

3 safe after boat begins to sink at Tahoe

Three people were rescued Tuesday afternoon on Lake Tahoe when their boat began taking on water.

The Coast Guard said the distress call was received shortly after 3pm Sept. 20 from the vessel Just Enough. The 25-foot boat was beginning to sink near the California-Nevada border of the South Shore.

The three adults were taken to shore by the Coast Guard, while a Good Samaritan from the vessel Sundance helped tow Just Enough to Tahoe Keys Marina.

No one was injured and what caused the boat to take on water has not been determined.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Sierra lake offers clues about ongoing drought

By Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

In 2000, researchers took a coring from the bed of a small, shallow lake in the Eastern Sierra Nevada mountains.

They analyzed the organic matter and chemicals in the sediments to reconstruct a climate record of the past 10,000 years. They then compared it with reconstructions of ancient

ocean temperatures.

The results echoed previous studies that have found a link between past periods of climate warming, cool sea-surface temperatures in the eastern Pacific Ocean and centuries-long droughts in California and the West.

Does that mean that global warming is pushing California to the threshold of endless drought?

Read the whole story

Wind, humidity create high fire danger



More than a half acre burned at Spooner Lake on Sept. 20. The cause is under investigation. Photo/USFS

A red flag warning has been issued for the Lake Tahoe Basin and Truckee areas from noon-8pm Wednesday.

This means hazardous fire conditions because of the strong

winds and low humidity. Winds out of the southwest are expected to be 15-25 mph, with gusts of 45 mph.

“The combination of gusty winds and low humidity can cause fire to rapidly grow in size and intensity before first responders can contain them,” according to the National Weather Service in Reno.

Fire personnel are beefing up resources, especially with an arsonist on the loose on the South Shore. A rash of fires have been human started in the last month. Authorities will not say if they have a suspect. Most of these fires have been set on state or federal lands.

Rain, including thunderstorms, is in the forecast for the Tahoe basin on Wednesday and Thursday. Temperatures are expected to drop dramatically, with the overnight low on Sept. 22 being 28 degrees. Sunny skies will return Friday, and the high Saturday is expected to be 73.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Swanson lone filer to fill LTUSD vacancy

Only one person applied for the vacancy on the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board – Angela Swanson.

The term was created with the resignation of Ginger Nicolay-Davis. She left because she took a paid position with the district. The term ends in December 2018.



Angela Swanson

"I am looking forward to rejoining the board and very much hope the current board members will welcome me to their ranks. The unexpected opening of the seat was a perfect opportunity for me to bring my skills in the areas of facilities, planning and finance back to the board at a time when the district looks toward reopening Al Tahoe Elementary School, addressing the accreditation issues at STHS and cultivating a new generation of teachers," Swanson told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I have been an educational activist since I came to South Lake Tahoe as a young mother. That passion has never abated. If selected, I will serve my district and the community to the best of my abilities."

Swanson was on the LTUSD board from 2005-09. She quit midterm to work for LTUSD. Currently she is working in Livermore as a school facilities planning consultant.

" ... (I) have the flexibility within my current position to work from Lake Tahoe on board days and as otherwise needed to fulfill my responsibilities as a board member. I don't foresee this posing a difficulty as I have always worked outside the basin. It is my normal," Swanson said.

Swanson also served on the South Lake Tahoe City Council from 2010-14.

The school board will meet Sept. 27 at which time the remaining four will decide whether Swanson should fill the vacancy for Area 2.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Cops confiscate 18 pounds of pot in Truckee



Chase, a K9 with Placer County, with his marijuana find. Photo/Provided

Nearly 18 pounds of packaged marijuana was seized in Truckee.

The California Highway Patrol called in the K9 unit from Placer County Sheriff's Department to search the vehicle that was stopped this month on Interstate 80 near Highway 267.

Chase was able to sniff out the marijuana.

CHP has not released the names of the people involved in the arrest.

"(Interstate) 80 is a pipeline out of Northern California to back East where you can fetch a lot more money for it," a CHP spokesman said of marijuana.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

SLT council candidates try to stand out



Eight of the 10 South Lake Tahoe City Council candidates on Sept. 20 make their voices heard. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Watching eight of the 10 South Lake Tahoe City Council candidates answer an array of questions Tuesday night gave the voting public and others an opportunity to see who has prepared well for this four-year job and who needs some polishing.

Candidates Dan McLaughlin and Bob Topel did not attend the forum at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel that was sponsored by Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce and South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association.

Moderator Evon Yakar tried to keep the candidates on point, had follow up questions to get them to actually answer the question, and asked questions they all answered and interspersed them with ones targeted to individuals. The sponsors prepared some questions, while others came from the audience.

For the most part they all agree listening is one of the best ways to learn.

Some of their responses based on the order they sat:

John Shearer:

- **Regarding how he as a business owner would increase economic opportunities:** He believes the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and chamber do well with marketing and that the city does not need to have a role.

- **Asked to define “sensible regulations” that he says are needed to deal with affordable housing:** He wants the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency to change; in particular he has issues with building allocations.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** He would like them to vote. [This would violate the Constitution.]

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** Supports the loop road. Recognizes houses won't be torn down without rebuilding new ones. Anticipates more events in that area.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Free transit; emulate successful ski towns.

Patrick Jarrett:

- **How would he grow the economy:** More events.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** They should have some voice.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** With the number of people who signed the petition,

believes the public wants a say; doesn't want project "crammed down our throats." Doesn't see benefits of project.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Pointed out how when he lived in Germany years ago the transit was reliable; would like to see that happen here. And sync the traffic signals.

Ted Long:

- **He was asked about his 10-year vision:** Tourism, he said, is a two level platform – to get them here and then to get them back.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** He wants to do more and is open to suggestions.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** He would support the voters, but realizes that still might not be what the majority in town wants based on voter turnout. "I think people who are in charge are going to do what they want."

- **How would you solve the traffic problem in town:** Put in light rail to get people to Camp Richardson and Stateline. Focus on getting tourists out of their vehicles.

JoAnn Conner:

- **The most urgent issue in the city:** Housing, with roads a close second.

- **With a contentious first term nearly over, she was asked how things would be different the next four years:** "Literally hundreds of people have asked me to run again." She said she has already put the issues behind her and that there have been many successful meetings. "I have no personal agenda." [The reality is tension, animosity and lack of professionalism are still the norm at council meetings, and no

personal agenda is disputable.]

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** Meyers can vote to annex themselves. She said she understands why they would not want to.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** Better to listen to the citizens, not the five council members. "Caltrans has assured me it will not proceed if the City Council doesn't want it to happen." She believes the project has too many unanswered questions.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Advocate for bike trails, said she got the snow cleared from them last winter; use smaller buses.

Tamara Wallace:

- **What areas of South Lake Tahoe present an opportunity for redevelopment and what would the appropriate approach be:** She wants the Tahoe Valley Area Plan to be implemented, but did not state a specific project.

- **She was then pressed to answer what she thought the city's role in the loop road would be:** She stumbled a bit, said eminent domain and easements and "things like that" would be the city's role; then she said the council will not vote yes or not on it because it's not a city project.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** "I think we are one community in very many ways. We will always be just a little bit separate." She mentioned how kids in Alpine County go to Douglas County schools and she wishes Whittell students could go to South Tahoe High. [They can.]

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city**

do: Doesn't matter if the measure is vague, it's what the people want. "I'm against three people making a million vote." [Earlier that day the five councilmembers made a multimillion-dollar vote when they approved the 2016-17 budget; million dollar votes are pretty routine.]

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Get businesses to subsidize transit.

Brooke Laine:

- **She was asked what a successful vacation home rental program looks like:** She wants the laws on the books enforced, for the code enforcement officers to work more than swing shift on the weekends, bear boxes to be mandatory and for VHRs to pay the same transient occupancy tax as the redevelopment area so that added revenue could pay for enforcement officers.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** She wants to create one Tahoe county so there is a larger voice.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** "I think it's taking the pulse of the community." She also believes the ballot measure is premature.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Mentioned how in the 1980s the city subsidized transit; wants it to be frequent, fun and free.

Jason Collin:

- **How best to address infrastructure:** "Roads are the most pressing issue." He wants added sales tax dollars to go toward roads.

- **Purpose of loop road lawsuit:** "The intent was to raise awareness to what I feel is an invalid measure. (The measure) would not allow the city to act."

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** When he was on the city's economic development team they came up with the "One South Shore" slogan.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** A vote for or against the measure is irrelevant because it's vague and if it passes, there will be a court hearing on Dec. 5; plus the city doesn't have jurisdiction over the project. Believes educating public is necessary.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** In the short term, work on sidewalks and trails. The trails he was on this winter were not cleared. Would like free transit, but doesn't know how to pay for it.

Trey Riddle:

- **With his platform being all about infrastructure, he was asked which project is most important to support and why:** He said the Mobility 2035 program. [This is a TRPA, not a city program.] He said his 9-week-old son would be in college by then, and that doing more now so his child could experience it as a kid would be ideal.

- **How important is it to meet the needs of the people living outside the city, but who are in the sphere of influence:** Important to listen to friends and neighbors.

- **If the loop road measure passes, what should the city do:** He supports democracy, and wants the public's opinion to prevail.

- **How to solve the traffic problem in town:** Rides his bike to work almost every day and doesn't feel safe; he'd like to change that experience.

2.4 earthquake rattles Desolation Wilderness

A 2.4 magnitude earthquake shook part of Desolation Wilderness at 10:03pm Sept. 20.

The temblor was registered 9.7 miles west-southwest of South Lake Tahoe, in the woods behind Emerald Bay.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Not all candidates participated in LTN forum

Lake Tahoe News asked candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Douglas County School District, South Tahoe Public Utility District and Lake Valley Fire Protection District a series of questions.

However, not all candidates chose to respond.

Not one of the four candidates for Lake Valley Fire Protection District took the time. Bob Bettencourt, board chairman, told *Lake Tahoe News* the board decided as a group not to do so. However, only two incumbents are running – Bettencourt and John Rice.

Bettencourt and Rice told *LTN* they didn't like some of the

questions. Many were the same asked of all the candidates. Specific to the fire board were:

- How can local government support effective fire prevention and forest management practices?
- Morale is horrible in the department, what can the board do to help fix this?
- What will you look for in a permanent fire chief?:
- What is your philosophy about ambulance service?

As for the other two candidates for Lake Valley FPD – Leona Allen and Tony Sears – the reason(s) for not responding are unknown.

There are three seats up for that board.

Also not answering questions were Mike Doyle running for Lake Tahoe Unified School District and Mike Kiger seeking the Douglas County School District board seat. Both said they were too busy. Their opponents, though, Bonnie Turnbull and Keith Byer, respectively, found the time.

Bob Topel, one of 10 candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council, does not have email and did not provide a friend's address for the questions to be sent there.

Look for endorsements from *Lake Tahoe News* for these offices and the three South Lake Tahoe measures to run in October. A panel of seven community members will come up with the recommendations of how voters should mark their ballots.

All of the candidate answers may be found under the Special Projects tab at the top of the Home Page, then click on 2016 November Candidate Profiles.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Big Sur wildfire becomes costliest ever to fight at \$200M

By Associated Press

BIG SUR – A wildfire burning for nearly two months on California's scenic Big Sur coast has surpassed \$200 million in firefighting costs, becoming the costliest to fight in U.S. history, according to data released Monday.

The fire has cost \$206.7 million to fight so far, the National Interagency Fire Center said in a report. And with the blaze at only 67 percent containment, there could be weeks left before the firefight is done.

That puts it well past the previous high of \$165 million established by a blaze that burned in California and Oregon in 2002.

The figure does not include the actual damages done by the fire like destroyed homes, only the costs of extinguishing and containing it.

It also is not adjusted for inflation, which would put the 2002 fire and others ahead of it.

The cost is mostly attributable to the long duration of the fire, and the need to pay thousands of firefighters for their daily work, the U.S. Forest Service said. The daily costs got as high as \$8 million at the fire's peak, though they've settled at closer to \$2 million as it has calmed.

The fire burning in the Los Padres National Forest wrought

havoc on the summer tourist season in the area after it broke out because of an illegal campfire on July 22. It led to the death of a man in a bulldozer accident.

At 185 square miles it is does not even approach the largest in size in American history and does not crack the top 10 in the state.

California is seeing a relative lull in active and dangerous wildfires as it awaits its heavy fire season, but three major uncontained fires are still burning around the state as wildfire conditions continue to expand into previously safe months, and new ones break out almost daily.

They include a wildfire at Vandenberg Air Force Base about 170 miles southeast along the coast from the Big Sur blaze. It forced the postponement of a weekend satellite launch, has exploded in size and continues to burn out of control at more than 7 square miles.

Leaders try to bridge regional gap in Nevada

By Nicole Raz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

About 300 business leaders, academics and government officials are meeting Tuesday through Thursday to make the 450 miles between Las Vegas and Reno feel shorter.

“We can break down those miles through collaboration,” said Matt Westfield, founder and director of Entrepreneurs Assembly, a not-for-profit business mentoring organization based at the URN Innevation Center.

The second annual Nevada Economic Development Conference, presented in part by UNR and UNLV, aims to create a new map for economic development.

Read the whole story