

Paid parking opponents win in South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Say goodbye to South Lake Tahoe's parking meters at Lakeview Commons and Lakeside Beach.

The voters on June 3 said take them out. This will happen after Labor Day.

With 100 percent of the precincts reporting, the yes votes were 1,271 at 68.41 percent and the no votes were 587 at 31.59 percent.

"I think the people have spoken very well; that they just don't like it," John Cefalu said of paid parking.

Cefalu was one of the main opponents to the meters and early leader to force the city's hand to change its policy.

"For the city to make the argument that this is a fundamental part of the budget and they need the revenue, I just can't buy it," Cefalu told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The city's latest paid parking program has not been welcome since the get-go. Meetings were often contentious, with name-calling and anger the norm instead of civility and compromise.

While a group called Tahoe 4 Tahoe secured enough signatures to take the question of paid parking to the voters, legally they could not do so because of how the Vehicle Code is written when it comes to parking meters. Had it gone to court the city would have likely won based on past rulings. In the end, though, the City Council decided it was better for the voters to decide and the city put the measure on the ballot.

"I just hope that the vitriol is over. We are getting a lot

done in this town with marginal revenue,” Mayor Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News*. “We need to all start pulling in the same direction moving forward. A lot more investment is needed.”

The decision does not affect the parking garage at Heavenly Village or the meters on Bellamy Court.

“It means we have to find a way to plug a hole that the lost revenue will create. We will be discussing that at the next council meeting,” City Manager Nancy Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Sullivan, Ashworth elected to judgeships

By Susan Wood

The women running for the two judgeships in El Dorado County will join presiding Judge Suzanne Kingsbury in what will be a slightly more gender balanced Superior Court.

Superior Court Commissioner Dylan Sullivan and Deputy District Attorney Vicki Ashworth won judgeship offices 5 and 1, respectively, in the June 3 primary election – both with resounding turnouts in their favor. Sullivan received 18,124 votes or 59.99 percent against attorney Joe Hoffman. Ashworth pulled in 15,841 votes at 51.5 percent to beat business owners David Combella and Joe Weinberger.



Dylan Sullivan, right, receives support election night from El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury. Photo/Wendy David

Sullivan seemed humbled by the win – declaring hard work, perseverance and strong familial influences as leading her to the office. She was the oldest of three children born to a teenage mother and knew she'd have to work hard, be strong and take responsibility to mold her path to success.

“My mother instilled that in me,” she told *Lake Tahoe News*. They were the only two college graduates in the family.

She pledged to continue the diligent work ethic, find fair resolutions and truly listen to people, much like she attempted to do in the campaign. She even talked about listening as if it were a lost art.

“That was the most effective part of my campaign – to really talk to them and go to the public forums. I think that’s an important part of being on the bench,” she said, during a break at her celebration with about two dozen people in a suite at MontBleu on Tuesday night.

Sullivan acknowledged Judge Kingsbury as yet another strong role model who helped “create an environment for me to succeed.”

Sullivan mentioned pounding the pavement as the most

interesting component to the campaign because of the residents' surprised reactions.

"I felt it's the least I could do. My one regret is that there was no way I could make it to every voter," she said.

Ashworth had a similar experience in her door-to-door interactions with voters.

"Most people don't expect that," she said, while driving home after her gathering.

But then again, anything's possible in El Dorado County. She was pleasantly surprised by so many people showing up at the public forums during the campaign season. She even attributes much of her success in her win as "voters educating themselves and being involved."

Ashworth has long learned how to balance being a conscientious observer, capable of a proactive bent. Meaning, she's a doer, which her record prosecuting high-profile cases proves, but has watched others such as longtime Judge Eddie Keller in action on the bench which has taught her another aspect of the law.

A judgeship isn't necessarily a lifelong dream – but a recent quest.

"It's been (there) since the children were getting older," she said.

And so it goes, the balance of family and work.

She promises El Dorado County she'll be "fair and impartial."

Brown, Newsom, Harris advance to November

By Michael Finnegan, Los Angeles Times

Gov. Jerry Brown finished first Tuesday in the California Primary, easily advancing to the general election while Republicans Neel Kashkari and Tim Donnelly battled for the second spot on the November ballot.

Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom and state Attorney General Kamala Harris, both Democrats, also advanced to November. Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones, another Democrat, also was all but guaranteed to move to the general election.

The election was the first full-scale test of a new primary system aimed at curbing entrenched partisanship in state politics. In contests for statewide office, Congress and the Legislature, candidates who finish first and second – regardless of party – will compete in a November runoff.

The “top-two” system was approved by voters four years ago. Exasperated by chronic gridlock in Sacramento and Washington, voters ignored pleas of the two major parties to keep California’s partisan primaries intact.

Read the whole story

Fire damages Incline Village

house

A fire damaged a single-family home in Incline Village on Monday.

The cause of the June 2 fire at 815 Ellen Court is under investigation.

Assisting North Lake Tahoe firefighters were crews from Tahoe Douglas and North Tahoe Fire.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

Macau casinos to ban smoking on gaming floor

By Howard Stutz, Law Vegas Review-Journal

Come October, Macau's casinos won't smell the same.

The special administrative region government last month told its resort operators that smoking will be banned on mass-market gaming floors starting Oct. 6.

Here's the surprise: Macau's six casino operators – including MGM Resorts International, Wynn Resorts Ltd. and Las Vegas Sands Corp. – asked for the prohibition.

The ban doesn't include Macau's private gaming rooms. Casinos can build smoking rooms on the gaming floors, which have their own heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. But the rooms can't include table games or slot machines.

Read the whole story

Low jobless rate for community college graduates

By David Leonhardt, New York Times

The federal government's main educational-attainment categories are fairly blunt. In particular, the "some college" category includes a wide array of people: Those who have dropped out of college without earning any degree, those who have earned a two-year degree meant to lead directly to a job (such as in nursing) and those who have earned an academic two-year degree that is often a first step toward a bachelor's degree.

If you want to understand how successful community colleges are, to take just one example, you need to know how well someone with a two-year degree fares in the job market.

Fortunately, in a series of tables that aren't on its website but are available upon request, the Bureau of Labor Statistics does distinguish among the different versions of "some college." (It would be even better if the bureau made this data easily available to the public.)

The group with the highest jobless rate, not surprisingly, is people who have attended some college classes without earning any degree. Their jobless rate is only slightly lower than that of high school graduates who have never attended college.

Read the whole story

Calif. wrestles with need for more dams

By Matt Weiser and Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

As California struggles through a third year of drought, elected officials from both parties are proposing to spend billions of dollars in public money on new dams and reservoirs. Seven different bills are pending in the Legislature that would use varying amounts of state bond funding to launch a new era of dam construction with the aim of increasing the state's capacity to store precious mountain snowmelt.

The surge of proposals has stoked familiar arguments in California's historic battles over limited water supplies: Water users in many cities and throughout the state's arid central farm belt say new reservoirs are vital to capture snowmelt that would otherwise flow "wasted" to the sea. Environmental groups counter that habitat and wildlife need that water, and call for more sweeping conservation measures and water recycling instead.

But this year, as California faces long-term supply shortages, some water policy experts are raising deeper questions: Is there enough water left in California to justify the cost of dams? If taxpayers do front some money, what are they really buying? Are they propping up a project with shaky economics, or buying something with real public value?

The bills before the Legislature aim to place a bond measure on the November ballot.

Read the whole story

2 Calif. counties trying to form new state

By Reuters

Creating the state of California took a revolt that led to the short-lived Bear Republic, a war with Mexico, and various international treaties. Now, some northern natives hope to take it apart, starting with a couple of ballot initiatives.

Tuesday, voters in Del Norte and Tehama counties will consider a measure calling for separation from California and the formation of a new state. Supporters are hoping to generate momentum for pulling together portions of northern California and southern Oregon into an entity to be called Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson once imagined that part of western North America might develop into a freestanding republic.

Local vexations with state government were cited by Aaron Funk, an aptly named organizer of the movement: “lack of representation, lack of infrastructure, inability to use a lot of our resources.”

Opponents of the measure say it sounds an economic death knell for the area, given its poverty and high unemployment.

Efforts to chop up California boast a long history. Disgruntled residents first proposed a state of Jefferson, also comprising counties in nearby southern Oregon, in the 1940s.

Read the whole story

Undeclared voters on the rise in California

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

California's chief elections officer reported Friday that the percentage of voters registered with no party preference has increased while the percentages for registered Republicans and Democrats declined.

Compared with four years ago, the number of registered voters has increased by about 1 percent, to 73.3 percent of the number of people eligible to register, according to the report by Secretary of State Debra Bowen.

The percentage of voters who registered with no party preference has gone from 20.17 percent four years ago to 21.16 percent today, an increase of about 325,000 voters, the report said.

[Read the whole story](#)

Rat poison maker to stop selling formula that harms kids, pets

By Martha Groves, Los Angeles Times

After years of challenges to federal environmental officials, the maker of d-Con rat traps has agreed to discontinue a consumer line of poison-laced baits that have accidentally harmed children, wildlife and pets.

The rodent-control products will be replaced next year with a new line of baits that the federal Environmental Protection Agency has approved for use in every state.

California earlier this year banned the sale of such products to consumers after July 1. Reckitt Benckiser, the maker of d-Con, sued the state to halt the ban.

Read the whole story