable housing but take an active role in public/private responsibilities. The TRPA must remove the barriers in place that are preventing residents from building an affordable home. As it stands now only out of town investors can afford to overbuild a house in Tahoe and turn it into a VHR. We need to build homes and not investment houses.

To date the county has not been able to fix the traffic issue in Meyers with tourists clogging up residential streets. What is your solution?: I have already come up with one solution to the overuse of the algorithms guiding the shortcuts beyond the “nudge” solution currently being used. This solution will affect all eight points of entry to our side streets at a cost of zero.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?: It will be far easier to form our own city of Meyers then combine with the city of South Lake Tahoe to form a separate county.

What entities would you not take money from?: I did not accept any money in the last election from Red Hawk Casino, Local One, West Slope developers or the local chambers and I don't see myself changing.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: Lack of proper representation from our current supervisor on every major issue in the Myers area. We cannot solve or move forward on the issues of the Meyers Plan without the community's input.

Do you believe supervisors should meet in Tahoe more often? Why or why not?: Yes. We are one-fifth of the county and we should meet here one-fifth of the time.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: Yes.

What is your vision for the 56-acres in South Lake Tahoe?: The county needs to step up and either work with the city of South Lake Tahoe to create a viable and productive recreational area or sell it to the city for \$1 as they did with the airport.

Do you support having vacation home rentals? Why or why not?: Yes. We are a tourist community and everyone is affected by

them. The problems we are now experiencing at an unprecedented level are caused by out of area investors without a stake in the community. An owner can have a VHR but they must have a local brick and mortar property manager to address any violations. We must also have a limit to the VHRs as well as addressing occupancy levels, noise, bear boxes and multi-family overbuilt residences being built in a neighborhood that is zoned for single family residences. TRPA must either enforce the current zoning or the city and county must change the zoning laws.

You lost last time you ran. What makes you think there will be a different outcome this time?: The current supervisor will now have to acknowledge the fact that she must recuse herself from the important issues and explain to the public why she did not say anything until after she was sworn in. The residents need representation which has been lacking these past 3.5 years. We cannot continue to pay someone for a full time job that they are only at part time.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: Pam and I have been married 37 years and we actually held the wedding ceremony on the beach at Vikingholmes castle in Emerald Bay.

Santiago: Experience to take EDC to next level

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Norma Santiago

Name: Norma Santiago

Age: 63

Occupation: Community consultant; Sierra State Parks Foundation, board member; El Dorado County Mental Health Commission, associate member

Education: B.S. Business Administration with emphasis in marketing and organizational behavior, UC Berkeley, graduated 1977

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: I was elected on three occasions to represent Lake Tahoe residents as their District V supervisor on the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. Within that capacity, I served on the:

- El Dorado County Water Agency
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
- Mental Health Commission
- El Dorado County Transportation Commission
- Tahoe Transportation District
- California Tahoe Conservancy

- Chamber of Commerce liaison
- Tahoe Paradise (Park) Resort Improvement District
- South Lake Tahoe Recreation Joint Powers Authority
- California State Association of Counties (CSAC), board of directors, El Dorado County representative

As a volunteer, I remain very active in the following:

- CA State Biomass Working Group
- South Fork of the American River (SOFAR) Collaborative
- Sierra State Parks Foundation, board member
- El Dorado County Mental Health Commission, associate member
- Hope Lutheran Church, Church Council, secretary
- South Lake Tahoe Democratic Club, vice president

Why do you want to be supervisor?: I thrive on being in service to the community.

I love being the kind of supervisor that listens and works with the community on deliver solutions that best serve them.

This is a nonpartisan position. How will you conduct your duties in a nonpartisan manner?: I seek community solutions based on community input. When called upon, I don't ask a person's political affiliation, I ask how can I help solve the issue?

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I am the candidate who best suits the next stages of Lake Tahoe's evolution in refining a vision and implementing ways to improve technology, advance economic clusters for education, tourism, recreation and environmental

science; and, for taking steps in creating the kind of community that will thrive with diversified opportunities for families, the workforce, business, visitors, and assisting those in need within our community.

How are you going to resolve the CalPERS issue?: There is a multi-faceted approach to addressing the county's solvency with respect to its retiree benefits that affect current and future budgets. First, is to have a direct input on what investments CalPERS makes that generates the best return for the fund's solvency without compromising the state's values e.g. investments in high tech industries that deal with climate change adaptability, "green" technologies, etc. I believe that California should be an example of a prosperous new economy based upon its commitment to climate change adaptability.

Given this there are, in my mind, three ways to deal with the problem:

- 1) Remain active with organizations such as CSAC to work with the state on ongoing pension reform. CSAC's well respected Executive Committee provides input from its members directly to the governor.
- 2) California state government and labor organizations need to work together to find a resolution for pension reform. There needs to be a compromise in policy so that the fund can get to solvency and begin the process of decreasing these unfunded mandates.
- 3) The county must look at the future impact it is facing with unfunded mandates and evaluate its own investments to set aside monies to pay these future obligations.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Yes, government should assist communities in addressing the

homelessness condition and affordable housing. County government has been conspicuously absent from the solutions side of the table regarding homelessness, lending a compassionate ear to the kind souls assisting those in need, but doing little to actually turn the tide on a growing homeless population. El Dorado County has dedicated only mild participation for mental health, affordable housing, substance abuse counseling, and veterans services for crisis and chronic homelessness.

I applaud the people whose exhaustive efforts have been assisting those in crisis and I would bring a final report to the Board of Supervisors based on practical input and practice to guide staff, departmental services and dedicated funding for a proactive programming to turn this condition around. On the policy side, ongoing studies and discussions have created analysis paralysis. It is time we take action on the conversion of tourist accommodation units to help build workforce housing; incentivize long term rentals versus vacation home rentals, and work with our larger employers and nonprofits, such as land trusts and foundations, to develop housing programs for their employees.

To date the county has not been able to fix the traffic issue in Meyers with tourists clogging up residential streets. What is your solution?: This is an unforeseen negative impact on our community from mobile map applications that give travelers shortcut information to avoid Highway 50 congestion. The city and county have met to address this issue and have addressed some of the neighborhood congestion by creating road blocks at Lake Tahoe Boulevard and Sawmill due to chain requirements; but while that works in winter, it is the travelers right to utilize public roads and this measure is only effective when chain conditions exist.

The California Highway Patrol is currently looking into the map application software to create electronic closure of roads, guiding travelers exiting the basin through the

Agriculture Check (Bug) Station.

Arguably, this is a public safety issue and the agencies in charge of our visitors' and residents' safety are the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, the California Highway Patrol, police and fire districts and departments.

I would work with all public safety agencies in addressing key map application providers and not give up until this issue is handled and travelers not congest neighborhoods but are directed to remain on U.S. highways when exiting the basin.

Likewise, the utilization of intelligent transportation systems that help motorists get real time information about traffic conditions could help minimize congestion while monitoring traffic flows.

And, finally, proven measures to improve traffic flow can be designed and put in place with the help of the highway patrol and Caltrans. El Dorado County's Transportation Department maintains a very professional and positive working relationship with Caltrans. Input from the community and county transportation staff will be an effective influence in working with Caltrans on traffic flow solutions.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?:

While I love the thought of autonomy based on the Tahoe basin knowing keenly its issues and solutions, I think affording its own identity as a county will require a great deal of analysis and public participation. Counties and cities are formed to initially address specific public safety, transportation, roads, public services, goals and visions reflected and requested by their constituencies. Services are provided through a tax base that is budgeted by government. In so much as the overlaps between counties and cities are balanced, it will be the budget of an independent Tahoe county that would have difficulty delivering state mandated social services and minimum law enforcement (Sheriff's Department) from within its

own tax base. Whether that tax base is large enough to cover these services has to be part of the analysis.

In the meantime, I see that communities at Lake Tahoe, Meyers to the West Shore, have consistently served as visionary examples impressing policy makers in Placerville. The strength of our community providing input to the Board of Supervisors has worked to implement positive changes throughout the entire county, but especially in the Tahoe basin.

When I was county supervisor, the board followed my lead in cleaning up the Angora Fire and processing the rebuilding of our burned community quickly and without undue costs to the fire victims.

The board also followed my lead on chamber of commerce grant requests, recreation improvements, bike trail expansion, water quality projects, forest treatment priorities, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency goals, road maintenance funding, public safety protections, and greater relationship building with the city of South Lake Tahoe and other regulatory agencies at the lake.

What entities would you not take money from?: It would be immediately convenient to say that I would not take campaign contributions from the National Rifle Association, as I would not.

I have never been confronted morally or ethically by a misguided contribution, so I haven't needed to contemplate this question. I have traditionally received contributions from supportive community members who know that I represent all voices evenly without consideration of financial impact on my election.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: Housing.

District 5 has been facing a housing crisis for several years and it is time to make a commitment to solve this issue. There

have been many studies and gatherings that have led to more studies and gatherings.

Policy changes need to be addressed to move toward building a sustainable, diverse inventory of housing for our residents: Revising ordinances for vacation home rentals, converting tourist accommodation units to create some workforce housing, and conformance to the 2008 California State Aeronautics Act zoning could seriously impact housing stock.

There is a direct relationship between housing and jobs. The opportunity for varying, well-paying jobs is not only contingent upon a strong and diversified economy, but also on a solid housing policy that creates a diversified housing inventory. We cannot have one without the other.

This issue can only be solved by strong leadership and political will. This will be one of my focused priorities and I fully intend to utilize all available resources by the combined agencies at the lake to finally provide improvements for affordable workforce housing.

Do you believe supervisors should meet in Tahoe more often? Why or why not?: Yes. Support by county supervisors is fundamentally based on an ongoing and frequent familiarity with the Lake Tahoe Basin issues.

When policymakers truly experience issues and efforts at Lake Tahoe, they will be invested in the solutions.

When I was the District V supervisor, I brought El Dorado County board members to the lake often to either meet with me individually, attend meetings with the city, to participate in public forums, to tour facilities, for annual board meetings, and to meet with our business and regulatory agencies so that each board member could gain a greater understanding of issues before making decisions on them.

Also, because of Lake Tahoe's unique position at the federal

and state level, there is an opportunity to influence policy county-wide that benefits the entire county. Some examples of this are in the areas of water, forest management, transportation, the digital infrastructure.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: I would argue that more county contributions come to the lake versus leave, though that figure can fluctuate according to road and facility maintenance needs, social services requirements, water quality control requirements and fluctuations in the economy that are recreation and tourist based.

El Dorado County provides many services at South Lake Tahoe and within the basin, including, animal services, library, recreation, road maintenance and snow removal, water quality, mosquito abatement, mental health, public health, law enforcement, court facilities, Juvenile Treatment Center, county jail, planning and building departments, recorder clerk, senior and low income services, Job Connections, environmental management, public defender, district attorney, and veterans' services.

And, while the Lake Tahoe Basin is a contributing economic engine for the entire county, it takes the entire county to contribute to a healthy Tahoe basin. And, vice versa.

In my nine years as the District V county supervisor, I took great effort in breaking down the barriers that leant to the separation of effort for the health of the entire county. When fires in the American River Canyon close down a transportation artery, not only does Lake Tahoe suffer from the economically constricting result, but so does Placerville and Pollock Pines.

I strive to keep our county whole and healthy, creating policy that raises the entire tide so that all ships rise.

What is your vision for the 56-acres in South Lake Tahoe?: The South Lake Tahoe Recreation Area, 56-acre, is a gem for our community and contains one of the greatest recreational and cultural experience potentials at the lake.

After a planning charrette, a creative public process by which the community, planners and governments came together to propose the best possible opportunities for this site, the county and city worked together alongside the Tahoe Conservancy to build Lakeview Commons and bike trails.

The future holds incredible possibilities for performing arts, expanded recreation, and improvements to the El Dorado County South Lake Tahoe Branch Library.

However, before we realize this vision, the lease agreement between the city and county regarding this property is in great need of revision. Soon this lease is going to be up for renewal and several things contained in the current lease need clarification. Discussions must begin now to address the greater goal and specific responsibilities.

It is important that the county and city come to an agreement on this important public property. There will be great opportunities to fund exciting projects in the future with the potential passage of Proposition 68.

Do you support having vacation home rentals? Why or why not?:

I fully support community input, and I respect those who have suffered from the lack of enforcement in their neighborhood surrounded by abusive behaviors in vacation rentals. I believe not only the abuser occupying the house should be penalized, but the owner or manager of that house should be immediately awakened, cited, and put on notice. There should be swift action throughout the community that our County will not tolerate bad behavior within our neighborhoods.

I believe county enforcement of offenders has been hindered by confusion within the Treasurer Tax Collector's Office, tying

the hands of our law enforcement with bureaucratic processes and procedures.

Residents should not be repeatedly victimized because the county cannot effectively and efficiently solve this problem. I am wholly disappointed that leadership on this issue was seriously late and lacking in action.

It is time that we come to an agreement over the definitions of vacation home rentals. While the state defines them as single-family homes subject only to county provisions of any single family home, the truth is that they are commercial enterprises that require conformation to higher standards due to their adverse impacts.

As a single-family home, VHRs are a permissible use in the neighborhoods, however, if they were designated as a commercial entity, they would be required to conform to same regulations similar to a commercial lodging property. How we get there could require a California Environmental Quality Act analysis that would provide input for zoning changes in residential neighborhoods related to restricting current uses.

Perhaps simpler would be new leadership and a strong political will that immediately makes necessary changes to relevant ordinances, and direction to county counsel to finitely present action the Board of Supervisors can currently take that will curtail abusive behaviors in our neighborhoods.

Lake Tahoe area Realtors and property management companies have an important role to play in this issue. During my tenure as county supervisor, I found that VHRs that were managed by property management firms where less likely to create problems in the neighborhoods. Given this experience and direct discussions with some VHR owners, I would make it a requirement that VHRs be managed by a local property management firm.

After you were no longer a supervisor you sued the county for

back pay. How can you justify this?: For the purpose of clarification, Supervisor [Ron] Briggs and I pursued litigation not because of more pay. We pursued it because of a disagreement on a legal interpretation of a compensatory benefit for the members of the Board of Supervisors that was written in the applicable ordinance. Supervisor Briggs, with the help of his own legal counsel, had done extensive research on the matter and brought it to me as well as other members of the board who would have been impacted. Given the extent of his argument, I chose to join him in the case.

As a county supervisor, you rely heavily on county counsel to provide you with the legal facts of a case in front of you. I have a great deal of respect for the county counsel and the many who serve in that capacity. Supervisor Briggs and I had limited avenues for ordinance clarification. From the court's decision, it forced the county to clarify and correct any misinterpretation of action and ordinance language. In the end, the important thing to remember is not who wins or loses, but that a positive outcome is achieved.

I strongly believe that any employee has the right to question policy especially if what is in an ordinance or any governing document is unclear. It is important that clarity be established by whatever manner is available. In our case, the option was to go to court.

I'm glad you asked the question because I want to make it clear to the people that just because you hold a certain position does not take away your constitutional right to challenge a legislative policy.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know:
I'm a proud mother of two amazing children.

I'm a very active member of the Hope Lutheran Church and service on its Church Council as the secretary. The core of my spiritual being is in the belief that we are here to help and

love one another.

I love Star Trek!

I am a proud Puerto Rican American who loves her birthplace and wishes that all could see it and its wonderful, loving people. It is a U.S. territory worthy of being honored and respected as any other state in the U.S. Viva Puerto Rico!

I love movies. I will watch a good movie over and over again. It was not only a preoccupation, but I also co-hosted a radio and TV movie review program.

I collected Betty Boop and Barbies, that I'll finally part with if anyone is interested.

I fully relate to being poor, and being successful, to personally searching for affordable housing at Lake Tahoe, and to preferring a job that helps people.

I believe in this community and the vision it can create.

I listen, I hear, I respond, and I respect community input. I love the public input process.

Feds plan to roll back sage grouse protections

By Henry Brean, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The Interior Department released revised planning documents last week formalizing the Trump administration's push to relax protections for the greater sage grouse in Nevada and 10 other states.

Interior officials said the six draft resource management plan amendments – including one that covers both Nevada and a portion of northeastern California – would give states more flexibility to administer conservation efforts to protect the threatened bird without hindering economic development.

Read the whole story

Novasel: Wanting to build on accomplishments

Publisher's note: *Profiles for the four El Dorado County District 5 supervisorial candidates will be running on May 6 and May 7.*



Sue Novasel

Name: Sue Novasel

Age: 62

Occupation: Incumbent – El Dorado County supervisor

Education: Bachelor's degree from University of Nevada, Reno; AA degree from Lake Tahoe Community College; high school

diploma from Salinas High School

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?:

El Dorado County – County supervisor (2015-current) and vice chair

Lake Tahoe Unified School District – School board trustee (2003-15); past president

TRPA – current Governing Board member

California Tahoe Conservancy – current board member

Tahoe Transportation District – current board member

South Lake Tahoe Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority – current board member

First Five Commission – current commissioner

EDC VHR Ad Hoc Committee – current member

EDC Cannabis Ad Hoc Committee – current member

EDC Broadband Ad Hoc Committee – current member

EDC Human Rights Committee – current member

California State Association of Counties – current board member

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care – current board member and past president of the board

Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe – current member and past president

Meyers Community Plan Team – past member

Meyers Roundtable Committee – past chair and member

Lake Tahoe Community College Foundation – past board president.

Why do you want to be supervisor?: I am running because I want to continue to protect and improve the quality of life for our county and our local communities. I believe my 15 years of public service experience and 30 years on various public and private local organizations, my integrity and my continued commitment to work for our community make me the best candidate for the job.

This is a nonpartisan position. How will you conduct your duties in a nonpartisan manner?: I listen to all sides of an issue before making a decision. It is important to keep an open mind in this job and to understand that there are lots of differing views and opinions on any one subject. Party politics should not play a role in the decision making process – it's about doing what is best for our county – not what is politically correct.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: The most important qualifications to this job are possessing the skills, professionalism, and experience to work with others on a board. I feel I am the most qualified and skilled as I have over 15 years as a public servant and an excellent working relationship with the current board. I was recently made vice chair of the Board of Supervisors, which is an honor and an important job for the future of our board. I have the unique skill set needed to collaborate and successfully reach consensus with my fellow board members.

How are you going to resolve the CalPERS issue?: Since the Great Recession, CalPERS (California's state public pension system) has made it difficult, if not impossible, for most of the state's jurisdictions to fully fund future retirements of our public workers. This has left our county with a huge retirement fund debt – and one that our board has acknowledged and is working to solve. Over this last year, our county put

away \$5.7 million to help with funding this debt. We are expecting to add \$1.3 million to a "prefund" account this year in the hopes that we can keep this issue to a minimum. The biggest difficulty is that CalPERS keeps changing their model, thereby adding more debt to jurisdictions around the state. We continue to watch closely these changes and will be proactive in working for solutions to the pension system issue.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?:

Affordable housing and homelessness are not mutually exclusive. With the average rental in South Shore well above the "30 percent rule" that says that paying more than 30 percent of your income on housing is "unaffordable," it's easy to see why affordable housing is such a huge problem. Government needs to help wherever it is possible since taxpayers end up paying for social services for those who can't afford to pay for services associated with homelessness. I recently created a Housing Task Force, convening local jurisdictions from around the lake to see what government can do to help. From that task force, a group of private and public members have decided to start a pilot project that is aimed at creating affordable workforce housing. I have agreed to chair the new Housing Tahoe project and am looking forward to starting the project. The goal is to build a new "toolbox" of ways to combat the lack of affordable housing in our community. Our large private employers have also stepped up to be a part of the solution – one such employer, Vail Corporation, has current employee housing and seeking additional property locations for their workforce.

To date the county has not been able to fix the traffic issue in Meyers with tourists clogging up residential streets. What is your solution?: Meyers traffic is nothing new. What is new are the apps and smart GPS in cars that now route more and more traffic into our local neighborhoods. We have tried

warning tourists about dangerous snow conditions on local roads through new signs and ordinances but that is difficult to manage and enforce. Our transportation director has created a new “nudge” program that diverts travelers away from North Upper Truckee by using flashing signs and traffic cones, thus making the route looked closed; although it is illegal to actually close the roads to “through” traffic. Nudging has helped but we all know this is not a permanent solution. We have been in talks with CHP for two years about other possibilities – the latest idea is to create an “electronic blackout.” There are still concerns about this idea but the county and CHP are now looking into the legality of the idea as we continue to search for a solution.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?:

In 1984, a Tahoe County Formation Review Commission was formed and a 108-page financial analysis of a proposed Tahoe County was developed. I have read the report and it sits in my office, if anyone is interested in looking at it. It failed to gain enough support – and that was back in the '80s when South Lake Tahoe was a large contributor to the county for revenue. We took a down turn when Indian gaming started to pop up in California and Tahoe revenues have dropped dramatically ever since then. With less revenue, a new county would have the effect of reduced services and revenue then what we currently receive from El Dorado. For that reason, I do not support the idea of a Tahoe County.

What entities would you not take money from?: I will not accept campaign contributions from any organization or business whose integrity is questionable; anyone whose activities bring harm to District V or our quality of life; and/or threaten the safety and well-being of our children, neighborhoods, schools, or businesses. I expect to receive support from a wide variety of individuals and entities. Anyone providing financial support must understand that supporting my candidacy does not mean having the expectation

of getting my vote on an issue.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: Affordable housing is a critical issue throughout my district. Development and redevelopment needs to focus on how to address the lack of housing by offering projects that give our citizens the ability to live and grow in walkable, bike-friendly communities – ones that offer plentiful recreation while meeting the infrastructure needs. As a Governing Board member to the TRPA and member of the Housing Tahoe program, we are currently searching for ways to allow incentives for affordable housing. A necessary component of proper housing is transportation. Reliable and free transportation systems not only benefit our communities by reducing traffic, they also serve as a viable alternative for a cleaner environment while allowing for better transit options when planned with housing projects. This, however, requires state and federal funding which is not so easy to find. As a board member on the Tahoe Transportation District, I support the search for new funding mechanisms that enhance reliable alternative transportation in our communities. A Meyers bus is now being proposed as part of the newest Transportation Plan. I support this bus service as being a critical link in the basin and our district's ability to move forward in long-term transit solutions.

Do you believe supervisors should meet in Tahoe more often? Why or why not?: I would like to meet more often in Tahoe. Logistically, it can be difficult and costly for the staff and other board members to travel and finding a large enough room can be difficult, too, as we recently experienced. I do find that since we have digital services which include videotaping of our board meetings, access to the board meetings and specific topics is much easier for citizens in El Dorado County, increasing citizen engagement and accessibility in a very efficient way. I also attend regular joint meetings with the City Council where the city of South Lake Tahoe and county

both present their major issues and discuss items where joint effort is needed. This is an important element to proper city/county collaboration.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: I want to be sure that District V is getting its fair share and have fought to be sure it happens. However, I don't know of any study or analysis showing that more dollars leave the basin than come back and have my doubts that this is true. For example, the basin, with about 20 percent of the county population, has its own set of secondary offices for more general departments than any other district or any other jurisdiction in the basin. El Dorado County is the only local jurisdiction to have a local juvenile hall and jail facility. When you add up the costs for those direct and indirect services and facilities, our local expenses and revenues are not far from equal.

What is your vision for the 56-acres in South Lake Tahoe?: My vision the 56-acres area is the same that it was when I participated as a community member on the 56-acre Design Review Committee many years ago. That committee process came up with the Lakeview Commons design and envisioned the entire 56-acres as the "Central Park" of South Lake Tahoe. The design also called for a new farmers market area and a re-design of the entire campground. And although there are issues ahead as to how the county and city work together to fulfill those plans, the plans are there and should be reviewed as we entered into a new agreement between the two jurisdictions.

Do you support having vacation home rentals? Why or why not?: When I travel, I prefer to stay in family homes rather than small, cramped hotel rooms. That being said, I realize that this ballooning type of travel has created some real issues when dealing with unruly, rude and/or over-bearing home renters. I feel that the biggest issue for the county is how to create new regulations so that enforcement can work to

regain quiet, peaceful neighborhoods once again. As a member of the County Ad Hoc Committee for VHRs, we are studying enforcement issues and programs throughout the state, looking for viable solutions. We have already established that a new system of enforcement – one done through our code enforcement department rather than the tax collector – is an important first step in the right direction. We have identified seven other areas that will be corrected in the near future. Other issues such as clustering, total occupancy, bans and moratoriums are all to be studied and decided upon soon. A public process has been established where all sides of this contentious issue will be allowed to voice their concerns and issues.

What have you accomplished in the last four years?: When I was first elected to the board, our county leadership was in turmoil. Since hiring a new CAO nearly two years ago, the culture and workings of the county have vastly improved. Our board developed a new strategic plan and has attached those goals to our budget, thereby ensuring that our top priorities are funding properly. One of those priorities is to improve our deteriorating infrastructure. Our recent purchase of the old Al Tahoe Post Office will improve the El Dorado Center in South Lake Tahoe and proves that we are keeping our promise to infrastructure improvements. In Pollock Pines, we purchased a local park, ensuring that our youth continue to enjoy a proper baseball field as well as improving other recreational programs. As the First Five Commissioner to the Board of Supervisors, I worked to create a new Community Hub program, which will bring critical services to needy families who visit our libraries. In Tahoma, when a road project didn't go as expected, I held a series of meetings and worked on securing funding to fix the problem. I also pushed for new funding for our local roads by making sure that a new compact with our local tribe includes the ability to use the money we receive for badly needed road work – nearly \$2.5 million per year in funding. In the future, I will continue to work to make sure

our district receives our fair share of funding and needed infrastructure work.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I have been married to my husband for 34 years and have two amazing daughters. I was a ski instructor at Heavenly and went on to own and operate my own business.

I'm an avid skier in the winter, mountain biker in the summer, and love to use my kayak in Tahoe as often as possible. Many people don't know that I was an Olympic torch runner when it came through town in 1984 on its way to the Summer Games in Los Angeles. The beauty and recreation of Tahoe brought my family here when I was growing up and it is still the most beautiful place in the world.

Spencer: Experience, vision to rebuild EDC

Publisher's note: *Profiles for the four El Dorado County District 5 supervisorial candidates will be running on May 6 and May 7.*



Jeffrey Spencer

Name: Jeffrey Spencer

Age: 58

Occupation: Planning professional

Education: Master of Science, transportation management, San Jose State University; Bachelor of science (2), Business administration and business management, University of Phoenix; Associate of Science (2), business, real estate, Sacramento City College

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?:

Committee/panel member, National Academy of Sciences,
Transportation Research Board

Board of directors, Natomas Basin Conservancy

President, Dry Creek Conservancy

Planning Commissioner, Yuba City

Chairman, Antelope Planning Council, Antelope

Board member, Sacramento Quality of Life Committee

Vice president, Antelope Community Association

Member, Sunrise Parks & Recreation, Park Development Committee

Member, East Antelope Specific Plan Steering Committee

Facilities chair, Catholic School Advisory Committee, St.

Isidore School

Sacramento and California Association of Realtors committees

Commissioner/Scout leader, Boy Scouts of America

President, Mineta Transportation Institute Alumni Association

Member, Sacramento Sheriff Community Representative Forum

Creek Clean-up Area coordinator, Urban Creeks Council

Member, Knights of Columbus

Member, Active 20-30

Why do you want to be supervisor?: It was borne out of frustration with the current issues. I didn't seek to be elected, but rather, many residents that know me and my experience urged me to represent them, and I listened. Working as an elected official should not be just a popularity contest.

I have been in public service over 40 years, holding various community planning and environmental positions. My experience in the federal, state and local government and various nonprofits has prepared me to tackle the job of protecting and rebuilding the communities of El Dorado County.

This is a nonpartisan position. How will you conduct your duties in a nonpartisan manner?: The duties of any elected position is to represent the people. This means to represent all of the people, regardless of partisanship. Our Constitution set up a representative form of government, not a ruling one. Extremism and polarity is not welcome and will not achieve our goals. We need to come together and find consensus and compromise to address the issues we face. When we work together, we can move mountains.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I possess the expertise and heart to tackle our issues. We are a small community, yet have big problems. Past elected officials have been locals with great interest in the issues, but they may lack the outside experience needed to get

the job done. I have been working at these various issues my entire career.

What has been lacking is the big picture view. Our housing, economic and transportation issues are not just local issues, they are being felt across the region. To resolve the issues at hand requires an experienced individual with the partnerships and relationships I have forged over many years with government and business representatives at all levels, including the state Legislature and U.S. Congress. No other candidate brings this kind of experience.

How are you going to resolve the CalPERS issue?: I cannot resolve the CalPERS issue single-handedly. State pensions are a contract between the government and unions. They are funded by regular deductions from workers' paychecks and contributions from the state. CalPERS invests the money to cover future benefits.

At the state level, CalPERS was solvent until political policies undermined their investment strategies. Not unlike the Social Security system. People have been compelled to contribute to retirement their entire lives, and now some call it an "entitlement." The federal government has borrowed nearly \$2.8 trillion as of 2014 from the Trust Fund and used the money for other purposes.

The state government created the issue by dipping into the CalPERS account then passing the buck along to the cities and counties. Gov. Pete Wilson took \$1.6 billion from CalPERS accounts in 1991 to help close a state budget gap. Wilson also reduced retirement benefits for new state employees, effectively creating a second class of state workers.

Then Gov. Gray Davis signed SB400 in 1999 that gave employee unions the kind of retirement security normally reserved for the wealthy. The law took effect in 2000, and that same year CalPERS investments were hammered by the bursting of the dot

com bubble. Eight years later, the housing market collapsed and the Great Recession set in, putting the pension fund in a deep hole. CalPERS investments lost 3 percent in 2008 and 24 percent in 2009 – wiping out \$67 billion in value. The fund has a fiduciary responsibility to maximize investment returns on behalf of the retirees whose money it controls – and on behalf of state taxpayers.

Now you have Gov. Jerry Brown and his state policy creating further problems. CalPERS had a \$2.9 billion surplus in 2007 and now has an estimated deficit of more than \$138 billion. Last year, CalPERS announced its Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Five Year Strategic Plan, which is a blueprint for the agency's so-called socially responsible investment strategy. Last summer, CalPERS sent letters to 504 companies represented on the Russell 3000 Index calling for them to develop and disclose a board diversity policy. They have placed undue influence on business.

According to a report by the American Council for Capital Formation, the CalPERS fund's "environmental-related investments comprised four of its nine worst performing private equity funds last year, accounting for more than \$600 million in committed capital." It noted that "none of the system's leaders put their own money into environmental investments."

There are those public employees that have taken advantage of the system, boosting their retirements beyond reasonable benefit. We need to address those within our responsibility and make sound decisions.

Politicians need to realize that these accounts are not a blank check for the latest scheme in government, but a security meant to cover those that dedicated their lives to public service.

Should the government be responsible for solving the

affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Homelessness is a result of a few factors, including joblessness, substance abuse, and mental health. Social programs have not kept pace with these issues and the government has a responsibility to offer help. I am in favor of a hand up, but not a hand out. There has to be limits to assistance as collecting government benefits should not be a career.

The residential population of South Lake Tahoe fell by 9.3 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to the Census Bureau, and the median income cannot afford housing. This is not unique to Tahoe, but across California. However, Tahoe is one of the most unaffordable in the state. According to Zillow, to buy a median house in SLT, you need an income of \$114,576. The Tahoe region's average-household-income-to-home-value ratio is 10-to-1, meaning average home cost is roughly 10 times higher than average annual wages. San Francisco, by comparison, is 8-to-1.

Due to a lack of good paying jobs and unaffordable housing we are exporting our future as younger people cannot afford to live here. The Lake Tahoe Community College is suffering enrollment, largely due to the cost of living. We have more people commuting into Tahoe to work and that affects our road congestion, contrary to environmental policy. What will happen to our community if we eventually have no local residents?

To date the county has not been able to fix the traffic issue in Meyers with tourists clogging up residential streets. What is your solution?: There is no one solution. We need to have a suite of options. The transportation demand has far outstripped our supply. While the economy of the Lake Tahoe Basin is largely dependent on tourism, it also brings many of the traffic problems at a high cost. The traffic problem extends the whole length of U.S. 50. I would work to implement a solution that makes all of the communities along the Hwy. 50

corridor less congested at peak times. It takes time and cooperation by many agencies to accomplish, and I know the ropes to get it done.

I have offered many ideas and suggestions to assist in resolving the problems we are experiencing with weekend and holiday traffic. One is called congestion pricing. Electronic toll collection with congestion pricing was supported by the CHP, the county sheriff, and many citizens in attendance at the meeting in February 2016. Another suggestion is using an odd-even license plate restriction like we saw during the gas crisis, and in critical events such as we saw in February, institute a periodic contra-flow that would improve flow leaving the basin.

One suggestion published in the *Tahoe Tribune* suggested a "better solution is to build a multi-modal transportation system that allows people to leave their cars at home." This is where we need a reality check. That would not work for a multitude of reasons. Plain and simple it is not practical. I support local transit systems, but TTD hasn't even provided regular service to Meyers, which is a community that has no transit. The folks out there cannot get into town for their shopping, recreation or jobs without a car. Who genuinely thinks a family of tourists is going to load the kids, all their baggage, and bulky recreational equipment onto a bus to come into Tahoe?

What would better serve our residents is to have affordable housing near their jobs, and land use zoning that concentrates tourist accommodations near the attractions. These two would greatly reduce traffic and pollution which are primary goals in the basin.

The simple fact is funding for our roads is not enough to keep up with maintenance, and we have the impacts of about 150,000 people every week, nearly a 700 percent increase in our population. We need to mitigate these impacts and we need to

find a way to do it. We always hear what can't be done, but never what can be done. It takes time and cooperation by many agencies to accomplish, and I know we can get it done.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?:

As with most proposals, there are pros and cons. I have heard that Placer and El Dorado in California should form one county in the basin, and Washoe and Douglas on the Nevada side should form one county in the basin. This may help focus efforts on local issues unique to the Tahoe basin. Still, there are already many layers of bureaucracy and paring down two is not likely to change things much.

The effort would be costly and not likely favorable since both states would have to ratify such a move. I am not in favor of further dividing folks, but rather, uniting them to be a community.

What entities would you not take money from?: I will not take money from any entity that expects a quid pro quo for donating. I also would not accept donations from any illegal or otherwise dubious entities. I would hope that donations come as support for my work ethic and ability to work on the issues we face. Any entity that expects favors in return will get their money returned. That may be the current practice, but not in my personal, ethical conscience.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 5 and how do you propose to resolve it?: The district is large and diverse, and no one issue can be attributed to the many people we serve. The Tahoe basin faces a critical problem with housing. The West Slope is facing many development pressures. We need to look at our guiding documents and stick to the plan. We need to enforce the laws on the books instead of creating new, confusing and contradictory ordinances.

The two main issues I see are housing and transportation. We have a serious shortage of affordable housing in the Tahoe

basin, while the West Slope is experiencing pressures from urban sprawl. The condition of our roads and congestion needs full and immediate attention.

Do you believe supervisors should meet in Tahoe more often? Why or why not?: Yes. Those elected to represent the people should be seen by the people. Staying out of touch means being out of touch with your constituents. Although we have districts with distinct representation, the whole of the board represents the whole of the county.

Would you support having more tax dollars from the county coming to the South Shore? Currently, more dollars leave the basin than come back.: Unfortunately, in government budgets, there are donors and recipients. The populace and economy in Tahoe is the strongest among the cities in El Dorado. This would be one argument in the "pros" column to make Tahoe its own county. The needs are distributed throughout the county and the budget is made to cover those needs. I will work with our CAO and staff to represent the whole district's interests to the best of my ability.

What is your vision for the 56-acres in South Lake Tahoe?: I do not have a different vision than what already exists. The analysis should be on the benefit for the county to keep it or transfer it. TRPA has limited coverage and development allocations, so other than what is there, we need to assess what else can be done. It will take a full view of the costs, revenues, benefits, and existing law and ordinances before anything should be decided.

Although surrounded by the city, the county has services that it provides at that location. The county has let their investments fall into a terrible state of disrepair. If the city has defaulted on their agreement, it is wasteful to allow these facilities to become so bad. People deserve decent facilities to serve them. Again, a full cost/benefit analysis needs to be completed.

Do you support having vacation home rentals? Why or why not?:

Vacation home rentals is a complicated issue. Although I support private property rights that come into the issue, also we have zoning laws and one of the basic principles in real estate, the right to quiet enjoyment. I support licensing and letting the industry show they can be responsible. I have proposed a Vacation Home Owners Association to police the members. It should not be the responsibility of the taxpayer for the liability of benefits and retirement of more public servants policing commercial interests. VHRs are an industry and we do not want to suppress commerce, but we must also protect the rights and liberties of our residents.

Zoning, in its basic form, attempts to separate residential property use from commercial property use. We are experiencing incompatible uses. Houses are generally built for families and not typically built to be used as a business.

Years ago, people would allow their second home to be used by family and friends that knew the neighbors and respected the tranquility of the neighborhood. Today, these are being advertised internationally by online services and our housing stock is being snapped up by outside investors solely for the purpose of making a profit. Vacation-home owners say they rely on the income. That makes them a commercial enterprise. We have to use our common sense.

South Lake Tahoe has 1,400 vacation rentals, mainly entire homes, in neighborhoods. South Lake Tahoe has 15,000 housing units, but more than half of them are second homes or seasonal rentals. These mostly are non-resident investors and speculators that have driven up the cost of housing to be unaffordable to those that live here. Only 18 percent of local residents can afford to buy the median-priced home, and 75 percent of our residents spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing.

Jim Hamilton, 2005 president of the California Association of

Realtors, told a group, "Real estate was never intended to be an ATM machine. This country was not founded on owning a home and making millions of dollars. Real estate should be about home ownership."

The landscape of real estate is changed. Ethical standards are in question. How is it an investor can bid up a home with the intention of making it a business, yet use a standard market appraisal and obtain a regular mortgage? Any other business has to use proper methods such as an income-based appraisal and business financing. We have to question the logic of allowing businesses to operate in our residential neighborhoods. Absentee investors do not live and work here. Residents report they feel trapped in their homes and on extremely bad traffic days, they tell of people that have done the unthinkable such as leave their cars, knock on the door and ask to use the bathroom, or even relieve themselves in the yard. My priority lies with the residents who live here and vote for me to represent them.

Unmovable traffic congestion, bad behavior, and the trash have left locals in a fit. It is a tourist economy, but even welcome guests can wear out the welcome mat. We need to protect home ownership and affordability for our residents.

The one thing we know since I was a Realtor is that the landscape of real estate is changed. Ethical standards are in question. How is it an investor can bid up a home with the intention of making it a business, yet use a standard market appraisal and obtain a regular mortgage? Any other business has to use proper methods such as an income-based appraisal and business financing. We have to question the logic of allowing businesses to operate in our residential neighborhoods. Absentee investors do not live and work here. Residents report they feel trapped in their homes and on extremely bad traffic days, they tell of people that have done the unthinkable such as leave their cars, knock on the door and ask to use the bathroom, or even relieve themselves in the

yard. My priority lies with the residents who live here and vote for me to represent them.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I was a part-time actor and have been in movies and industrial films. “An Operation Lifesaver” film that I was a principal actor in won both a Telly (the industrial equivalent of an Academy Award) and a Communicator Award.

D.C. Dems playing favorites in race against McClintock

By Emily Cadei, Sacramento Bee

Officially, the national Democratic party has stayed out of the hard-fought Democratic battle to take on Rep. Tom McClintock in California’s 4th district. But unofficially, D.C. Democrats have sent a pretty clear signal about who they favor to finish among the top two candidates in the June 5th primary.



Roza Calderon, Regina Bateman, Jessica Morse

Campaign finance reports reveal that the number two House Democrat, veteran Maryland Rep. Steny Hoyer, donated \$7,000 to former State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development staffer Jessica Morse in late March – \$2,000 from his congressional campaign and \$5,000 from his political action committee, AMERIPAC.

The DCCC has not weighed in on the 4th district contest, which is not a top-tier race for the party at this point. President Trump won the sprawling district, which includes Lake Tahoe, by a comfortable margin in 2016, and McClintock has faced little competition in recent elections. But the contest has crept onto Democrats' radar in recent months, thanks to local grassroots organizing efforts and a flood of money that has buoyed Morse and a second Democrat, Regina Bateson, a political science professor on unpaid leave from MIT. Political handicappers have moved the race from "safe" Republican to "leans" Republican, as a result.

Less than a month from the primary election, Morse and Bateson remain locked in a fierce race for party votes.

Read the whole story

Paris: Military background an asset for DCS0

Publisher's note: Four people are running for the position of sheriff of Douglas County Sheriff's Office. Their profiles will run May 4 and May 5.



Dean Paris

Name: Dean Anthony Paris

Age: 47

Occupation: Retired Marine Corps military law enforcement

What groups, nonprofits, other civic involvement are you part of outside of work?: Member of the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce, member of WAVE (Welcome all Veterans Everywhere), volunteer for the Carson Valley Community Food Closet.

What is your opinion about teachers having guns at school?: It is a constitutional right to carry a firearm. However, a teacher needs to focus on the education of their students, not analyzing a treat or possible threat. There are a lot of cons with arming teachers. First, who is going to pay for training, certification and the firearm for that teacher if they are found qualified to carry a gun? Second, who is going to cover the cost of personal protection insurance for that teacher? A third is the firearm going to be carried on the teacher during the day or secured in a classroom? Who is going to make the decision on which teachers will be allowed to carry or is it a volunteer basis? How many teachers will be authorized to carry a firearm?

Vacation rentals are allowed at Lake Tahoe. Should they be allowed everywhere in Douglas County? Why or why not?: I would have to look at the statics before I can make a recommendation.

How best to enforce vacation home rental regulations?: This is something new to me and I am not familiar with and would have to conduct more research.

Why do you want to be sheriff?: My time in the Marine Corps I have learned how to be a successful leader by setting the example and I enjoy helping others to succeed. I believe in bottom-up leadership which allows others the opportunity to become leaders. My core values guided me through my career in the military that I have so honorably served the people of the United States for 20 years now I would like to serve the people of Douglas County with the same honor and leadership that I gave the Marine Corps. I will be constitutional sheriff and protect what you" the people value most."

Why should someone vote for you over someone else?: I have the proven leadership and experience that made me a successful leader in the Marine Corps for 20 years, with the leadership, knowledge and experience I can lead the sheriff's office. My ethics, my leadership and my values have never been questioned. I hold will hold all personnel accountable to include myself and always set the example.

How are you going to deal with people driving under the influence of marijuana?: As sheriff, I will ensure that the deputies are currently trained and certified to recognize the indicator(s) of person(s) under the influence of marijuana, and per Nevada Revised Statue Section 484C.110(3) the suspected offender will be charged and processed for that violation.

What do you believe is needed for a good relationship between the sheriff's department and county commissioners?: More open communication between the commissioners and the sheriff's office.

If the commissioners cut your budget by 10 percent, what program or people would you cut? Please be specific.: The

sheriff's office's budget comes out of the General Fund which is controlled by the county commissioners, but if I had to cut funding I would have to start with training. I would not cut personnel. With the new five-year budget for personnel the office can keep the deputies we have now and is paid for five years.

What is your relationship with businesses at Lake Tahoe that work with the sheriff's office on various events? If anything, what would you consider changing?: I currently don't have relationships with Lake Tahoe business, but it will be my priority to be involved and work on those relationships. I do know the sheriff's office does aid with summer events at the lake and that assistance would continue. But I would need to know what the business would want from the sheriff's office.

Deputies use targets to practice marksmanship. Is there a better way to train people so not so many unarmed people are being shot? Please elaborate.: There are various ways to train deputies to engage a threat. You can conduct training using paintballs or sim munitions which allows the deputies to experience a real-life experience of being shot at while returning fire and the ability to engaging that threat without causing harm to incident bystanders. Another option is computer-based training scenarios, the computer places the deputy in real life situations and anytime during the training if a bystander is shot the training scenario stops or if it a bad shooting the training scenario will stop. Then the instructor can walk and talk through the training and educate the deputy on what went wrong with the shooting and how to address it.

If you could make the rules for New Year's Eve at Stateline, what would they be?: The sheriff does not make the rules, the sheriff enforces the law.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies make less than South Lake Tahoe police officers and El Dorado County sheriff's deputies.

Does this hamper efforts to recruit employees? Do you believe deputies should be paid more? Why or why not? If yes, how would you go about getting them more money?: It does hamper efforts to recruit new deputies, but let's look at other aspects, California pays a lot more in taxes so yes, the officers and deputies in the Tahoe region do make between \$2 to \$3 more per hour than Douglas County. The cost of living is currently high in Douglas County so trying to hire new deputies with high housing prices is discouraging potential sheriff candidates. Looking at the new pay agreement the current pay, incentives, and the increase is locked into a five-year plan. I would propose to the commissioners for additional money and attempt to hire new deputies by offering incentives to live and work in Douglas County.

What is lacking in the department right now in terms of personnel or equipment or other resources? How would you address those needs?: I would hire two more school resources officers and push for more funding for recruitment of new deputies.

What do you think is the biggest issue facing Douglas County Sheriff's Office and how do you plan to resolve it?: Moral, and the status quo. I would want to be involved with the deputies, get to know them and their families, have family functions, establish team building exercises to help boost morale. I would also empower my personnel to lead, be involved and working side by side with the deputies and doing and always set the example.

Body cameras are about to be required throughout Nevada. What are the pros and cons?: We are in a profession that is always under the watchful eye of society and cell phone cameras. I do support the use of body cameras by law enforcement personnel for several reasons. First, the cameras are designed to record what the deputies see in real time, and that the recording can be used in a trial as evidence. Second, it's a system of accountability that will ensure that the deputies are

maintaining a standard of professionalism while interacting with the public. Additionally, when a civil complaint is filed against a deputy, the recording from the body camera shall be used to either corroborate the claim or clear the deputy for any wrongdoing.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not already know: During my time in military law enforcement, I have investigated over 55 cases of domestic violence, over 80 assaults, around 50 thefts of property, 25 sexual assaults, six child abuse cases, processed 12 DUIs, investigated eight suicides, and written over 400 traffic citations. As a leader, I was always setting the example and responded to as many calls for service as I can. It's not that I was micromanaging my Marines but supervising and assisting with calls for service because "we too" had a shortfall of manpower. And instead of putting the burden and pressure on my Marines as a leader I chose to do the right thing and to be active and either assist in the investigation or take one over so they can move on to other calls for service. The numbers show that I have the experience in investigating and that I do understand the aspects involved in responding to and investigating crimes. Military law enforcement does the same types of functions as civilian officers. But the one difference that we as military police officers have to be concerned with on every call we respond to is never to let our guard down because the military are trained killers, and almost every household has a service member that can be armed, and they know how to use it. I am a bottom-up leader and believe in empowering your juniors and allowing them an opportunity to become leaders. I have mentored over 100 Marines in my career and helped them in the advancement of their career. I always have but my Marines first ahead of myself and as your next sheriff I will be there for the people of Douglas County and the sheriff's office. When I see a problem, I approach the problem, provide a solution and follow through to the end.