

League files suit over South Lake Tahoe's General Plan

By Kathryn Reed

It was a matter of when, not if the League to Save Lake Tahoe would sue South Lake Tahoe over its recently adopted General Plan.



On Friday the League filed a complaint challenging the city's General Plan that was approved in May. At that meeting the League's attorney threatened to sue if the city went through with approving a plan that was inconsistent with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's Regional Plan.

"It's not a surprise," City Manager Tony O'Rourke said of the complaint. "I think the council did the right thing. Unfortunately, this is the tactic the League has used historically. We have wanted to sit down with them, and hope we still can, but that process takes longer than filing a lawsuit."

In a statement released today, League Executive Director Rochelle Nason says, "From a planning perspective, the city is putting the cart before the horse, because it is prematurely trying to adopt a new General Plan before there is a new Regional Plan. This is a clear violation of the TRPA code of ordinances."

Although the city knowingly adopted items that are out of compliance with TPRA, there is essentially an asterisk by each of those items that prohibits such things like increased density from taking place until TRPA adopts its next Regional Plan – which is more than a year away.

"We knew they would probably sue us," O'Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News*. "They say they want to be partners, but then they revert to litigation. Actions speak louder than words."

O'Rourke stands by what the council approved – a document long in the works before he was hired nearly a year ago and the majority of the current council came on board last fall.

No injunction has been ordered by a judge, so the General Plan stands for now. But it is possible the League could ask a judge for the city not to implement certain aspects of the General Plan or all of it until a court rules on the entire case.

The League takes issue with the environmental document associated with the General Plan as well.

"We need plans that reduce traffic and boost restoration efforts," Nason said. "The urbanization proposed by the city will not only diminish the region's draw as a serene and beautiful place for residents and visitors, it also violates regional, state and federal environmental laws. The sensible solution would be for the city to wait until the TRPA adopts a new regional plan."

The General Plan cost the city more than \$775,000 to create. What a lawsuit will cost would be purely speculative at this point. How long the document will be tied up in court is too early to tell.

"Just because they filed a suit doesn't mean they are right," O'Rourke said.

Jazz pianist dazzles crowd; key to memorable weekend

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Few entertainers are better live than recorded. Diana Krall is one of those musicians.

Though her voice ranges from purring sex kitten to raspy lounge singer, it's her fingers that are most magical. The way they glide across those ivory keys – lingering, pounding, subtle, but always with such purpose. Oh, the music she creates – at times getting off the bench to put more oomph into the keys.

Jazz really is about the music, with the lyrics secondary.



Diana Krall is all bundled up to ward off the night chill at Harveys on June 18, as Robert Hurst plays the bass.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

It's that free flowing jam session of sorts that makes for songs not always sounding the same each time they are played. They often seamlessly flow into one another without a clear ending or beginning.

Krall returned to Lake Tahoe on June 18 after a four-year break from being part of the Harveys Outdoor Concert Series.

Accompanied by Anthony Wilson, who on guitar seemed like a cross between Leo Kottke and Eric Clapton; Kareem Riggins on drums; and Robert Hurst on bass, the quartet made for a formidable ensemble.

The most disappointing part was they only played for a little more than hour. A close second was having the carnival at Horizon as a backdrop for the audience. Besides the horrible visual, the noise from it was equally as irritating as the people in the row behind us talking loudly through most of the concert.

The 43-year-old Krall interacted a bit more with the audience compared to 2007.

"The amusement park screams remind me of my husband," Krall said of husband Elvis Costello.

Krall and Costello have been inspired by a variety of musicians, but both have a fondness for the 83-year-old Mose Allison. They have recorded his songs, with Krall singing "Stop this World" on Friday night. It is on her "The Girl in the Other Room" album from 2004.

And it was the Mose Allison Trio that opened for Krall.

"He really is one of my heroes," Krall said of Allison.

While many could be overheard asking who Allison was, one woman in the eighth row said, "I've been waiting to see him since the 1970s."

The trio started with a classic syncopated jazz beat. This is what makes jazz so hard to do well – it's off beat.

His lyrics are quirky, like, "Your mind is on vacation and your mouth is working overtime."

Allison says his prime inspiration in high school was Nat Cole. Cole is also a big part of Krall's music. She put out an album in 1996 dedicated to the Nat King Cole Trio.

At Harveys she performed a song inspired by Cole, as well one of his originals.

As the sun turned a brilliant orange on this chilly night, the Allison trio wrapped up a nearly 40-minute performance to mixed appreciation from the audience.

After all, it was Krall they came to see. While the parking lot of a casino is not the ideal place to listen to any jazz artist, especially one of Krall's caliber, it works. Though I still think the South Shore Room would be a better venue for her.

On this mid-June night it was downright cold. Krall at times sat on her hands to warm her fingers. Dressed in black leather jacket and red scarf, her blonde hair blew in the gentle breeze.

For some of her more somber songs like "Abandoned Masquerade", the carnival behind her was an unfortunate juxtaposition, not to mention at times it drowned out Krall's vocals.

But, still, she held her own. She is clearly getting better with age.

And ideally as the concert series progresses, there won't be any more carnivals or cold nights.

Making a night of it

Staying at the hotel made for a quick getaway to a warm environment. Many others had the same idea as hundreds flowed inside to Harveys after the show.

We had arrived in the late afternoon to make it more than a crash pad. Lounging by the pool finally made it seem like summer had arrived.

Kids running by, telling mom they wanted to go to Sno-Flake made me wonder if these were other locals or tourists who had discovered the best place on the South Shore for French fries.

Having been on the convention center floor plenty of times before, I didn't know the pool and fitness center were there as well. A bar is poolside. I would have fired the bartender if he were my employee. A guest (not one of us – we just overheard it) asked him how he was doing, "I'm bored," he said. Not good. And he had no creative ideas for a fun summer drink, so we stuck with beer.

But it was a great place to relax in the comfy lounge chairs. The pool is warm, but we opted to be warmer by going in the hot tub.

We had dinner reservations in Round Hill at Capisce? – the first, and last, time I need to eat there. What is it with lousy service on the South Shore? The wine was poured so it chugged out of the bottle and splashed on the tablecloth, our glasses were never filled up, the olive oil-balsamic vinegar mixture was placed by me so Sue couldn't reach it, and the used forks from our salad (with mine tasting like a vat of vinaigrette was dumped on it) being put on the tablecloth instead of being given new ones.

I expect more out of all restaurants.

Sue liked her ravioli. My veggie pasta dish was OK.

Back at Harveys, being on the 11th floor meant having a great

view of the lake from bed. Waking up to the sun hitting Mount Tallac was stunning. So much snow; it looks like the cross may last until next winter.

As the morning wears on, the clouds dissipate and a bluebird day takes hold.

Boats of all sizes slide across Lake Tahoe. It is mesmerizing to watch.

Out the window to the left below us is the pool. It's morning and a few guys are catching rays. Raising my eye the Heavenly Village and the mountain beyond it are visible – still with lots of snow.

While the concrete and rebar from the stalled convention center project are obviously in view, the natural scenery from this vantage point distract me so I don't notice the hole.

It's check out time and my stomach is gurgling. It's also Father's Day. We head to the original Red Hut – my Dad's favorite breakfast place. He insisted going there every time he and Mom visited. We toast with coffee – wishing he were there. He died in April 2010.

The nearly 24-hour getaway ends on a great note. The Red Hut's service is impeccable (and is never anything less) and the food delicious.

Future Harveys Outdoor concerts:

July 10 – Alison Krauss and Union Station

July 16 – Lionel Ritchie

July 20 – Soundgarden with The Mars Volta

July 27 – Slightly Stoopid with Rebelution + Shwayze

July 29 – Lady Antebellum with Troy Olsen

July 30 – Steve Miller Band with Dave Mason

Aug. 9 – Phish

Aug. 10 – Phish

Aug. 13 – Big Four

Aug. 19 – Miranda Lambert with Little Big Town

Sept. 10 – Sammy Hagar & The Wabos.

Susan Wood contributed to this story.

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Cedar House hotel is more than a place to sleep

By Kathryn Reed

TRUCKEE – It's the perfect trifecta – food, adventure and lodging.

The Cedar House Sport Hotel offers all of this to guests, making for an uncomplicated stay and a new twist on an all-inclusive resort. It's more than the average dining experience, more than the average outdoor adventure, and more than the average hotel.

Opened in 2006 by Patty and Jeff Baird, the Cedar House is about a mile from downtown Truckee. Inspired by their time spent in European sport hotels, they wanted to replicate that experience. With the acquisition last month of adventure company Tahoe Trips & Trails, the Bairds are able to be that

all-in-one property they dreamed of creating.



The Cedar
House Sport
Hotel in
Truckee has it
all.

Photos/Kathryn
Reed

While people don't have to stay at the hotel to partake in one of the adventures, especially since trips are all over the West, the hotel does make for a perfect launching pad to the outdoors.

Some trips are guided hikes, some combine food and the outdoors. And if a suggestion of where to go is what you want, that's free for the asking.

Kayaking and river trips are available this time of year, with cross country skiing and snowshoeing available in winter. This barely touches on what's available.

Patty Baird says the three main reasons to acquire the travel company were so they could market to the adventure traveler, attract corporate businesses interested in team building, and to offer guided hikes into the wilderness. The U.S. Forest Service limits the number of permits allowed for businesses like this, with the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit not allowing any. The Cedar House goes into the Tahoe National Forest, which Truckee is next to.

But adventure is relative. Across the street from the hotel is a regional park that offers disc golf, and within walking distance is a golf course. Northstar-at-Tahoe, Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley are a quick drive for skiers.

Getting outside

A week ago Sue and I spent a night at the property – now wishing our get-away was longer. We designed our mountain biking adventure, but left most of the culinary experience up to Chef Jacob Burton.

With hitting snow on the Pole Creek trail (about 7 miles south of Truckee off Highway 89), maybe we should have asked the experts where to go. Nonetheless, our ride through the woods got our heart rate up as we kept going uphill. We found the route in Ken Castle's "Tahoe" guidebook.

It's definitely a scenic area we'll get back to.

Not wanting to have too much for lunch, but wanting to act like we were on vacation – if just for a day – we drove to the River Ranch at the base of Alpine Meadows. The patio there is one of the best on the water eating experiences in the whole Lake Tahoe area.

The Truckee River is roaring by, the sun is shining and the drinks are flowing. Sue's complaint about her CoCo Mai Tai was too much alcohol. I would have ordered another Tiki Torch if I wasn't driving and heading to taste wine as the next stop.

Oh, and the \$2.95 basket of fries is tasty.

Next stop was the Truckee River Winery – which boasts of being the highest and coldest winery in the country. Russ Jones has been making wine since the 1980s, with the tasting room open for about 18 months.

The winery is walking distance from the Cedar House. Stella, the restaurant at the hotel, sells Truckee River Winery wines

and the winery sells Stella's yummy breads.

The grapes are from throughout Northern and Central California, with all the winemaking and bottling done in Truckee.

We now have some bottles to drink this summer.

Eating at Stella

While Stella – the restaurant on site – is designed for hotel guests, locals often are found at one of the indoor or outdoor tables. It's open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday from 5:30-9:30pm.

Burton is of the belief that what's on the menu should reflect what's in season. So, you may have liked one dish this month, but in the fall it may not be on the menu based on the ingredients not being in season.

"Everything is completely inspired by the ingredients," Burton says, showing the garden that has just started now that the snow has stopped falling. "Our concept is unique. I don't like to stick to a single cuisine. I don't like to label it."

Burton is into sharing his love for food. Recipes are online, including videos, and a place to ask questions about cooking.

The name Stella means star in Italian. The Bairds chose it for this reason as well as a restaurant by that name was on the property years ago.

Paul, our waiter, starts us off with slices of fresh made rosemary-olive and sourdough breads. I could have easily filled up on bread.

Sue's tomato bisque has her barely able to set her spoon down, while my salad is refreshing.

Using what's in season was clearly what Burton had in mind by

making a bolognaise out of Bing cherries.

“They look like meatballs to us,” Burton said.

Before that night I didn’t like cooked cherries. Now, at least for this dish, I’m a convert. Oh my goodness, I wish I didn’t clean my plate so I could have had leftovers. To top it off, the fettuccine was clearly homemade. But the noodles were thin and delicate, adding a texture not often found in pasta dishes.

Sue enjoyed her halibut, raving about how flaky and tender it was.

For dessert we shared, though I think I had more than half, of the goat cheese cheesecake. I’ve only had cream cheese cheesecakes before, so this lemony concoction was quite a pleasurable experience.

The lodging experience

Walking across the parking lot, we ascend the stairs to our room. First, though, we take in the ambiance of the cedar exterior of the hotel lighted at night. We really do feel like we’re in Tahoe with all the wood and unobtrusive lighting.

Cedar House is a green hotel, and while that is what got it headlines five years ago, Baird admits it’s not a primary reason people choose the hotel.

“Green is totally incidental for bookings. People like it, but it’s not a driving force why people book,” Baird said. “But it helps us with our message.”

It also helps with lower utility bills.

From our spacious second-story balcony we look over the living roof on the main building. Water drains from the roof to gutters that supply water for landscaping.

The room is contemporary, but not austere. Simple things like instead of wasting space with a closet, a rack of sorts in the corner allows guests to hang clothes. Instead of an uncomfortable backboard to lean against in bed, the back doesn't require a pillow.

Things guests won't readily notice are solar tinted windows, no incandescent lighting is used, and the hot water system is tankless. This barely touches on the green features of the hotel.

A filling, yummy buffet breakfast back at Stella is part of an overnight stay. Dogs are allowed in most rooms, a bar is in the main area near comfy seating and a fireplace, and a hot tub is out back.

Cedar House Sport Hotel is the perfect get-away – my only complaint is it was too short.

Partial list of events:

July 16: The Forgotten Feast with Hank Shaw, author of "Hunt, Gather, Cook: Finding the Forgotten Feast," is a celebration of wild plants and mushrooms, game and seafood. It begins with cocktails and a book signing by Shaw at 5:30pm and is followed by a five-course tasting menu inspired by Shaw's book.

July 17-21 and Aug. 7-11: The Active Gourmand Tour is a four-day adventure for hikers who love to cook.

July 23 and Aug. 20: Cooking demonstrations on both days. Summer canapés and appetizers on July 23 features the basic composition of bite sized hors d'oeuvres, garnish and plating with four wines from California. Composed salads on Aug. 20 in an opportunity to learn to mix flavorful vinaigrettes and select specialty greens.

Aug. 18-21: A photography and hiking adventure.

For more information:

The hotel

Activities

Culinary experiences

Telephone: (530) 582.5655

Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 along the West Shore. Pass Squaw Valley. Before hitting Truckee, turn right on West River Road. Turn right on Bridge Street, this turns into Brockway Road. Hotel is on the right at 10918 Brockway. Or, take Highway 50 west up Spooner Summit, turn left on Highway 28. In Kings Beach, turn right on Highway 267. Turn left on Brockway Road. Hotel will be on the left.

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Surge in graffiti adding to South Tahoe's rundown look

By Kathryn Reed

Art isn't usually the first word business owners or residents think of when they see graffiti marring structures.

While tagging is nothing new on the South Shore, it has been cropping up in more visible locations in the past six weeks.

Adidas was hit in early May just below the roofline, with taggers covering up a good part of the high wall along Highway 50. It took several weeks for it to be painted over.



Graffiti on
the back of
the Miller's
Outpost.

Photos/Kathryn
Reed

A large tag still remained Thursday afternoon on the back of the old Miller's Outpost with the word "kind" and the number 420 in a circle dotting the I. The number represents California Senate Bill 420 regarding medical marijuana cards. And April 20 is known as an international pot smoking day.

Some businesses do patch jobs to cover up the graffiti; others like at the Y Factory Stores do a better job so there is no evidence of the vandalism.

The cumulative cost to businesses to clean up after the vandals is unknown. But it definitely is an unbudgeted expense.

"It's not just the Y, but there it has been the most brazen and more public," Detective Nick Carlquist said.

Carlquist is South Lake Tahoe Police Department's point man for gang and graffiti activity. He works odd hours – much like the taggers. He's not in a uniform most of the time – much like the taggers who don't want to be easily identified.

His is a world where people don't like to talk. While interviewing people about all the tagging on the interior and exterior of the old C&M Lodge on Bonanza Street, one guy said he wouldn't name names for fear of retaliation from the gang

members allegedly involved.

Taggers don't stop at the state line. Law enforcement believes some of the same people are working that area – at the casinos, and the run down, closed motels on Cedar Avenue. Nearly every pillar at the bankrupt convention center site is tagged.

Experience counts

Carlquist has been with SLTPD for about three years, having come from the Hollister department. Even when departments like the K-9 unit were cut there, the gang unit stayed intact.



Taggers like large areas where they can leave their mark.

His experience in these matters helped him get the job in Tahoe.

What he noticed when he arrived is not a lot of talk going on between neighboring jurisdictions. Now gang investigation meetings are taking place on a regular basis for detectives of various agencies to share info. That wasn't happening a year ago.

When Carlquist asked about South Tahoe's "gang registry" his bosses had no idea what he was talking about.

The department now has that registry which is allowed per a

California law passed years ago. It works in somewhat the same as the sex offender registry. Once a gang member is out of prison they must register with the law enforcement agency where they reside.

But there are no limitations of where they can live or with whom. However, it gives cops an address for at least a one-time gang member, if not current.

While Carlquist won't give the exact number of people on the registry, he said it's high for the size of city South Lake Tahoe is. But it has become a tool for law enforcement.

"It has proved to be a deterrent," Carlquist said of the registry. "About 95 percent of registrants are not repeat offenders. It has helped some get out of a gang and some have moved to another town."

Who is doing the tagging?

As is tradition in Tahoe, the taggers come out as the snow melts. Winter isn't a big season for them.

It's not that there are necessarily more of them, but there are more places to vandalize. Carlquist has noticed the sagging economy in South Tahoe has left more vacant buildings – commercial and residential – for taggers to use as a canvas.



Brick is hard
to restore
after it's
been

vandalized.

People aren't at the buildings so there is more opportunity to get away with the crime.

He sees the graffiti being a mix of taggers who think what they are doing is creating art and gang members marking their territory. Either way, it's criminal activity. When these men and boys, that is the predominant gender, are caught they are often charged with vandalism, burglary, breaking and entering, and trespassing.

About two-thirds of the crimes are committed on commercial sites, with the other third being a mix of residential and city property like pump houses and street signs. Businesses are easier to hit because usually they aren't occupied at night.

The culprits don't fit into a nice profile. It's all races, ages and genders. With gang members, oftentimes the affiliation is passed from parent to child or sibling to sibling.

They are a bit like male dogs, though, in needing to leave their mark without any regard to the property they are doing it on.

In 2009 and 2010 the Surenos hit the Ski Run Boulevard area, putting out a roll call with all the monikers the individual members go by. While this helps law enforcement put together a profile, those monikers don't always stay the same. Some have four or five ways to sign a tag.

This gang also has been known as the Southside 13.

South Tahoe also has Nortenos. N is the 14th letter of the alphabet and represents northerners.

With the convictions in three Cyclones gang members in 2010

for the 2009 stabbing of a South Tahoe teen, it basically wiped out that group.

Carlquist doesn't believe the gangs mentioned above are responsible for the spike in graffiti at the Y. He won't say anything more until arrests are made.

With the South Shore being along the triangle of Reno, Carson City and Sacramento, the area has a lot of transient gang members. Some stop a while, some pass through.

Drug sales, trafficking and transporting weapons are common.

When it comes to taggers not in a gang, it's all about being creative.

"It's a mindset thing. Taggers really think they are doing artwork. They say 'we are great artists and want to show the world'," Carlquist said. "They say the world is their canvas and there is no such thing as private property."

These people know about the websites touting which tips on spray paint cans will do what, what markers are good, how to tag or bomb or scratch.

And taggers in Tahoe don't just need a wall. They hit granite rocks and bike trails.

Proactive possibilities

Property owners can make their buildings less attractive to taggers by using motion sensor lighting, cutting vegetation away so taggers can't duck behind it, and putting up chain link fences instead of wood so there isn't a surface to tag.

It's creating defensible space to stop would-be taggers.

Heavenly Village rarely has graffiti because security officers are constantly roaming the area and lighting plays a role in deterring that kind of behavior.



Dumpsters are a common item to be tagged.

Carlquist recently met with security for that center to talk about gang awareness so they understand indicators.

The city has a graffiti abatement program to provide some assistance with cleaning up tagged buildings and structures. But call officers before painting over the crime scene.

Parents and teachers can pay attention to what might seem like innocent doodling when in fact it's miniature graffiti on their notebooks or in their rooms – sketches possibly before hitting the streets in a bigger way.

Carlquist wants to talk to concerned adults about whether something might be an indication a person is in a gang or potential tagger. He may be reached at (530) 542.6121.

He wants to do more outreach with the community and is hoping grants the police department is applying for will pay for that. In the mean time, when he's not out searching for the bad guys, Carlquist is doing what he can to talk to local groups.

"Enforcement and prevention are the two important points," Carlquist said to ridding the area of graffiti and those responsible for it.

Judge sides with state; Kindertown to close

By Kathryn Reed

The last class of preschoolers may have graduated from Kindertown.

Kindertown Preschool and Daycare is being forced to lock its doors at the end of the day June 24.



Maria Barrows-Crist hands Danika Yuzbick her preschool diploma June 17.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

While most of Friday morning was about proud parents taking pictures of their little ones dressed in pink and blue caps and gowns, a meeting afterward had their faces turn almost ashen.

Maria Barrows-Crist read a letter to them and then handed each a copy. It talks about her day in court, the future, who they can write letters to, and suggestions for where to take their children if, in fact, this South Lake Tahoe institution does lock its doors for good.

Barrows-Crist has been fighting the state Department of Social Services since September 2009.

Just when she gets over one hurdle, another is put in front of her.

"I'm not perfect, I don't do everything right, but I'm not a danger," she told parents June 17.



Parents
receive the
news June 17
Kindertown
must close.

The state believes otherwise. The biggest issue is a child was able to get out the gate at the center and wander onto the walk along Highway 50. The state has no leniency for this child having a history being an escape artist at other locations.

Barrows-Crist won a stay in February, with the idea she would get her day in court again. With her lawyer Mike McLaughlin and his office trying endlessly to get the court to set a briefing schedule, time kept passing.

On June 2 a management conference was set of June 3. From there the June 16 date was set. Attorney Kara Thiel represented Barrows-Crist in El Dorado County Superior Court in Placerville on Thursday before Judge Warren Stracener because McLaughlin was out of town.

The thinking was Stracener would extend the stay, allowing Kindertown to stay open, and a date set to hear the evidence. Instead, Stracener said close and you can have your say later if you want.

McLaughlin, who called *Lake Tahoe News* from the road, said he isn't giving up. He plans to spend the weekend researching options.



Maria Barrows-Crist helps preschoolers to their seats
June 17.

"I hope to get before him Wednesday and convince him of the error of his ways," McLaughlin said of the judge. "I think it would be hard for (Barrows-Crist) to keep up the fight once the doors are closed."

Barrows-Crist is unable to hold back tears on the phone or in person as she talks about the situation.

"This is not just my business. This is my life. These families are my family," she told *Lake Tahoe News* as she arrived at the center Friday.

One thing that might save her is the buyer who is interested in the 30-plus-year-old facility. If the business trades ownership, the doors would stay open.

Recreation advocates take sides on ballot measure

By Kathryn Reed

If an umpire had been in the room, several “players” would have been ejected.

And it was a good thing no children were there Thursday night, even though the subject matter was recreation. These grown men don’t all play nice together.

What brought them to the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Complex was to discuss Measure S and the possibility of changing it into Measure R. What got them riled up was if voters should be asked to change how the dollars are divvied up and how the dollars should be allocated.



John Upton and
Norma Santiago
get an earful
at the June 16
meeting about
rewriting
Measure S.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

South Shore voters on the California side approved Measure S in 2000 to provide money to maintain future bike trails, create ball fields, and build an ice rink – in that order. Instead, the order was reversed. The ice rink is done, one ball field is in, and little of the bike trail funds are spent because no asphalt is being laid.

The ball field proponents, led by John Cefalu and Measure S's lone paid staff member John Upton, tried in 2009 to get more money out of the measure for their preference and failed with Measure B. This time they brought the bike community to the table in hopes altering the measure's language to allow for old trails to be renovated would sweeten the pot.

"Little League is trying to get more money. I will very much be opposed. I think the funds should go to what was originally voted for," Jerome Evans, a former city recreation commissioner, said. (The only current rec commissioner at the June 16 meeting was Jonathan Moore.)

Evans and Cefalu traded verbal jabs. Evans was confrontational as he spoke. Cefalu and Upton were not always gentlemen-like, either. Cefalu eventually left the meeting when it came time for Evans to speak again.

Before he departed, Cefalu said based on the opinions of the dozen people in the room, he didn't see Measure R having the two-thirds votes needed to pass.

He suggested the bike people get their own measure on the ballot to raise funds for their cause.

The reality is what's left to be collected through 2030 from property owners at a rate of \$18/year for single family residences and what's in the bank from Measure S is not enough to take care of what voters thought they were paying for. Cyclists and baseball advocates agree on that much.

However, one person described it as everyone wanting a piece

of the pie, with Measure R creating a smaller piece for bike trails. And it ultimately would no matter how people sugar coat it.

Upton and Cefalu lobbied hard that doing nothing is sticking with the status quo. For them, and the ball field gang, it means not being able to make the improvements they want.

The status quo for cyclists means the only bike trails that would be improved are new ones when they need it.

It's the pot of money being set aside for those improvements that ball field advocates want to get their hands on.

Cyclists contend while the money for new trails is stagnant, one day the fiscal situation will change and those dollars voters approved for their maintenance will be needed.

The next step is the recreation joint powers authority will meet June 30. Because the meeting as been noticed to be at Lake Tahoe Airport at 9am, it will start there, and then be moved to the library on Rufus Allen Boulevard because of a conflict in scheduling. So attendees just need to be at the library about 9:15am.

The three members of the JPA (El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago, South Lake Tahoe City Councilman Hal Cole and Tahoe Paradise Park board member Deborah Henderson) will be asked to vote on a resolution to create Measure R and the November ballot language.

When asked Thursday by more than one attendee if any of this could be changed, Upton said an emphatic no. Santiago said the politically and legally correct answer of yes. A "no" would imply a decision had been made – which at a minimum violates the Brown Act. And it would be political suicide to admit to making a decision before a public hearing is conducted.

Santiago told *Lake Tahoe News* for the JPA board to consider

amending the language of Measure R the verbiage would need to be presented in the necessary legalese at the June 30 meeting.

But the truth is the ballot language does not need to be finalized until July 29, so the JPA could schedule a special meeting to create some other iteration of Measure S if they so desired.

Santiago took issue with the allegation rewriting Measure S has not been transparent, citing the May 5 meeting that resulted in Measure R being tweaked.

But the truth is Kathay Lovell, as South Tahoe mayor last summer, approached the Bicycle Coalition, saying a compromise to amending Measure S needed to be found.

Talks between the Coalition's Ty Polastri, Upton and Cefalu started earlier this year. The first time the idea of altering S was brought to the public's awareness was at an April South Lake Tahoe City Council meeting.

By that time, the language for R was written. No public meetings were conducted before then to get input from anyone. It was all behind the scenes finagling by youth baseball leaders to get it to that point.

On a side note, the Cefalu family is involved in this in another way. Even though no money from Measure S goes to the ice rink operation, it was South Shore property owners who built it via the tax assessment. The city sought bids from people and entities wanting to run the rink, with Chris Cefalu – son of John Cefalu – being the frontrunner to get that bid in July when it comes to the City Council. The proposal was submitted by Tahoe Sports and Entertainment, owned by Van Oleson and Cefalu.

The is proposed Resolution and this is the proposed ballot measure.

Sacramento turmoil keeps budgets downstream in flux

By Kathryn Reed

Now there's a state budget, now there's not. This fiscal gamesmanship California lawmakers are playing may ensure they keep getting a salary, but it is creating an eraser hole in ledgers up and down the state.

Lake Tahoe Unified and Lake Tahoe Community College boards of education on June 14 discussed their respective budgets. Both plan to adopt so-called final budgets June 28. But in reality they are placeholder budgets until the state approves a budget.



June 15 was the legal deadline for lawmakers to approve a state budget. It was done so on controversial party lines. The following day Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed the Democrats' plan – even though he is one of them.

Brown said what landed on his desk contained “legally questionable maneuvers, costly borrowing and unrealistic savings.”

State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, and Assemblywoman Beth Gaines, R-Roseville, who represent Tahoe in the Legislature, voted no on the budget.

LTUSD and LTCC had found ways to work within the confines of what Brown proposed in his May revise.

But what the Dems put forth Wednesday would have thrown at

least K-12 CFOs scrambling to find money.

“It is unfortunate that the state has chosen to shift the burden to fund state education obligations – forcing districts to use precious limited dollars to borrow money – to meet unavoidable expenses for salaries and operations,” LTUSD CFO Deb Yates told *Lake Tahoe News* before the governor’s veto.

While it’s a wait-and-see mode right now, it’s like a fiscal (and bit of an emotional) yo-yo that educators, cities and counties are subjected to.

The budget lawmakers came up with would have eliminated redevelopment agencies. Placer County adopted a five-year redevelopment plan in May, while South Lake Tahoe transferred most of its Redevelopment Agency holdings to the city.

Marc Sabella, director of fiscal services at LTCC, presented options to the board Tuesday night for being able to keep from bouncing checks. At the May 24 meeting the board was briefed on possibly needing a TRAN (Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note) to keep the cash flow going.

The board decided this week to hold off on that idea and instead consider borrowing from reserves or a local bank or possibly some other scenario. This is because a TRAN could cost \$65,000 and other options would be nil or significantly less.

The money is needed because the state stops paying its bills if a budget is not in place. The fiscal year for the state, LTUSD and LTCC starts July 1.

On Thursday, Sabella told *Lake Tahoe News* June 16 just before Brown vetoed the budget, "Only when all parties agree to the state budget, does it effect the college. We will have to wait for a completed state budget before there are any changes here."

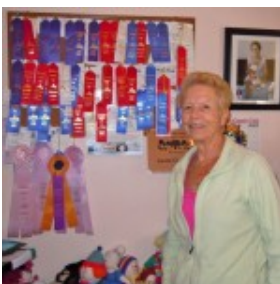
When that day will come remains a mystery.

Fair more than animals; Tahoe craftspeople win awards

By Kathryn Reed

A long Tahoe winter might be responsible for the number of blue ribbons awarded at this year's El Dorado County Fair to people living in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Jonnie Crawford entered six items in the knitting category and came away with six ribbons.



Jonnie
Crawford needs
another board
to hang her
knitting
ribbons.

Photos/Kathryn

Reed

Jon Helman submitted two needle art pieces and was rewarded with two ribbons.

Though neither South Shore resident requires bad weather to work on their crafts, both admit a little more time was spent on projects this winter because indoor activities were more fun than outdoor on many days.

Everyone may see their handiwork at the fair, which starts today and goes through Sunday. The entry fee for Tahoe residents has been reduced to \$2 each day.

Crawford is a veteran of winning – and knitting. She has been entering items in the local fair for more than a decade. Each year she has won something. The blue, red and white ribbons along with best of show fill a bulletin board in one room of her South Tahoe home. She learned to knit from her grandmother when she was in kindergarten, and has shared the hobby with her daughter and granddaughter.

Helman, a teacher at Sierra House Elementary School, started doing cross-stitch in 1989 – partly as a way to pass the time in winter. Pointing to how former Rams defensive lineman Rosey Grier picked up needlepoint as a way to calm his fear of flying, Helman said he is secure having a hobby that is not common for men.

Helman did not know he won two first-places until contacted by *Lake Tahoe News* this week. His best until now for needle art was third place. (With a friend, he has previously earned two seconds for winemaking.)

“I got a lot of sewing done this year with the miserable weather,” Helman said.

Half of his pieces are original, half come from a pattern.

"Some take a couple years to finish. They are real complex," Helman said.

The one he just started has 66,100 stitches.

"It's going to take a while," Helman said.

This is the fifth year Crawford has been awarded best of show. Each class is judged and awarded first, second and third. Then all the first places are judged, with the winner being awarded best of show.



Jonnie
Crawford
designs knit
fingerless
gloves.

Crawford was in Placerville on June 10 for the judging. Even though she is a veteran competitor, she admits to having butterflies in her stomach as the judge inspects her work.

"She judges the inside and the outside," Crawford said. "She looks to see if it is practical."

This year Crawford received three firsts, two seconds, a third, and the best of show. She entered three sweaters, a pair of socks, a hat, and shawl.

She was shocked the socks won. She would have voted for the lace shawl.

A bookshelf in the Crawford living room is devoted to knitting

books. Some patterns, though, are original. Her daughter designed the winning socks, while Crawford did the work.

Crawford and Helman share their work with friends and family. Much of Crawford's husband and children's wardrobes consists of her sweaters. For Helman, a unique gift to new parents is a birth announcement – in needlework.

While both would like to make some money off their creativity, the reality, they say, is it's cost prohibitive.

Crawford said with the wool yarn manufactured in Norway and Great Britain she orders online, plus labor a sweater may cost \$500.

Helman sold one of his pieces for \$400. He thinks he made \$1 an hour, plus matting and framing.

They create for the love it – and to pass the time during a long a Tahoe winter.

"It's something to keep me sane," Crawford said of her knitting.

Thrift store reinvests profits back into community

By Kathryn Reed

It was getting to the point that the store looked more used than the items on the shelves.

Fourteen years after the Attic Thrift Store moved to its Lodi Avenue location, it finally got a thorough spring-cleaning. It

was so intense the shop was closed for six weeks before reopening last month.



Pat Lacey is in charge of house wares at the Attic Thrift Store. Photos/Kathryn Reed

A fresh coat of paint complements the new flooring, curtains and display cases.

“It was getting pretty raunchy,” says Pat Lacey, one of the nearly 125 volunteers who make up the Barton Auxiliary.

The auxiliary, which is in its 51st year, opened the South Lake Tahoe thrift store in 1961. Through the years it has raised millions of dollars. In the early days this money is where the payroll came from for the doctors at Barton Memorial Hospital.

The \$315,000 the group raised in 2010 is going to pay for the \$800,000 expansion and renovation of the Barton Community Clinic.

The bulk of what the auxiliary raises is from the thrift store.

During the recession donations have not tapered off, but the number of people shopping has shot up.

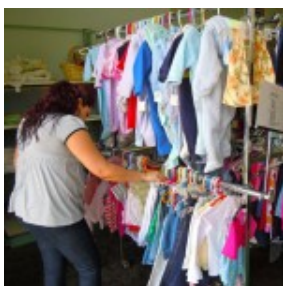


The Attic is cleaner and less cluttered.

"We have some really nice stuff. Some things from stores are brand new," Lacey said while sitting on one of the couches that is for sale. "The celebrity golf tournament (last year) donated T-shirts. Harrah's donated shirts, too."

A designer dress with the original \$159 price tag came in recently. It sold for a few dollars within minutes. Pricing is consistent for a particular item; it's not based on the age or wear and tear of it.

Children's clothing is popular because little ones outgrow their clothes so fast that most of these items look like they have not been worn much.



Baby clothes sell well.

Plenty of shorts are on racks now. Jeans are something the Attic seems to keep a steady supply of.

No clothes with holes are put out – and workers would rather

they were never donated. Children's clothing gets washed on site, but not any of the other garments. Nelta Brown handles all the baby stuff.

Several straw hats with red, white and blue piping around them have been donated. Odds are they'll be snatched up for a Fourth of July party.

Lacey is responsible for the house wares area. She's sold a ton of canning jars lately. As she straightens the shelves, she makes sure the Father's Day mugs are front and center.

Although the prices on items are relatively inexpensive, most days the Attic has a sale. On Friday it was half off on DVDs. There's even a free table out front. Things that have been in the store awhile often end up there, along with dinnerware with a chip in it.

Workers know some people shop for deals and then resale the item at a higher price.

"If they want to make money, we don't care. It's free to us," Lacey explained. She relayed the story of a guy buying a \$4 piece of artwork and selling it for \$150.

Most of the workers are from the auxiliary – so they are working for free. The store manager, Henry Suarez, is paid. So are a few of the guys who help with sorting and doing the heavy lifting.

The Attic is open Monday through Friday, 10am to 4pm and Saturdays 10am to 2pm. For information, call (530) 541.3378.

Outdoor upgrades turn Bijou into destination play area

By Kathryn Reed

Scrambling onto rocks, rolling around in grass, throwing a Frisbee, sitting at tables with friends, watching trees blow in the gentle wind. Life at Bijou Community School is a whole lot different now.

Dirt, and more often mud, is what the South Tahoe elementary school students played in. Not anymore.



First-graders
Aidan Anton
and Martin
Valdez play on
one of the new
boulders at
Bijou
Community
School.

Photos/Kathryn
Reed

With the force and determination of parent Kathy Haven behind the project, she corralled the necessary people, businesses and officials to make this a reality.

The nearly two-year project culminated June 9 with students

patiently gathered on the blacktop listening to all the adults talk before they were allowed to run to the grassy field.

As a bit of a test, they were given treats, with the lesson being – use the bear boxes for the trash. With no plastic wrappers visible by the time they headed back to their classrooms Thursday afternoon, these Tahoe kids understand about not creating garbage bears.

Principal Karen Tinlin expects fewer students will be in her office with scraped knees and elbows now that they have a softer surface to play on.

Superintendent Jim Tarwater said practically the first day on the job six years ago Tinlin was complaining about the dirt in the back of the school.

Dale Rise was a bit overwhelmed looking over how this dirt field he grew up next to is now a showcase of sorts. His construction company donated significantly to the project.

The school district came up with half of the \$50,000 expense through Measure G bond dollars, while the community came through with the rest. Big George Ventures, Tahoe Asphalt, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Tahoe Sand and Gravel, Barton Health Foundation, Bijou PTA, Adams Concrete Design, Dale Rise Construction, Signs of Tahoe, Tahoe Bear Box Co., De Celle Memorial Tahoe Relay, Ed Cook Tree Service, Aspen Hollow, Western Turf, Earth and Stone Landscaping, Fuller Construction and Cafecitos either gave cash, supplies or reduced their prices to make this a reality.

“It has been amazing how our community has contributed. For example, when I called Tahoe Asphalt about their big boulder sale, they asked how many we needed. When I said about 40, they came back with ‘we’ll just give them to you’,” Haven said. “It was amazing.”

Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe was another huge component of

getting this project completed. They along with parents and other volunteers like the entire Tahoe Derby Dames team finished putting everything in on June 4 – in the rain.

Twenty-three trees have been planted – mostly aspens and red maple. Five came last year, and seven more are on order.

Not all of the 12 picnic tables have been installed. Some hardware needs to arrive. One table is ADA compliant.

“I’m very happy to see this park for the community,” special education teacher Charna Silver said. “The fact that it’s attached to our school is a bonus.”

This is the only park between Rufus Allen Boulevard and Stateline.

The soccer-size field could be used in the summer for tournaments.

Between the blacktop and the field are the play structures. Haven’s next goal is to have exercise stations on the far corners of the field.

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