

South Shore women ready to rally to be heard

By Kathryn Reed

"We walk in peaceful resistance to the negative rhetoric of the past election cycle."

That is the message a group of South Shore women want to convey as they march Jan. 21 in solidarity with the thousands, if not millions, of other women throughout the United States on that day.

A woman in Hawaii initiated the Washington march after the Nov. 8 election. From there, people in communities in nearly every state have been organizing marches to take place on that Saturday. The impetus is to give a voice to women's issues that many believe have been trampled upon by President elect-Donald Trump.

The marches will occur the day after he becomes president and takes up residence in the White House.

Locally, it was Del Laine, Brooke Laine and Vicki Gonzales who spearheaded the event. Now about 20 people are behind the Tahoe brigade. Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe is the financial backer.

"This is not a demonstration just for women. It is for unity; it is for tolerance. It's also recognizing we are paying attention and we are going to stay educated locally and act nationally when necessary," Brooke Laine told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The local march could be the only bi-state event in the United States. Organizers plan to convene in the parking lot at Hard Rock in Stateline, walk along Highway 50 to Lakeview Commons and gather there as a group.

Two women of different generations are expected give short speeches. The proclamation the group came up with will likely be read as well.

The procession will start at 11am no matter the weather. Sponsors are expecting between 200 and 500 people – and not just women. Other organizations have expressed a desire to be part of this march, which to date is the only one planned in the basin.

Laine and others hope that out of this gathering people will unite to form a sustaining group that will have its own identity rooted in the bigger cause, with action taken locally.

A **Facebook page** has been created to provide more information about the Tahoe march.

Court: Calif. cities' private lawyers' bills can go public

By Bob Egelko, San Francisco Chronicle

Local governments in California must release records of the amounts they've been billed by private lawyers for cases they handled, a divided state Supreme Court ruled Thursday.

In a 4-3 decision, the court said the attorney-client privilege – which makes most communications with lawyers confidential – doesn't apply to a public agency's financial dealings with private attorneys in cases that have been concluded. The ruling was at least a partial victory for advocacy groups and media organizations seeking more public

disclosure of government records.

Cities and counties turn to private attorneys to handle legal proceedings that require resources or specialized personnel that the government agencies lack.

Read the whole story

Nev. 9th most popular moving destination in U.S.

By Jason Hidalgo, Reno Gazette-Journal

A lot of folks decided to make the move to the Silver State last year.

Nevada was the ninth most popular destination for movers in 2016, according to the latest United Van Lines National Movers Study.

The ranking represents a slight drop from 2015, when Nevada was ranked eighth in the nation. Nevada also fell from third to fourth place among states in the Pacific and Mountain West, behind Oregon, Idaho and Washington.

Read the whole story

21 arrests at Stateline during New Year holiday

Douglas County sheriff's deputies made 21 arrests in the Stateline area during the New Year holiday.

The department considered the holiday weekend from Dec. 30 at 6pm to Jan. 2 at 6pm.

In addition to the arrests at the lake at that time, five people were arrested in Carson Valley. Most of these were misdemeanor domestic battery, disorderly conduct, minor consuming alcohol and trespassing.

The two most serious arrests included a felony domestic battery, and a second arrest for DUI causing substantial bodily harm. The department would not provide further details.

Highway 50 was closed in the casino corridor for about 30 minutes as revelers filled the area to ring in the new year. The road was open by 12:15am Jan. 1.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Fiscal oversight not top priority for EDC supes

By Kathryn Reed

It has been well documented that to get a job in El Dorado County it pays to know who is doing the hiring.

Last month the Board of Supervisors reviewed a list of

contracts of \$64,000 or less signed by the chief administrative officer. According to board policy, these contracts are not approved by the supervisors, but instead they are reviewed by the board annually after the fact. The majority of the contracts were signed by former CAO Larry Combs.

Joe Harn, county-auditor controller, has been harping on transparency for years. Only now with Don Ashton at the helm of the county is there beginning to be some light shed on favors done by previous CAOs.

Nonetheless, the electeds seem to care very little about what has gone on under their watch. Supervisor Brian Veerkamp appeared disgusted with Harn bringing the issue up again in December.

"I'm really here to briefly vent about the Prentice, Long, and Epperson contract which really is a text book example of a total lack of transparency and frankly poor financial management. This contract is in the CAO's budget but the contract administrator is county counsel. So, who's ultimately responsible for the work and the contract? I don't know. As far as I can tell, nobody," Harn told the supervisors. "Also, related to Prentice, we are talking about Alpine County's county counsel who the former CAO brought on board, which indicates, I suppose our former CAO concluded that there's not a law firm in our county that could provide these services, which I find hard to believe. What this is really about county officials hiring their out-of-county friends."

Not only are friends being hired, but they come on board at top dollar.

When former CAO Pamela Knorr had the same position in Alpine County she filed a claim for damages against that county for failing to provide a safe work environment. Knorr's claim

states that her alleged grievances are supported by Ken Machold's investigative report. Machold is now an employee of the Prentice law firm. David Prentice of the Prentice, Long, and Epperson is the part time county counsel for Alpine County and Prentice approved a \$168,000 settlement/severance agreement between Knorr and Alpine County.

Mike Ciccozzi, who heads El Dorado County's legal department, is the contract administrator for the county's current contract with the Prentice law firm.

Former EDC CAO Terri Daly, a former Amador County employee, brought in her friend Martha Shaver, the former Amador County counsel as a consultant. Daly signed a contract with Shaver to review and update EDC's policies and ordinances. EDC paid Shaver \$50,000. No proposed update of the county's policies and ordinances ever came forward. In fact, the Board of Supervisors has nothing to show for this \$50,000 expenditure.

Beyond being fiscally irresponsible, these types of hires and contracts are impacting morale at the county.

Harn told the supervisors that county employees find it demoralizing when CAOs hire their out of county friends at the highest step.

Board policy says all employees hired by the CAO at the highest step must be reported to the board and the public annually. On April 13, 2016, Harn wrote the BOS and then CAO Combs saying the public reporting requirement was being ignored.

Combs, the former Sutter County CAO, hired two former Sutter County employees at step 5, the highest level. Those hires (the risk manager and assistant CAO) were never reported publicly as required by county policy. Both were friends of Combs'. Shawne Corley, the current assistant CAO, was hired at an initial salary of \$182,000 per year. Qualified longtime El Dorado County employees were never given a chance by the then

CAO, according to Harn.

At the time, Harn told *Lake Tahoe News*, “The supervisors all say that they are for complete transparency, but the county doesn’t comply with its own policies that require transparency.”

Spooner reopens after snow, spinouts closed Hwy. 50

Spooner Summit between Carson City and Highway 28 was temporarily closed this morning because of multiple spinouts.

As of 8:43am Jan. 4 it had reopened.

“People were not following the chain or snow tire requirements,” Meg Ragonese with the Nevada Department of Transportation told *Lake Tahoe News*.

At the time of the closure only the westbound lanes were shut down. It was still possible to get from the lake to Carson.

Trooper Dan Gordon with the Nevada Highway Patrol said there were not a lot of crashes, just a lot of people sliding off the road.

“The conditions right now are really, really bad,” Gordon told *Lake Tahoe News*. “With the amount of snow it is tough to keep the road clean.”

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Weather a problem for schools, driving

For the second straight day the weather has forced the closure of schools in the Tahoe-Truckee Unified School District. Washoe County school in Incline Village have also been canceled for Jan. 4.

A winter storm warning remains in effect for the Lake Tahoe Basin through 4am Jan. 5. Another 6 to 12 of snow could fall at lake level, with 1 to 2 feet above 7,000 feet.

The Sierra Avalanche Center has issued a warning for the backcountry from 4pm today through 7am Thursday.

For current road conditions, click on the state icons on home page of *Lake Tahoe News*. Law enforcement agencies are reporting multiple spinouts and accidents.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

3 fires in South Lake Tahoe in 2 nights

If it's true things go in threes, then the workload for South Tahoe firefighters should diminish for a while.

Crews on Tuesday night quickly knocked down a fire on Markoffer Way. One person was displaced because of the amount

of damage to the duplex.

The cause of the Jan. 3 fire is being blamed on the wiring to a heater. Officials told *Lake Tahoe News* it appears a nail punctured the sheathing of the wires. This is something that could have occurred years ago.

The first fire of the new year was at **TJ Maxx on Jan. 2.**

Shortly after that fire crews were at Paradise Avenue to fight a blaze that started in an outside water heater closet. Fourteen people from Argentina were renting the house and had to be assisted by Red Cross because the structure was not longer habitable.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Sink hole closes Kingsbury Grade indefinitely

Kingsbury Grade has finally been closed because the sink hole that has been expanding is now too dangerous for vehicles to drive on. The closure went into effect at 5pm Jan. 3.

“As weather will play a factor, no timeframe is set to complete roadway repairs, but we will work to reopen the road as quickly and efficiently as possible,” Meg Ragonese with the Nevada Department of Transportation said in a statement. However, it is expected to take several weeks to repair.



A sign for the past two weeks warned motorists of the weakened surface on Kingsbury Grade. Photo/Lisa Huard

Lake Tahoe News first reported on the deteriorating road condition last week.

An eroding drainage pipe under the highway has created problem. It is on the Carson City side of the road.

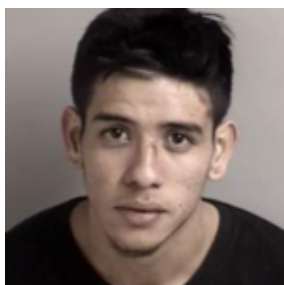
Kingsbury Grade is the main thoroughfare between the Lake Tahoe Basin and Carson Valley, with 5,600 cars on average traveling on this road. Drivers may still use the Tahoe side between Highway 50 and Tramway.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Arrest made in South Tahoe drive-by shooting

An 18-year-old South Lake Tahoe man has been arrested in connection with the Dec. 29 drive-by shooting in town.

Kevin Gonzalez was booked into jail on one felony charge of assault with a deadly weapon and one misdemeanor charge of destruction of evidence.



Kevin Gonzalez

South Lake Tahoe police officers said other arrests are possible.

The drive by shooting was at the Pioneer Inn Motel on Pioneer Trail.

Witnesses said several young Hispanic men occupied the truck. It is not known if more than one fired shots. Several rounds were discharged, but did not strike anyone.

Before the night was over the vehicle had been located.

Detectives said they watched Gonzalez retrieve and attempt to destroy evidence from a vehicle. The specific nature of this evidence is being withheld. Detectives further stated they recovered the undamaged evidence when they arrested Gonzalez.

No firearms have been recovered.

Officers initially said this was a gang shooting, they have since it is not gang related.

Anyone with information is asked to call the South Lake Tahoe Police Department a 530.542.6100 or Secret Witness at 530.541.6800.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report