Final EIS outlines future planning regs for Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – On a blustery day where Lake Tahoe seemed to have the energy of the ocean, it set the stage for what could have been a combative, boisterous day. Instead, those who came out to discuss the final environmental documents of the TRPA Regional Plan update remained civil.

Oct. 24 was the first of two days to discuss the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's revisions to the documents that were first released in April. This morning the Governing Board and Advisory Planning Commission meet at Harveys in Stateline starting at 9:30.



The final environmental impact statement for the TRPA Regional Plan update is out. Photo/LTN file

Board members Mara Bresnick (California Assembly speaker appointee) and Byron Sher (California Senate Rules Committee appointee) are expected to introduce changes to the Regional Plan update at today's meeting. Sher was not at the Wednesday meeting. It was possible for Bresnick to have brought her

concerns to the table sooner, as she was asked to be part of the committee to hash out the update. She declined to do so.

Eight members of the public voiced their opinions after staff gave a brief overview of what the differences between the draft and final EIS are. Arlo Stockham, TRPA regional planning coordinator, outlined the changes. None of the changes is the law of the land until the Governing Board takes action.

One difference between the draft and final EIS is the ability to appeal decisions to TRPA. More procedural safeguards are in place when it comes to permitting area plans. Those are the plans local jurisdictions will create. They come with more flexibility and less microscopic analysis from TRPA.

The increase in height allowances to bring the Stateline casinos into compliance will be granted just for those structures and any buildings on those properties that would replace what exists today.

Increased building height for areas outside the town centers was scrapped.

With about 4,300 development rights left, a maximum of 2,600 allocations would be released in the next 20 years. And those would be doled out in four-year intervals.

The final EIS lists “resort recreation” areas as Edgewood’s property and Heavenly’s California Base Lodge. Additional recreation development may be possible in area plans. Transfer of sensitive property must be within hydrologic areas.

Property within 300 feet of Lake Tahoe would have different coverage rules than other locations. Americans with Disabilities Act exemptions would be in place in regards to coverage, too.

Businesses have five years after the building was shuttered before mitigation fees would have to be paid. Currently, it’s

two years. A pilot program to see if a drive-through pharmacy impacts air quality will be allowed.

While the inadequacy of the noise threshold was brought up in the peer review of the threshold document, no substantive changes are in the works to make it more logical.

The Governing Board will be asked to come up with a list of priorities after the first of the year for things to work on after the update is finished. Noise could be on that list.

When it came to public comment, Jennifer Quashnick with the Tahoe Area Sierra Club, said she believes the document focuses more on development than thresholds.

Laurel Ames, also with the Sierra Club, raised doubts about enough being done regarding scenic issues, said pervious pavement is problematic, and soil needs to be addressed further in relation to coverage.

Bob McKay with Tahoe Beach Club believes the plan is good.

In addition to the EIS, the other updated documents released this week include the Threshold Evaluation, Regional Transportation Plan and final EIR, and Code of Ordinances.

Notes:

• TRPA's website has the documents. TRPA staff will also have USB thumb drives available for $15 each at the Oct. 25 meeting.

• The final environmental impact statement was released Oct. 24. Because of this, more input will be taken next month to give people an opportunity to review the information. The Nov. 14-15 meetings (in Incline Village and Stateline, respectively) will be another joint meeting of the APC and Governing Board.

• A vote by the Governing Board is expected on Dec. 12.

South Shore residents talk economic revitalization

By Kathryn Reed

In 2007, the South Shore experienced what many believe was one of the worst disasters to hit the area – the Angora Fire that reduced 254 houses to ash in a matter of hours.

To rebuild – the structures, their psyche, their belongings – it took the community coming together. This included the government agencies setting aside some long-held ways of doing things. It took people giving – time, resources, money.



SMG President Carl Ribaudo talks economics Oct. 23 in South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

It took having a common goal. That goal was to make whole the lives of those individuals who lost their homes and those who

were displaced.

That type of cooperation is what Paula Lambdin suggested be done to turn the economy on the South Shore around. She should know it works. Her family rebuilt in the burn area. And Lambdin was instrumental in holding her neighborhood together after the fire.

Lambdin was one of nearly 200 people who attended an economic forum Tuesday night at Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe that was put on by the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Tahoe Prosperity Center and Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority.

Casey Blann, president of the chamber board, said it is time to stop looking in the rearview mirror and start doing something.

Carl Ribaudo with Strategic Marketing Group went over the economic analysis he prepared for the South Shore Vision plus some additional information. (This is the economic analysis he presented to the South Lake Tahoe City Council earlier this month, which is similar to what he delivered Oct. 23.)

He emphasized how the South Shore has lost about a half million hotel room nights, or 30 percent, since 2001; that retail sales in the city are declining, while Truckee's are increasing; the need to look at whether economic changes are cyclical or structural; how the bulk of hotel rooms are not in casinos, but that the casinos are hosting the majority of travelers; the abundance of rooms; and how other areas are charging more and therefore bringing more taxes to government coffers.

"The status quo does not provide the level of revenue that is sustainable for the community," Ribaudo concluded.

He believes the type of person coming to Tahoe is the same person who shops at REI. While he doesn't want to discount the idea of bringing families, Ribaudo said with that sector

representing 30 percent of travelers, it would be foolish to forget the other 70 percent.

B Gorman, president of the chamber, spoke about the trek a group of South Shore powerbrokers took earlier this year to Livermore and Monterey and what the message was from that excursion. She also shared a video from the experience. http://youtu.be/9dCeNVqudN0

Three questions were asked of the audience at the beginning before each table worked on its solutions. In a brief brainstorming this is what people came up with:

Q: What expectations do you have for the evening?

A: • Education • Accurate data • Inspiration • Information • Solutions • All encompassing plan • Partnership • Shared vision • Momentum • Change.

Q: What are the obstacles?

A: • Financial • Regulations • Communications • The past • Lawsuits • Assumptions • Complacency • Apathy • Status quo • Lack of imagination • Weather • Fragmentation • Isolation • Lack of leadership • Multi-jurisdictional.

Q: What are you willing to do?

A: • Engagement • Collaborate • Invest • Compromise • Shop local • Participate • Be uncomfortable • Volunteer • Share assets/resources.

Then it was time for the eight tables comprised of residents, business people and agency types to hash how best they would revitalize the economy and the obstacles that may get in the way.

All the comments were being collected, with the goal of having a meeting after the first of the year to encourage solutions with the public and private sectors working together.

Comments included, but were not limited to:

• Stop competing with each other – in other words, work together instead of against each other;

• Identify core values;

• Perhaps the wrong visitor is being targeted;

• Change the status quo;

• Transportation is a problem;

• Communication needs to go both ways – not just one segment telling everyone else what is going to happen;

• Find out what visitors want;

• What brought locals to Tahoe will bring tourists;

• Mountains, wildlife views, fly fishing – those things and others need to be promoted, not just the lake;

• Create a collection of pedestrian zones that are linked;

• Reduce the speed limit;

• Empower locals;

• More jobs;

• Leadership;

• Need more participation – not just all the regulars.

The question people were left with was: What role are you willing to play in the economic revitalization of South Lake Tahoe? Substantive answers will be sought at the next meeting.

A similar question is the Question of the Week on *Lake Tahoe News.*

South Lake Tahoe airport passes FAA inspection; major changes in the works

By Joann Eisenbrandt

Even though the Lake Tahoe Airport has not had scheduled commercial air service for more than a decade, the city has retained the airport's FAA-issued Part 139 Air Operating Certificate. This is required for airports serving scheduled air carrier aircraft to remain ready for the return of commercial service.

To obtain Part 139 certification, commercial service airports agree to meet specific operational and safety standards for the upkeep of the physical plant, to maintain accurate recordkeeping by the airport proprietor and fixed base operator (FBO), and to provide for adequate firefighting and rescue equipment and proper safety training for all personnel.

FAA inspections to ensure compliance are conducted annually, problems noted and time frames for correction given. On Aug. 27, 2012, Elizabeth Louie, FAA airport certification safety

inspector from the Los Angeles Airports District Office, conducted the Lake Tahoe Airport's yearly Part 139 Airport Operating Certificate inspection.



Lake Tahoe Airport officials want to make sure all the FAA certificates are in place so commercial air service could return. Photo/LTN file

Last week, a rumor began circulating that the airport had failed to correct problems, specifically related to fire suppression equipment, by the deadline, and that the Part 139 Air Operating Certificate had been pulled. *Lake Tahoe News* and the city received inquiries.

South Lake Tahoe City Manager Nancy Kerry responded, "Somebody is certainly calling people and saying things that are not true. They're trying to stir the pot. I don't know what the source is, but it's disheartening."

FAA inspector Elizabeth Louie later confirmed, "This was a normal inspection. There are some 'housekeeping' items that need to be addressed, but the [Lake Tahoe Airport] certificate was not pulled."

The annual inspection included a review of airport and FBO files and logs; checking the runway and taxiways for correct

slope, pavement condition, markings, lighting, and signage; inspecting rescue and firefighting equipment and reviewing personnel training records. The fuel farm and mobile fueler's fire suppression equipment (maintained by Mountain West Aviation, the airport's FBO) was also checked. A post-inspection briefing was conducted with airport management and a "letter of correction" sent noting any violations.

"This is normal," Airport Director Sherry Miller told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Every airport goes through this exact same thing and gets a list of corrections."

Noted this year was the need to perform a live fire drill, to light all the windsocks on the runway at night and ensure all fire suppression equipment was BC, not ABC (ABC extinguishers are corrosive to planes), and was currently certified and properly tagged. Last year's inspection requested development of a wildlife hazard assessment and management plan. Miller noted the city's fire extinguishers are all now correct, the live fire drill has been done and the runway windsocks are all lighted. The wildlife management plan will be put in place in the next several years – a timeframe acceptable to the FAA.

The remaining unresolved issue is with Mountain West Aviation's fire suppression equipment. The FAA correction letter states, "Mountain West Aviation (FBO) has expired fire extinguishers in the fuel storage area …. The mobile fueler's fire extinguishers have no tags." Miller adds, "[Michael Golden] has been notified that he's in noncompliance. He has the right kind (of fire extinguishers) on the fuel trucks … but the fire suppression system at the fuel farm has not been certified every year by a licensed certifier."

Golden, president of Mountain West, disagrees. He told *Lake Tahoe News* that all his fire suppression equipment, "is current. We received a letter two years ago from Sherry [Miller] to change the fire extinguishers from ABC to BC and we did. Last year we were notified that our fuel truck meters

were not certified. They have been certified. We haven't received anything verbally or in writing (from this year's inspection) that we're out of compliance."

1992 Airport Master Plan Settlement Agreement expires

Having a current Part 139 certification is crucial to the city's future plans for the airport. Officials have been actively seeking proposals for scheduled commercial air service, using smaller, quieter, new-generation aircraft, with the initial focus on routes to Los Angeles and San Diego. The last 20 years saw a number of short-lived, largely unsuccessful spurts of commercial service from a variety of airlines. The city points to the 1992 Lake Tahoe Airport Master Plan Settlement Agreement as a main cause for these failures.

This agreement among the city, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, California Attorney General's Office, League to Save Lake Tahoe and FAA resolved a swarm of lawsuits over noise restrictions and other operational issues at the Lake Tahoe Airport. It included a master plan and environmental impact report, and created the regulatory framework governing airport operations for 20 years. On Oct. 8 it expired.

A key issue discussed in the past was brought to the forefront by the expiration of the Settlement Agreement. Must the city prepare a new Airport Master Plan before reinstituting commercial air service?

"The only environmental document we have right now is the EIR completed in 1992. It's still a viable document." Miller notes. "If we wanted commercial service now, we must operate under those documents, even if the SA has expired, because that EIR says what can and can't be done."

In July, Julie Regan, TRPA's external affairs chief, expressed her agency's viewpoint, "If the current (master) plan expires before a new plan is in place, the status quo would continue,

i.e., the city would continue to operate the airport as a general aviation facility until a new plan is developed and put in place."

General aviation airports do not have scheduled commercial air service.

Kerry, at the time, disagreed, "We don't have to wait for a master plan to be completed to bring in commercial service."

The city has not had additional discussions with TRPA about this question, but has decided to prepare a full master plan study. It recently secured needed FAA funding and put out a request for qualifications for consultants to complete the document.

Master plan costs will be between $450,000 and $500,000, with federal funding paying 90 percent and the city 10 percent, and will take about a year and a half to complete. Three responses to the RFQ have been received, a committee has been formed to review them and make a recommendation to the City Council, with potential selection at the Dec. 11 council meeting.

But what happens if the city receives a serious proposal for commercial air service before the master plan is completed? There isn't a simple answer.

"If somebody wants to propose service," Kerry states, "they would have to meet the thresholds that are required. What those thresholds are … that's a long conversation. We'll do what's required to be done, but it would depend on what's proposed. It's too broad a question to answer without having a specific proposal."

When asked if such a proposal were imminent, Kerry replied, "We have had someone interested, but we're not sure if they're just kicking the tires or are going to give us a proposal."

Potential outsourcing of airport management operations

As important to the city as securing commercial service is the need to control costs. Serious reductions in overall city staffing, and a reconfiguration and consolidation of duties have already taken place. Outsourcing of airport management may be the next step.

On Oct. 9, the city put out a request for proposals inviting, "submissions from qualified and interested airport managers or management companies who will manage and operate the city's FAA certificated airport … serving both general aviation and commercial aviation operations."

The city's goals, as stated in the RFP, are to increase the number of airport users, eliminate the city's subsidy of airport operations, maximize the facility's revenue potential and take advantage of all available and creative marketing opportunities.

The deadline for RFPs is Oct.31. They will be evaluated by a selection committee, interviews conducted and an award of contract potentially approved by the City Council on Dec. 11.

The transfer of management would begin within 60 days with a 36-month contract, with an option by the city to renew the agreement for two additional 12-month periods for a total of 60 months. All airport functions and staffing would remain basically the same – but would be performed by management company employees, not city staff.

Kerry emphasized this RFP process may not actually result in any changes to current airport management.

"Don't presume any specific action will be taken regarding the RFP. Putting out an RFP does not guarantee a specific outcome. It provides an opportunity to assess management and operations solutions," Kerry said.

The city could choose to reject any and all proposals, even from fully-qualified bidders, or to modify, postpone or cancel

the RFP. Kerry declined to make any additional comments about the RFP, the options for current city airport employees, or elaborate on specifics regarding the city's plans until the bidding process has closed.

While not all city employees appear aware of the RFP, current Airport Manager Miller sees value in it. "This is a good process to go through and the city and the public will get some good information from it."

The privatization of airport management was suggested several years ago by former City Manager Tony O'Rourke in his report to the City Council at its March 15, 2011, meeting. It was proposed as part of the city's five-year financial plan for, "structurally reducing the city's personnel costs."

This change has become a more common choice for airports, the Minden-Tahoe Airport among them. It has contracted out all airport operations and staffing to ABS Aviation Management.

In 2009, Douglas County was notified by the FAA that its ordinance imposing weight restrictions on aircraft wasn't appropriate under federal regulations, and unless it was changed, federal funding to the airport would stop.

"This led," as Douglas County Manager Steve Mokrohisky explained, "to an extensive public engagement process to figure out exactly what type of airport we wanted, which was a self-sustaining, general aviation airport focused on soaring, sport flying and corporate aviation."

While the ordinance was being revised, the airport manager left and the county contracted with ABS Aviation Management for airport management services for an interim six-month period while recruiting nationwide for a new county airport manager. Bobbi Thompson was the contracted airport manager with county staff remaining in the other positions. After the recruitment period, Mokrohisky was unsatisfied with the applicant pool.

“We didn’t want to settle. We were pleased with the very good service we’d received from Bobbi and decided to ask ABS to make a proposal,” Mokrohisky told *Lake Tahoe News*.

In February 2011, the Douglas County signed a two-year agreement through January 2013 with ABS for overall airport management, with a yearly savings in airport staffing costs of $50,000. Airport staff are all now ABS employees.

“They are all residents of Douglas County. Their business cards say Minden-Tahoe Airport, not ABS. From the public standpoint, there is no difference, other than the quality of service they’ve received. We’ve done a 180 at our airport and are now back on the map internationally as one of the top two locations for soaring. “

County airport employees all had the opportunity to apply for positions with ABS, and all who did secured them. Mokrohisky adds that even though airport operations have been outsourced, county oversight remains.

“We still have a Board of Commissioners. I oversee the airport manager. She comes to all my directors’ meetings, and as before, issues related to airport leases, changes in fees, standards, rules and regulations require approval by the Board of Commissioners,” he said.

“The city (of South Lake Tahoe) did inquire of the county how this has worked,“ Mokrohisky added. “This is a great example of a time when privatization works well in the private sector. … The Minden-Tahoe Airport is the only financially self-sufficient general aviation airport in the state of Nevada.”

Resort executives: Market Lake Tahoe as one region

By Katherine E. Hill

KINGS BEACH – Working together to promote Tahoe as a region was the message at the annual North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce member lunch.

“We need to have one message for the entire region,” said Julie Maurer, vice president of marketing for Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski resorts.

Maurer was one of the speakers at last week’s lunch attended by business owners in the North Tahoe region about efforts to market the area to regional, national and international winter tourists.



Squaw Valley is putting $24 million into the resort for this season. Photo/Provided

Maurer called on everyone to work together to market Tahoe's big mountain snow to tourists.

"We need to do this as an entire community," she said.

The recent snow atop Heavenly Ski Resort, (before this latest storm) which was heavily publicized, was a boon to the entire Tahoe region, she said.

"It really helped, in terms of our phones ringing to book lodging," Maurer shared.

Maurer outlined a three-point plan to recover from the 2011-12 season and to build on Tahoe's reputation for big mountain snow – remind visitors of the region's snow, which averages more than 400 inches annually; diversify the market to international customers; and offer past guests incentives for booking lodging and tickets early. She also said the capital investments in local resorts, despite the recession, is another marketing strategy.

"In North Tahoe, we have one of the most power messages," Maurer said. "There is more capital being spent despite a poor winter."

Maurer cited the $70 million, five-year Renaissance at Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows that started during the winter of 2011-12, which saw dismal snowfall throughout the region. Despite the winter, KSL, which operates Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows, invested $14 million in improvements at Squaw Valley on and off the mountain, and is spending another $24 million this year. Improvements for the 2012-13 season, which begins Nov. 21, include two new lifts at High Camp, expanded snowmaking, new learn-to-ski areas, remodeling the Olympic Plaza Bar, and improved terrain parks at Squaw Valley.

Maurer also said KSL would continue to offer access to Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows on a single ticket or pass for the upcoming season with a free shuttle operating between the

resorts.

That message in capital investment and regional marketing has echoed by Davy Ratchford, director of marketing for Northstar, which is operated by Vail Resorts.

Vail invested $30 million in improvements at Northstar during summer 2012, with Ratchford noting that about $1 billion has been invested at Northstar in the last 10 years from the development of the village at the base of the resort to the mid-mountain Ritz-Carlton to expanded terrain and new lifts.

During the 2011-12 season, Northstar unveiled the Zephyr Lodge at mid-mountain, expanded terrain at Sawtooth Ridge (with cat tours coming this season), to the new Promised Land Express. For 2012-13 season, which starts Nov. 16, Ratchford says the resort will open a new concept restaurant in the village along with a location of the popular Truckee eatery Taco's Jalisco. As well, there will be a Ripperoo's Riglet Park for ages 3 and older and the resort is expanding its popular EpicMix Photo program with an EpicMix Racing component at all Vail Resorts. Guests may post their best times on runs and compare it to times set by Lindsey Vonn. Those with the best times at the end of the season will have the chance to race Vonn.

The resort also will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a Birthday Bash on Dec. 22 with Shawn White at Northstar for the festivities.

North Shore news:

• The TNT-TMA will unveil a pilot ski shuttle program later this season offering a one-stop shuttle access to every ski resort in the North Tahoe-Truckee region.

• Iron Man will debut its highest altitude race in North Tahoe in 2013 as part of a five-year commitment to hold the race in the region.

• A bid to host the Amgen Tour in 2013 is being considered, with a decision expected in November.

NorCal city embraces its roots of being ground zero for breast cancer awareness

Publisher's note: ***October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. People are affected by cancer in all sorts of ways and communities do various things to shine a spotlight on various cancers. This is the last of four stories about cancer.***

By Kathryn Reed

REDDING – Every shade of pink imaginable floods the streets here to show unity in bringing awareness to breast cancer.

Cars are lining up before the 6am Oct. 18 start time to release 40,000 bags filled with breast cancer information. And people are coming by after the bags are gone. People could even order 150 bags ahead of time.

Smiles are everywhere. One woman boasts of being a 20-year survivor. All are appreciative of the gang of volunteers who are up well before dawn to begin the bag brigade.



The Sundial Bridge in Redding becomes pink once a year to bring awareness to breast cancer.
Photos/Kathryn Reed

A school bus comes by, so did an 18-wheel Coca-Cola truck. Each year a woman who owns a vintage pink car comes for her bag. All ages, both genders are driving up. Guys are saying they are getting their bags for the women in their lives.

This is the 16th annual Think Pink event where each year bags filled with all things breast cancer related are given out in the North State. Think Pink started in Redding and it's the Nor-Cal Think Pink board of directors in cooperation with its partners that is able to put on Think Pink Day. (It's always the third Thursday in October.)

Education is the key. The calendar, which is a main part of the goodies in the free bag, has a sponsor for each month. Each month also has educational material. A hanger for the shower helps remind women to perform a monthly self-breast exam.

Volunteers are in pink, but so are most of the people in the vehicles slowing down for their bags.

Pink and breast cancer are synonymous – especially during October. But it’s not just people turning pink.

The fountain in front the Redding City Hall is sending streams of pink water into the air.

The restaurant View 202 is offering deals on Pink-Tinis and select food items with a percentage of the proceeds going back to Nor-Cal Think Pink.

The board approves who can do what. Several businesses have a day, a week or all month (after all October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month) where some of the money they raise goes back to Think Pink. Every business that participates must have an educational component to the promotion.

For example, the pen MD Imaging gives out says “Mammograms Save Lives”.

At Chop Chix Salon pink hair extension are being woven in for a $10 donation. All the money goes to Think Pink. This is the fourth year the salon has participated. The first year $800 was raised. The next $2,400. Last $2,500. Their goal is to keep increasing the cash for Think Pink by $100 a year.

It’s the evening on this third Thursday of October that draws the largest crowd – 3,000 last year and estimates are more showed up this year. The iconic Sundial Bridge is awash in pink. With the pylon shooting 217 feet into the jet-black night, having it turn pink was like a ribbon in the sky.

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Cancer League lends help to those in need on South Shore

Publisher's note: ***October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. People are affected by cancer in all sorts of ways and communities do various things to shine a spotlight on various cancers. This is the third of four stories about cancer.***

By Kathryn Reed

A cancer diagnosis if life changing – no matter the ultimate outcome.



Not everyone has the financial means or support group to handle it without the help of strangers.

That's where the South Lake Tahoe Cancer League steps in. This nonprofit run by volunteers and an eight-member board has been around since the early 1980s. The group helps people on the South Shore – going to Glenbrook, up to the El Dorado County line past Emerald Bay, and into Christmas Valley.

"It started because at one time it was just the American Cancer Society here. Local people decided we were not seeing any benefit from the money so they decided to break away and form the South Lake Tahoe Cancer League, with the idea that we would help local people and not just the city," explained

board President Jonnie Crawford.

People undergoing treatment for cancer – chemo, radiation or surgery – may apply for a grant from the organization. Their doctor must verify they are undergoing treatment, but no one has to show any financial paperwork to receive a grant.

“(Last week) I approved a grant for a person who goes to the VA. He lives in a trailer and absolutely has no income,” Crawford said. “It’s so sad. A lot of times these people are not visible.”

Up to $400 is available every other month for cancer patients. The money can be used however they want. There are no strings attached to money or need to show receipts. It can go for medication, gas, food or other bills. To date for this calendar year the local Cancer League has given out $33,000 worth of grants.

Besides cash, rides are also available. Volunteers drive patients as far as Reno and Truckee for medical care. Drivers are reimbursed for the miles driven based on what the state sets as the rate per mile. For September, the group wrote checks totaling $2,815.

“Some of the people who need rides … they are desperate,” Crawford said.

Through the years, the number of people seeking grants and those needing rides have increased, according to Crawford.

Money to support the Cancer League comes from a variety of sources. But the biggest fundraiser of the year is coming up. It’s the Sees Candy sales.

Each year the storefront has donated the space for free. The group is returning to the Raley’s center at the Y by Starbucks. The doors open shortly before Thanksgiving.

One-pound boxes of various chocolates are available.

“We get quite a few merchants who buy candy for their offices,” Crawford said.

People have been seen making multiple trips to their vehicle with all the boxes they’ve bought.

The Moose Lodge puts on the Longest Day of Golf event, which benefits the Cancer League.

This was the first year Sierra Athletic Club put on a walk with the beneficiary being the Cancer League. More than $2,000 was raised that day.

Last year $6,000 from the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority via the celebrity golf tournament was secured. The Cancer League has sent in a request for funds from this year’s event, too.

For more information about making a donation or to become a volunteer, call (530) 573.1703. Donations may also be sent to: South Lake Tahoe Cancer League, P.O. Box 17962, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151. Memberships are also available at $20 year. Not all volunteers are members, and being a member does not mean one has to volunteer.

Tahoe doc knows what ‘you

have breast cancer’ means

Publisher’s note: ***October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. People are affected by cancer in all sorts of ways and communities do various things to shine a spotlight on various cancers. This is the second of four stories about cancer.***

By Kelly Shanahan

You have breast cancer. Four small words that can change a life. Usually I am the one saying those words, but in April 2008, I was on the receiving end.

Actually, I was looking at the mammogram with Dr. Betsy Card at Great Basin Imaging and she didn’t really have to say the words. I could see the ugly white tangle for myself. My first words were not fit for publication. “Can you biopsy it now?” I asked, and minutes later a large needle was boring into the center of the mass.



Kelly Shanahan

I didn’t wait for confirmation that it was indeed cancer before I arranged to be seen at the Carol F. Buck Breast Cancer Center at UC San Francisco. My husband told me to be optimistic, that it might not be cancer. But he’s a glass half full person and I knew in my heart I wasn’t that lucky. I also already knew what I would do – bilateral mastectomy. I didn’t have time to have post-lumpectomy radiation and I didn’t want the sword of Damocles hanging over my head, worrying about a recurrence.

My mind made up before I even saw the breast cancer specialist at UCSF, I had only one difficult chore: telling our then 9-year-old daughter. That was the hardest thing I've ever done. She looked me straight in the eye and asked if I was going to die. I told her yes, eventually, but not from breast cancer because I was going to kick its ass. That got a little smile, and a request for 25 cents for swearing.

There is nothing like having a child to make one fight – nothing, not breast cancer for sure – was going to keep me from seeing my daughter grow up.

Surgery wasn't scary for me, probably because I am a surgeon myself and cutting bad stuff out was natural for me. I didn't, however, plan on having a positive lymph node and having to go through chemo. I planned on having the surgery and getting back to my life four weeks later.

Well, four months of chemo intervened, with the stereotypical hair loss and vomiting, but heck, there was a silver lining – didn't have to shave my legs all summer and I lost 50 pounds pretty darn quick. You have to have a sense of humor and find some good in order to survive chemo.

It has been four years now and sometimes I forget I have had breast cancer. The scars are long healed, and my surgeons did such a good job that I look normal. But in the back of my mind there is always that reminder of my mortality, that if my cancer had gone undetected much longer, the outcome would not nearly be so good, that I might not be arguing with my now almost 14 year old about the length of her shorts or the need to do homework.

October is breast cancer awareness month, a time when cereal boxes wear pink ribbons. If this helps to raise more money for research in how to fight this disease, then I will happily eat pink cornflakes. If one woman gets a mammo because of reading this article, then everything I went through is worth it.

Kelly Shanahan is a South Lake Tahoe medical doctor, gynecologist, mom, and breast cancer survivor.

Victim in South Tahoe fight dies; no arrests ever made

By Kathryn Reed

The man involved in a South Lake Tahoe bar fight in May has died and still there has never been a single arrest stemming from the now fatal incident.

“Zippy passed away last night. His gramma Rose, my wife Debbie and myself were with him,” Wayne Penaranda told *Lake Tahoe News*. He died Oct. 17, about four hours after the trach was removed.

Derek Penaranda, better known to his family and friends as Zippy, was in town to celebrate his 30th birthday.



Derek "Zippy" Penaranda and Katie

Musselwhite had hoped to one day marry. Photo/Provided

That celebration took a tragic turn when a phone call came in the early hours of May 20 telling Debbie and Wayne Penaranda to get to Barton Memorial Hospital.

Penaranda didn't leave Mo's Place on his own. From Barton he went to Renown Medical Center in Reno. He then was moved to two specialty rehabilitation facilities in the Bay Area. But his insurance stopped covering him because he was not making progress, according to his dad.

Besides all the normal strife that comes with a loved one in such a serious medical state, Penaranda said it was hard on the family, who lives in Ripon in the Central family, to be more than 100 miles from Zippy. Eventually the younger Penaranda was at Rossmoor Care Facility in Walnut Creek – still 100 miles away.

On Aug. 20 he was "neurologically classified as permanently vegetative state," Pernaranda said of his son.

Pernaranda said he spoke with El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Joe Alexander on Sept. 28 "to cover some issues, including the possibility of this case turning into a homicide."

South Lake Tahoe police when questioned Thursday morning about why no arrests have been made, issued a press that says, "The circumstances surrounding Penaranda's death are still under investigation by the South Lake Tahoe Police Department. There is no information being released at this time concerning the possibility of criminal charges being filed, what those

charges would be, or when they would be filed.”

Think Pink: Early breast cancer detection saves lives

Publisher’s note: ***October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. People are affected by cancer in all sorts of ways and communities do various things to shine a spotlight on various cancers. This is the first of four stories about cancer.***

By Kathryn Reed

> *We had so many requests for mammograms in the next 30 days. It was incredible.*
>
> *A fellow went home from work, called on the telephone and said I am going to put my wife on the phone and she is going to make an appointment for her mammogram.*
>
> *In our imaging center where gals come to get mammograms it was unheard of to have men in that department. Today that department is full of support of their woman to have a mammogram. It has become socially acceptable.*

Those are the words of Melody Christenson as she told *Lake Tahoe News* about the evolution of Think Pink. She is on the NorCal Think Pink board of directors.



When Christenson was working for MD Imaging in 1997, she along with oncologist Mike Figueroa of Cancer Care Consultants (now Solace Cancer Care) and Carol Lake of the American Cancer Society created Think Pink.

Today is the 16th annual Think Pink Breast Cancer Awareness Day.

While the movement started in Redding, the cause has spread to be an international drive to educate women about the need for regular mammograms. The Redding people got so many inquiries from people outside the area wanting to dovetail off the Think Pink theme that a video was created so people could start their own event. The video and other info are on the NorCal Think Pink Breast Cancer Awareness website.

“We want to let women know there is no prevention. We don’t have any idea for the cause. Right now (it’s about) early detection, self-breast exams, if they feel a lump or bump, get to their doctor,” Figueroa told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Early detection is the best protection. That is the message.”

The trio came up with Think Pink as a contrast to the Susan G. Komen Foundation’s Denim Days that were going on 16 years ago. (Komen now is all about pink and not denim.) For one, Figueroa said helping promote Lee jeans had no correlation to breast cancer. Figueroa and Christenson said jeans are a regular clothing item in Redding so every day is denim day.

“In joking around we said if you really want someone to pay attention in Redding, they need to wear pink,” Christenson said. Cowboys and construction workers in pink turn people’s heads.

Today, someone not wearing pink is more likely to turn heads

in this city that is ground zero for Think Pink.

Figueroa as director of a cancer center also knew how many women were being diagnosed with stage 3 and 4 breast cancer.

“It was out of proportion with what I thought should be the real numbers,” he said. He knew with awareness, understanding and early mammograms that those numbers could be changed.

Figueroa said in the Redding area the number of women with stage 3 or 4 breast cancer dropped substantially in the first five years of Think Pink and after 10 years those numbers were “tumbling down”. He added if he were to see 50 cases of breast cancer this year, maybe two or three would be stage 4.

“It is one of the cancers you can make a significant difference in the mortality rate if you know about it early,” Christenson said of breast cancer.

There is a 98 percent cure rate for people detected with stage 1 or 2 breast cancer.

Sixteen years ago, the group started handing out 500 bags of promotional material about what women can and should do when it comes to having healthy breasts. Now 40,000 bags are distributed – with a cadre of volunteers starting before the break of dawn.

Bags are handed out in the counties of Shasta, Tehama, Trinity, Modoc and Siskiyou.

Money raised by NorCal Think Pink goes toward education and being able to put on Think Pink Day.

In the first year more than $1,000 was raised by having business owners donate $1 for every employee who wore pink – really wore pink, not just a ribbon.

The board of directors that is responsible for Think Pink works year-round. While today is the big event, activities

have been going on all month. After all, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The event culminates tonight with the Sundial Bridge being bathed in pink lights.

Breast cancer facts from the American Cancer Society and Centers for Disease Control and Protection:

• Excluding cancers of the skin, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, accounting for nearly 1 in 3 cancers diagnosed in U.S. women.

• Ninety-five percent of new cases and 97 percent of breast cancer deaths occurred in women 40 years of age and older.

• Since 1971, the American Cancer Society has awarded approximately $450.7 million in breast cancer research grants. The society is currently funding $114 million in breast cancer research through more than 200 research study grants.

• In 2008 (the most recent year numbers are available), 210,203 women were diagnosed with breast cancer; 40,589 women died from breast cancer.

Economic topics dominate South Tahoe council meeting

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe’s economic vitality is what Tuesday’s City

Council meeting was all about.



A variety of agenda items, while separate and not even lumped together, all focused on the city's future.

Carl Ribaudo with Strategic Marketing Group started the morning off Oct. 16 with a presentation about the economic impact of the South Shore Vision Plan.

Lauren Thomaselli with the city spoke mostly about the success of special events during the summer, but also some of the issues with putting them on.

How to proceed with area plans – which could be an economic stimulus – was resolved.

The last item of the day had to do with partnering with El Dorado County when it comes to developing a recreation plan for the area.

While not all the items required action, it was obvious recreation and entertainment are what the city wants to focus on. This council wants to be instrumental in crafting policy that would ideally be a stimulus for the area.

The five agree the state line cannot be a barrier, especially when tourists cross it without knowing what county or state they are in. But the electeds also are cognizant of wanting to do what's right by the people who put them in office.

Even Ribaudo said, "Why not call it the California Core?"

So often the Stateline area is referred to as the "casino corridor" when the reality is most of the changes that are proposed are in South Lake Tahoe. This is where Heavenly Village and the gondola for Heavenly Mountain Resort are, and

where one-day a project will be built across the street.

Ribaudo’s presentation in large part focused on lodging.

“We are out of sync with our competitors who have a smaller lodging inventory,” Ribaudo told the council.

Much has been said about how the South Shore, South Lake in particular, has more hotel rooms than it will ever fill. And many of those rooms come with a small price, which in turn drives the average daily room rate down. This dominoes into fewer tax dollars, mostly via transient occupancy tax.

When it comes to figuring out what to do on this side of the state line and at the Y, the council wants to simultaneously develop area plans. That’s the name of the new document the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency will require once the Regional Plan update is adopted.

The city and TRPA will share the costs of a planner to make this work. It’s still likely a consultant will need to be hired to do some of the more technical work.

That position is estimated to cost about $100,000. The money will come out of unassigned reserves.

It’s also possible that person could help the city as it develops a recreation master plan.

To that end, the city is contemplating jumping on El Dorado County’s coattails. The county has put up $10,000 for RO Anderson to assess the inventory of the county’s recreation components – public and private assets.

Coleen Shade, with the consulting firm, told the council her firm is also looking at the sphere of influence in regards to inventory, so places like Kahle are part of the equation.

The inventory tally should be done some time in November, if not sooner.

The city’s rec subcommittee of Councilmembers Hal Cole and Angela Swanson will be conferring with City Manager Nancy Kerry and possibly county folks to discuss further what the city could get out of partnering with the county in going forward with finding someone to come up with a recreation master plan.

In other action:

• A report on the rebar and concrete at the never-built convention center site shows it is structurally sound.