

Letter: David thanks community

To the community,

Quite simply, thank you for your support of my candidacy and election to your South Lake Tahoe City Council. I am humbled and honored by your support and will strive to represent you as residents and our city as a whole.

Thank you to all of the candidates that ran in this election. I learned so much from each of you. You have my respect and admiration as well.



Wendy David

We are seeing many visible improvements and it is buoying our spirits and our resolve to continue to enhance this incredible City that we are fortunate enough to call home. We have always known what we have: the best skiing, water sports, lake sports, beaches, biking and hiking trails of anywhere around the lake. What about our sunsets and sunrises, our schools and our community college? The list can go on forever with pride in our voices. You have voted about what is important to you and you are leading us into the future.

Thanks again for allowing me to represent your voice at the Council, along with so many others to make wise decisions, bold decisions, important decisions, all through thoughtful and collaborative discussion. Thank you for voting. You have

exercised one of our greatest rights, the right to vote for your leaders. Together we will continue to work for the best for our community and City.

Gratefully,

Wendy David

Letter: Adventure Mountain helps at B&B

To the community,

Bread & Broth would like to thank Jim and Linda Mueller, owners of Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe, for their sponsorship of an Adopt A Day of Nourishment on Oct. 27.

The Monday evening Italian dinner prepared by B&B's versatile cooks was enjoyed by 125 dinner guests who raved about the roasted chicken and garlic pasta meal which was financed by the Mueller's Adventure Mountain sledding, tubing, and snow play resort.

"We feel privileged to be able to give back to the South Lake Tahoe community," said Linda Mueller.

Joining the Muellers in assisting the B&B volunteer crew were their son, Luke, and Adventure Mountain employees Randy Cronin and Wes Snyder.

"This is a great way to help out," commented Cronin, who was busy helping serve the thankful and hungry folks who frequently find this meal to be one of their few hot meals during the week.

Through the generosity of the Lake Tahoe South Shore community, B&B is able to provide hot, nutritious meals twice a week to the hungry and those in need. B&B's meals served at St. Theresa Grace Hall and Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church are made possible by our generous financial donors, the donation of time by our many dedicated B&B volunteers and sponsor crew members and the support B&B receives from our many store/business partners.

Thank you to Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe for "giving back" to our community's less fortunate.

For more B&B information, go online or find us on Facebook.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Letter: LTCC thankful for Measure F support

To the community,

Thank you for your support of and confidence in the students, board, faculty, staff, and leadership of Lake Tahoe Community College. We'd like to personally thank the South Lake Tahoe community for lending your support to Measure F, and for turning out this Election Day.

This community's four-decade-long involvement and interest in the college is what keeps LTCC going. You've supported your local community college, and we hope in the months and years to come, you'll see firsthand the difference Measure F is making and will join us in celebrating its passage.

It's been a long journey toward Election Day for Lake Tahoe

Community College and the many volunteers who supported Measure F, endorsed it, donated toward the campaign, walked neighborhoods to get out the vote, made phone calls on behalf of it, and voted in favor of it. To all those who worked so hard for so long to get this bond measure passed, thank you sincerely. Your efforts have made Measure F a reality. This bond measure will contribute not only to the success and growth of our college and students, but also of our community. Great things await all of us thanks to your efforts. The staff, students, faculty and administration at LTCC owe you a huge debt of gratitude.

Special thanks also must go to the dozens of hard-working members of the Measure F campaign committee who donated many hours of their time for months to attend meetings, collect endorsements, put up signs, write letters to the editor, arrange phone banking nights, and all the other efforts that helped to turn out the vote and get Measure F passed. Your total dedication to LTCC's future was inspiring, touching, and made all the difference. Thank you.

With sincere gratitude,

Roberta Mason, board president

Kindred Murillo, superintendent/president Lake Tahoe Community College

Opinion: Daly leaves wake of destruction

By Larry Weitzman

Terri Daly, the El Dorado County's chief administrator officer, spent the last week cleaning out her desk and office of everything personal. But it remains unknown whether any county property or more important, any county records went with her. It is also unknown the reason for her sudden departure.

At the Nov. 4 Board of Supervisors meeting she resigned.

Kathryn Reed, publisher of *Lake Tahoe News*, reported first on this story on Saturday after a Friday email from others and me about Daly cleaning out her office. She called District V Supervisor Norma Santiago to ask what Daly's actions mean.



Larry Weitzman

Santiago replied, "I'm not going to tell you. I'll call you later. Bye." Remarks like that made it sound very foreboding for Daly.

Daly in four years has ruined this county. She acted like the EDC budget was hers to do with as she pleased. She hired her friends, giving them big salaries. Many of them were incompetent or were other county rejects. She gave everyone huge raises and god help anyone who crossed her or Kim Kerr. One point that must always be remembered, Daly has served at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors. They are ultimately responsible.

A recent restudy of the budget projections from an earlier column may indicate that the cash shortfall over the next five years will not be \$103 million, but could rise to a five-year

total of \$125 million (more on that in my next column). Hey, that \$20 million albatross of a lease Daly stuck Amador County with over the next 13 years is going to look like small potatoes to EDC.

Randy Rafoth suffered under the Daly regime when he questioned Daly's use of the Risk Management budget for her purposes. Because he was about three months from ending his probationary period as director of Risk Management, he was let go by Kerr. He didn't know Daly and Kerr were absolute rulers.

Then there is the recent firing of the director of Child Support Services, Laura Roth. Roth at the time of her unwarranted firing was ranked No. 2 or 3 in the state on a 58 countywide basis in total collections. She was certainly doing a good job, but that didn't matter to Daly when you cross her.

Another victim of the wrath of crossing Daly and/or Kerr was head of probation, Greg Sly. Sly complained that Kerr shouldn't have sent an email to county managers that said you should keep a tube of KY Jelly and explain to complaining employees that it will ease their pain. Sly was eventually let go for complaining that the email sent by Kerr was harassment. There was an "investigation," but it was investigated by two of Daly's cronies, both hired out of Amador County; just like Kerr.

The investigator on Sly's complaint was Karen Kramer, an employment law attorney, who was hired as an outside consultant by Daly. And yes, Kramer was a former Amador County contractor. During her investigation Kramer told employees that all statements taken would be confidential except for the Acting HR Director Karl Knoblauch, also a Daly hire from Amador County. But employees were afraid as they knew anything said against Kerr would go straight to Daly. The investigation was whitewashed by Daly's friend, Knoblauch, and Sly was soon forced to retire. Nothing happened to Kerr. Sly's "firing" isn't over and may cost the county millions of dollars in the

near future.

Daly also let outside consulting contracts with Martha Shaver, a former Amador County employee.

But wait; there are more Friends of Daly. Daly hired Kerr as she was about to get fired as the Ione city manager. When Kerr was the Ione city manager she spent time at the Amador County offices of Daly. According to employees of Amador County, they would see Kerr there often. Although Daly denies it, Daly had to know of Kerr's indiscretions while the Ione city manager.

Daly hired her and gave her a raise.

Daly also wanted to hire Robyn Drivon as county counsel. I don't know Ms. Drivon, but she was about to be let go by Yolo County as their county counsel. Was that the best choice? It was for Daly. Drivon was hired in at the top of the pay scale.

Daly also hired Pam Knorr, now head of HR as well as the interim CAO. Daly gave her a big raise and also had the BOS raise the top salary for HR director from about \$130,000 to \$160,000. Knorr left her prior position as CAO of Alpine County (population 1,100) under questionable circumstances.

Daly also recommended analyst Kelly Webb as the new IT director with a \$140,000 paycheck, a raise of about \$30,000. Webb's short lived performance was so poor she was quickly demoted by the BOS back to her original position quite recently.

In other words, Daly's departure will be good riddance. She hired many unqualified people, paid them outlandish salaries, hired consultant after consultant, fired many qualified employees, hired hundreds of unnecessary new employees and caused EDC to be facing a five-year deficit totaling as much as \$125 million. Unfortunately, even though the door will close behind her, Daly's actions will cost the county perhaps millions of dollars in the future, notwithstanding the huge

deficit. It's been a great four-plus years.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Letter: Council candidates urge people to vote

To the community,

Today is the day you shape our city's future. With your vote, choosing three members for our City Council, you will speak on issues from economic development and the environment to jobs and the way we care for families and children. You have seven candidates to choose from, each proposing a path to move our city forward.

We thank you for engaging with us through four candidate forums, numerous press interviews, endorsements, coffees, fundraisers, phone calls and door knocks. You've seen our signs, watched or read our ads. By now you know that all seven candidates have a passion and love for our community. We share a desire to create jobs and continue to be good stewards to our beloved Lake Tahoe and basin.

As candidates, we focused on our messages, sharing our vision for the future of our city. Unlike many political campaigns, we displayed respect for each other and pledge to continue working for the betterment of South Lake Tahoe no matter the outcome of today's vote.

We now join together to ask for you to vote today. Choose South Lake Tahoe's future, be one of the decision-makers. It's your vote; please use it. Last but not least, for those of you

who have already cast your ballot by mail, thank you.

We did our part as candidates and now it is up to you.

Thank you,

Angela Swanson, Wendy David, Tom Davis, Bruce Grego, Austin Sass, Matt Palacio, Brooke Laine

Opinion: Abuse of power by EDC officials

By Larry Weitzman

This column's theme for the last several months has been about mismanagement within the Chief Administrator's Office of El Dorado County, and it goes right to the top. It all started with the climate of fear and the unfounded claims made by Terri Daly, the county's chief administrative officer.

Then it went into the CAO's hiring practices in recruiting people who by their past history were clearly incompetent and perhaps with a little spoils system thrown in.



Larry Weitzman

Next it has gone to the huge budget deficits (\$25 million or

more annually) that are becoming apparent because of an excess of hiring new employees, massive spending on outside consultants and recommending huge raises to county employees including the assistant chief administrative officer. Now those deficits look to be even larger because of potentially overstated revenue projections, but that will be for a later column.

If you thought it couldn't get any worse, it has and it goes to the actions of the then acting head of the Community Development Agency and now assistant CAO, Kim Kerr, at the time they occurred. What could she have done that was so bad? How about authorizing contract change orders well beyond her authority and spending money without the required procedures and approval of the Board of Supervisors. And it just didn't happen once. According to county documents, it happened on at least seven capital improvement programs, including projects like the Highway 50/Missouri Flat Road interchange and several Green Valley Road improvements.

Pursuant to Section 20142 of the California Public Contract Code and conforming Board of Supervisors resolution 102-2012 passed on July 24, 2012, (it superseded BOS resolution 106-93), change orders subsequent to the award of a contract are limited in their amount to 10 percent of the original contract amount except when the original contract is in excess of \$250,000 which in that case the limit of total change orders is \$25,000 plus 5 percent of the original contract amount not to exceed \$210,000, no matter the original amount of the contract. Any contract less than \$50,000 has a \$5,000 change order cumulative limit. Actually, it is an easy concept to understand, except for Kerr, who either intentionally or negligently ignored the law. Either way there is no excuse. These violations became public when a County of El Dorado Document Master Report, File Number 11-1196 enumerated the various violations of the Public Contract Code. In that master report it lays out that these illegal contract change orders

totaled 48, as much as 48 times that the head of the CDA at the time issued 48 change orders that exceeded her statutory authority. Payments have been made on 36 of these illegally issued CC0s, but 12 are still outstanding and unpaid.

Those 48 illegal CC0s that have illegally authorized total \$1,295,559. Records show that most were signed by Kerr as acting CDA director, but other county staff are involved as each CC0 requires at least four signatures starting with the resident engineer, assistant director, director of transportation and the (acting) CDA director.

Someone within the CAO's office (the CDA operates within the CAO's office) discovered these mistakes and without BOS retroactive approval, not only will these CC0s remain illegal, but the 12 remaining unpaid CC0s will remain unpaid without BOS ratification of the prior acts. But that doesn't excuse the actions of certain county official(s) who approved these CC0s without BOS approval.

There are two people upon which these illegal actions fall upon. The "buck" stops with ACAO Kerr, who headed the CDA during this period and the CAO herself, Daly. They should know the rules as Resolution 102-2012 was passed on July 24, 2012, in open session by a 5-0 vote of the BOS and Daly's name appears on the document attesting to the resolution. Daly and Kerr were well aware of the rules and laws governing change orders. But it looks like they didn't think these rules were very important as one or both of them violated the California Public Contract Code and BOS Resolution 102-2012 48 times.

Zebras don't lose their stripes and the modus operandi of ACAO Kerr hasn't changed. Her slipshod management style as the recent city manager of Ione is obviously apparent in her actions as EDC's ACAO. Kerr as Ione city manager failed to reconcile Ione's bank accounts for more than two years and Amador County Grand Jury reports called her incompetent saying that "the city manager for the fiscal period 2007-2011 (Kim

Kerr's tenure) did not demonstrate she possessed the proper qualifications and expertise to perform the duties required for that position."

Now comes the cover-up. It appears that the CAO plans to place an item on the next BOS calendar attempting to get retroactive approval for the acts of the ACAO by simply ratifying her actions. It will be interesting if this item shows up under the consent calendar with Daly trying to slip it through and hiding it from the BOS and the public, just like Daly did during her tenure as Amador County CAO sticking Amador County with a \$20 million lease they didn't need. You see Terri Daly is responsible for hiring Kim Kerr and giving her a raise in salary while knowing of her past "indiscretions" as city manager of Ione. Daly is responsible for Kerr's actions as an employee of EDC.

Then there is the issue if these potential violations of the California Public Contract Code rise to the seriousness to cause an investigation by the district attorney. Public officials are given the public trust and need to be held to a higher standard just as former District II Supervisor Ray Nutting was. His misdemeanor violations of the law cost him his job and a whole lot more.

In another twist of fate, it appears that Municipal Resources Group, a company that was hired for the sum of \$250,000 to eliminate the "climate of fear" and create a "Climate Action Plan" in EDC, hasn't been paid. In a letter to the BOS it seems that CAO Daly signed, pursuant to BOS approval and at her request, a contract of which she has neglected to pay invoices totalling \$63,356 for the months of July, August and September. The purpose of the contract was to address the alleged problems supposedly enumerated in the "Climate of Fear" study created by the law firm of Van Dermynen Maddux, a study which cost \$140,000. The Balancing Act analysis of the Van Dermynen Maddux study said if there is a climate of fear in EDC government it starts and ends at the top, in the CAO's

office. The question becomes why wouldn't the CAO submit these invoices to the county auditor for payment? Could the reason be that the CAO didn't like the preliminary information received from MRG. Perhaps they are pointing the finger in a direction Daly doesn't like proving prior columns correct.

Thank you Terri Daly for flushing \$390,000 down the toilet looking for answers of which you already knew by looking in the mirror.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Opinion: Consider the arts when voting

By Robert Schimmel

I'll bet you've heard how you must vote and why, right? Well, I hope you listened, because when you vote it really makes a difference.

I'd like to offer you another criteria to consider: the arts and what they mean to our community as a point of pride, a vehicle for healing, a source of inspiration and creative development, the nurturing agent for educational abilities and success, a real engine for our economy and growth, and an identity that will bring recognition and pride like no other. And what does this have to do with voting? Everything.



Robert
Schimmel

Who are the candidates that support art as part of our curriculum and will fight for it? Oh, by the way, art is a legally mandated part of our schools' studies but has been cleverly left out for budgetary reasons for many years by the powers that be. The sad part is that it is a primary stimulant to all learning processes, and our kids aren't benefiting from its influence on their performance in other subjects.

Who recognizes that the arts as an economic engine have no equal for what they generate in employment, contribute to projects, bring to festivals, galleries, stage shows, etc., attract and turn into heads in beds dollars we desperately need? The point here is that most artists and art related businesses can only thrive and fuel our economy if the governing bodies regulating business have freedom and success of private enterprise at the core of their beliefs. This has been steadily eroding here and even more so nationally.

Do you know candidates who will be proactive and support the arts at the city, school, community and business levels? Or do you fall prey to the lip service with no teeth that is so easy when they are not held accountable or even understand what's at stake?

Don't misunderstand me, I am not scolding you (as promises and truth are hard to discern and make stick), but I am encouraging you to take another criteria with you into the booth that may make voting easier. After all, we live and thrive on art every day and have become oblivious to it and

its benefits. The new creative economy we have entered is fairly obvious but has crept up via the Information Age and been camouflaged in the process to the extent that we haven't adapted or understood what's happened.

Bottom line is that I want (and will assume you do) Tahoe to prosper and grow. This doesn't have to be ugly with thoughtless, carpet-bagging policies, favoritism and environmental devastation. Instead it can be accomplished by opening the gates to creativity by including more arts integration in every city project and arts education funding of organizations that provide it (including our schools), by passing new or supporting existing legislation that empowers and permits artists to do more in public venues, etc., and by actually promoting Tahoe as an arts destination.

Novel idea, right, especially when most of us are here because of just that, whether we knew it at the time or not. Yes, the appeal of all our seasonal recreational activities is largely based on the aesthetic of beauty before, during and after we've caressed each experience, don't you think?

Be sure to vote, and, if uncertain as to why or for whom, then make the arts a priority.

Robert Schimmel is a professional artist in South Lake Tahoe.

Letter: Vote Sass for SLT council

To the community,

A few weeks back I did something that I have never before done

in my 54 years of life, the past 32 of which have been spent raising two sons, living, working, recreating, and being a participant in our community here in the city of South Lake Tahoe. I did something that I had never ever felt compelled to do. I made a contribution to a campaign for an elected official.

I've endorsed candidates before openly in local press. I've displayed election signs for various measures and candidates in my yard. But in this election I felt so passionately about doing in my small way what I could to get Austin Sass elected to the South Lake Tahoe City Council that I contributed to his campaign. Although a small donation (which anyone who looks will find listed in the contribution section of Sass's candidate financial statement), it was my way of showing my community that I believe so strongly that Austin Sass should be elected that I was willing to invest in it. Now when I say invest I'm talking about an investment that I believe will pay off in spades when it comes to the quality of life that I, my family, and my fellow community members can look forward to here in South Lake Tahoe should Austin Sass be elected to a seat on our City Council.

Two years ago when Sass was narrowly defeated and was denied a council seat that I and many voters felt should be rightly given to him when a sitting council member, with two years left on her term, resigned weeks after the election. Sass eagerly jumped through every hoop that the sitting council members required for their "appointment" process. I'd be lying if I didn't tell you that Sass was very disappointed and even somewhat disillusioned about his desire to run for a council seat in the future, and in my mind rightly so. Now I want to point out that I used the term "somewhat" because when weeks after that election two years ago we talked and I opined that he should give it one more shot in 2014 his head and mouth said, "I don't know." But his eyes told me yes.

Perseverance, dedication, qualified on every level required of

a council member, and most of all, passionately cares for his community and wants to do his part to create a sustainable path for the future generations of South Lake Tahoe community members. Anyone who has read any of his interviews or has attended any of the candidate forums knows that Sass is highly versed in the current issues facing the council, agencies and regulations involved in the Basin, and has a firm grasp on the processes to achieve the best outcome for the members of our community both residential and business.

Not only has Austin received the endorsement of *Lake Tahoe News*, but also Taylor Flynn of the *Tahoe Mountain News*. Well, and of course mine!

In closing, I want to urge each and every member of our South Lake Tahoe community registered to vote, to not only vote Nov. 4, but to make sure that you make one of your three choices Austin Sass for city of South Lake Tahoe City Council member.

Toogee Sielsch, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: Tahoe Fund making basin a better place

To the community,

In 2010, amidst a backdrop of discord in the Tahoe basin, a group of people who love Tahoe came together to start the Tahoe Fund. As leaders in conservation, business and community, our interests were diverse, but all agreed we could do better for Tahoe. There was a lot of pent up energy to do tangible projects that would protect the environment, improve recreation and increase environmental stewardship.

Not wanting to reinvent the wheel, we decided the best way to do that would be to support the already existing environmental improvement program (EIP), a collaborative interagency effort to identify priority projects which was a result of the first Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit. In our first few years, we have raised funds for more than a dozen projects to expand the network of bike trails, fight invasive species, and restore important watersheds. Projects include the Van Sickle Bi-State Park, removal of Asian clams from Emerald Bay, restoration of Blackwood Creek, and a new bike path from Incline Village to Sand Harbor. A full list of our projects can be found online.

I would like to thank the visionary Tahoe Fund supporters who make these projects possible. With your help we can increase our impact and leave a legacy for generations to come.

Cory Ritchie, Tahoe Fund board member

Letter: Measure F deserves a yes vote

To the community,

I strongly encourage our community to vote yes on Measure F. This measure helps to maintain and upgrade existing facilities on the Lake Tahoe Community College campus, construct a public safety training center for emergency personnel training, and supports the planning of on-site residential housing.

The college gives our local kids a hometown college option upon graduating from high school. The college is an important training ground for our youth, who someday will be leading this community, in much-needed skills such as fire safety,

environmental protection and business development.

LTCC is one of the smallest community colleges in the state. Of the 112 colleges, Tahoe is one of eight with less than 3,000 full-time students enrolled. This presents challenges since with a smaller enrollment there is less tuition collected to maintain facilities and to lay the foundation for the next phase of the college. The college has developed a well thought-out strategic plan including increasing energy efficiency, modernizing the science and computer labs, establishing a sustainability degree, and offering four-year degrees in certain fields.

Even non-traditional students get to directly benefit from the college by enrolling in classes that can help further their careers, or to just add a new skill or hobby. There is a robust year-round theater program featuring local talent, a state-of-the-art culinary program, and an expansive physical education facility with a large variety of classes. You can learn a new skill from highly qualified faculty, such as creative writing, pottery, dance, computer programming, and there are many more to choose from.

LTCC and its diverse and rich programs and beautiful campus were built by long-time locals who dedicated thousands of volunteer hours to creating this vision. Forty years ago this dedicated group launched the college in a motel along Highway 50. Twenty-five years ago they broke ground on the first building on the beautiful campus where it exists today.

Let's not let the heart and soul of the South Shore community and the vision and hard work of dedicated locals just wither away. The measure will add an average of \$68 per year to our property taxes. This small investment provides a high return for the community.

Kim Carr, South Lake Tahoe