Letter: An alternative revenue source for S. Tahoe

Publisher's note: ***This was first sent to the South Lake Tahoe City Council more than two weeks ago with no response. The author asked for it to be published on Lake Tahoe News.***

Dear City Council members,

As you are well aware, the city of South Lake Tahoe urgently needs to cover an annual budget shortfall of $1,000,000 for at least the next four years. This proposal will present a brief outline of a plan for filling that shortfall without any significant environmental or otherwise negative impact on the city. Best of all, it will not require the city to spend a single dime in order to collect this additional one million dollars each year.

Instead of cutting back on services, or forcing loyal City employees to take reduced salaries, or installing parking meters or other odious projects that will only generate a fraction of the money needed and will probably upset many of your constituents, I am proposing a plan that will balance your budget – with little effort and zero additional cost on the part of the city.



Steve Kubby

Before I present my plan for putting South Lake Tahoe back in the black, you need to understand the extraordinary background

and exceptional talent of those who will be involved in ensuring this program is successful. My company, KUSH, of which I am founder and CEO, features an impressive all-star Board of Directors:

• former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson

• former LAPD Deputy Chief Stephen Downing

• Jurist James P. Gray

• former U.S. Sen. Mike Gravel.

These men who make up our board understand federal law, state law, case law, and the conflicting legal conundrum that exists with respect to medical marijuana. Our attorney, William McPike, was recently featured on the cover of the National Law Review as one of the nation's top marijuana lawyers. In addition, we have Dr. David Allen, a former heart surgeon, as our medical director. We also are proud to have world cannabis authority Ed Rosenthal as our director of research.

The famous inventor of the geodesic dome, Buckminster Fuller, once said, "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

It is in this spirit of creative cooperation and building a new model that makes existing models obsolete that our company, KUSH, was founded.

Our management team consists of high profile experts who understand the convoluted world of medical marijuana law and practice. Our uniquely qualified team of experts understand the standards used by successful dispensaries to create a medical marijuana business program that is virtually invisible within the local community. For example, under our program, we would not allow any medical marijuana dispensary to display anything other than their address on or around their facility.

No signage or even names of dispensaries allowed. Patients know how to find dispensaries through online websites like WeedMaps, so there is no reason for dispensaries to publicly display anything besides the numbers of their physical address. Not only would we insist that dispensaries be invisible to the community, but under our supervision, their staff would be required to ensure that zero unauthorized consumption or sales takes place anywhere near their facility.

Speaking of staff, do we really want dispensary employees who are covered with tattoos and look like gang members, as is the case under the city's current program? Under our program, all dispensary staff will be required to maintain a professional appearance that is appropriate to a medical facility. Likewise, the community doesn't want to see young people hanging out at dispensary sponsored reggae parties, something which is currently allowed by the city.

Legitimate dispensary organizations understand these issues and are happy to comply.

An important part of our job is setting standards that are consistent with well run facilities, comply with state law, and carefully avoid setting off red flags with federal authorities.

The recent decision by the California Supreme Court that local cities and counties can ban dispensaries grabbed all the headlines. However, the court also officially recognized that dispensaries with over-the-counter sales are legal in California. Until now, some authorities had insisted that dispensaries are not legal, so it is important that this key issue was finally resolved by the high court.

The prospect of many jurisdictions banning dispensaries is creating a spectacular opportunity for our town, similar to what happened here in the past with the gaming industry. As you know, for decades South Lake Tahoe relied upon the nearby

Stateline casinos to attract large numbers of tourists and dollars. Clearly, those days are over. The harsh reality is that Indian casinos have devastated our local economy and our town has no choice but to step up our game.

The only real question is how can a town that allows gambling and liquor 24/7, claim any moral objections to medical marijuana. Nearly nine out of 10 Americans – including 80 percent of self-identified Republicans – now say that marijuana should be legal if its use is permitted by a physician, according to nationwide Fox News telephone poll of 1,010 registered voters.

While the past experience in South Lake Tahoe with medical marijuana did not go well, it is important to remember that I specifically warned the city manager and city attorney [who are no longer employed here], in a private meeting with all three dispensary operators, that these dispensaries were not in compliance with state law or even basic standards of the medical marijuana industry. That meeting took place on April 14, 2011, at the Blue Angel Cafe. Nobody wanted to hear or discuss my concerns then, but two of these three dispensaries have since been closed down and it is clear in retrospect that they were not in compliance, just as I had warned.

Unlike the city's current program, we would strictly limit cultivation for dispensaries to local growers and patients within the city boundaries. City residents would be able to supplement their income through a regulated and independently supervised cultivation program that benefits the entire community. Landlords would immediately benefit by this program because growers would be supervised and privately inspected on a regular basis in order to be allowed to sell their medical marijuana locally. Since most patients and growers would prefer to avoid the risks of transporting medical marijuana on the open road, they would have a strong motivation to allow our private inspectors to examine their home gardens to ensure no damage is occurring and proper health and safety procedures

are being followed.

Our licensing program would not give anyone permission to violate federal law, nor can we be responsible for any federal actions against dispensaries we license. Our mission would be strictly limited to providing supervision and inspections to ensure the health and safety of these dispensaries and their products, within the boundaries of South Lake Tahoe. Such actions are entirely consistent with both state and federal law, which recognize the right of local jurisdictions to enact their own laws to protect public health and safety.

The proposed program would also go a long way toward improving the appearance of blighted areas of South Lake Tahoe.

Most professional dispensary organizations that I work with are happy to locate in the most blighted and economically depressed areas, as well as in industrial zones, since they understand that this is where they are most welcomed. Furthermore, dispensaries often invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to upgrade the exterior and interior of rundown properties as a way to gain acceptance within their local community.

We also understand that marijuana odor is a very serious issue with the community. While you can threaten irresponsible growers with fines, we will get much better results if growers know that they must meet our strict standards for cultivation and odor control, before they will be allowed to sell to any local dispensaries. Growers don’t want police or city officials visiting their gardens, but they will allow our private inspectors to verify they are in compliance.

Under the plan I am proposing, tourists and their dollars would again flock to our city for the same reason they once came here for gambling, in order to take advantage of something that is legal, but forbidden to them where they live. Now, with this decision by the California Supreme Court,

more and more patients will see their local dispensaries banned and be forced to go to the Bay Area to purchase their medical marijuana. If you are a patient and are faced with fighting traffic in the Bay Area or driving up to Tahoe instead, which would you pick? Likewise, if you or your family member is a medical marijuana patient and you are planning a vacation, you are going to find it safer, easier and more enjoyable to come to South Lake Tahoe than just about anywhere else.

In addition to the enormous tax and business license revenue from a carefully regulated medical marijuana program, we will see major new revenue streams for a wide range of businesses. Our local radio, newspaper and online media could see a badly needed boost in ad revenue from dispensaries. At the same time, our licensing program could specify strict limits on dispensary advertising so that their ads conform to what one would expect for a medical facility, such as a dentist or veterinarian. Local business property owners would also receive long awaited relief in the form of new rental income, from businesses that can pay top dollar and be relied upon to pay promptly each and every month.

Let’s take a closer look at exactly how the city of South Lake Tahoe can generate a million dollars a year with a strictly regulated and taxed medical marijuana program. Let’s say we were to license eight dispensaries, like Oakland does. That amounts to $1,400,000 a year just in taxes for Oakland. In addition it provides employment for close to 100 people. Granted, Oakland is bigger than South Lake Tahoe with 390,724 residents. However, it is not unusual for our local population to swell to 250,000 during high seasons and holidays. In addition, unlike Oakland, our city is surrounded for hundreds of miles with jurisdictions that have already or will soon ban dispensaries. This city can draw upon a large surrounding area where patients have no real alternatives and a complex of eight well run dispensaries, offering a wide variety of

strains and edibles, would be a powerful draw throughout the state. Hence, the notion that the city of South Lake Tahoe could generate a million dollars in taxes and licenses is actually quite realistic.

The program I am proposing is really very simple. You sign an agreement with us that gives us the exclusive power to grant special licenses to dispensaries, edible manufacturers, and related businesses. We in turn thoroughly interview and investigate all potential licensees, set strict standards of operation, oversee operations and verify all fees are current with the city. Our company would not require any money from the city. Instead, we will bill all licensees directly to cover our services. We would have the right to suspend or cancel any license and oversee the operation of all licensees, sparing the City Council headaches, wasted time and expensive lawsuits.

Let me be very clear. I cannot promise that we will raise $1,000,000 in our first year, but I can tell you that it is my sincere belief that this program can raise much more in the first year than you will ever see from parking meters or stricter traffic enforcement, or any other revenue generating program currently being considered. It is also my belief that we can raise $500,000 by year two and reach our goal of $1,000,000 by year three.

As much as you probably don’t want to think about medical marijuana, you owe it to your constituents to look at anything that will balance the budget and bring money and jobs back into the local economy. Right now, South Lake Tahoe is on its way to becoming a ghost town with a population that is in decline, employment that is in decline and business in general, except for the ski hill, that is in decline. Raising taxes isn’t an option, because it will only hasten the exodus of families, businesses and capital fleeing South Lake Tahoe. The only real and lasting solution to solving the city’s budget problems is to generate new revenue. And the only

realistic new revenue stream for the City is medical marijuana. We can provide the expertise and structure to make medical marijuana a simple and practical solution for solving the current budgetary crisis.

In summary, our firm can offer the city of South Lake Tahoe the following benefits:

• Create a legal firewall between the city and the licensing and management of dispensaries.

• Generate up to $1,000,000 in revenue through taxes and fees.

• Generate up to 100 new jobs within the city.

• Boost local economy and real estate market.

• Protect local landlords by creating a private inspection program to ensure homes are not damaged by cultivation.

• Provide a powerful draw for people to come to South Lake Tahoe over other travel destinations.

• Serve as a serious source of additional income for city residents.

• Operate under regulations that would forbid outdoor advertising and strictly limit other forms of advertising.

• Restricts storefront dispensaries to blighted industrial areas, out of sight of the community and children.

• Creates a self-supporting program that won’t burden the City Council with any financial requirements or obligations.

If you are serious about fixing the gaping million dollar hole in your annual budget, I am ready to meet with you to answer your questions and to show you how we can create a program that is a win/win for all involved.

Sincerely,

Steve Kubby, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: MontBleu helps support Bread & Broth

To the community,

Bread & Broth would like to express its gratitude to MontBleu Resort Casino & Spa for financing an Adopt A Day of Nourishment and sending two very hardworking and conscientious volunteers to their Monday evening's sponsorship dinner on May 22.

Their sponsorship supported B&B's goal of feeding the less fortunate of the South Shore. Each Monday warm and hearty meals are served to the working poor, families in need, elderly on fixed incomes as well as those living outdoors.

MontBleu's Melissa Patton, director of human resources, and Ruby Turner, director of hotel operations, were busy throughout the entire setup and meal serving. They were a great help to the B&B volunteers. Ruby had a "wonderful time helping and meeting such nice people" and Melissa thought the B&B program was "great and truly appreciated the opportunity to participate in the B&B volunteering experience".

Bread & Broth salutes MontBleu Resort Casino & Spa for their generosity and commitment to the South Lake Tahoe community through their annual sponsorship of an Adopt A Day.

As a nonprofit program, B&B relies on the generosity of our sponsors to provide meals on Monday at St. Theresa's parish hall and Friday at Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church.

If you would like to support Bread & Broth's program, please contact me at (530) 542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

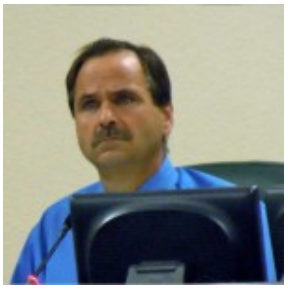
Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Editorial: Nutting's excuses not good enough

Publisher's note: ***This editorial is from the May 30, 2013, Sacramento Bee.***

After months of speculation, El Dorado County Supervisor Ray Nutting was arrested Tuesday and charged with four felonies – most of them related to approximately $70,000 in state grants he received for clearing brush on his own land. After his arrest, Nutting posted his entire $55,000 bail in cash, money he said came from family and friends in an "unbelievable outpouring of support."

In the criminal complaint he filed on Tuesday, El Dorado District Attorney Vern Pierson alleges that Nutting failed to report all his income on Form 700, the statement of economic disclosure all elected officials are required to fill out annually. Besides payments from the state for brush clearance, the complaint alleges that Nutting failed to disclose $26,040 in cash he deposited in his bank account in 2009, $6,803 in income for work "pushing stumps" and another $16,334 in rent money he collected.



Ray Nutting

Through his attorney, Nutting insists he did nothing wrong. “It’s all horse puckey,” David Weiner, the supervisor’s attorney, told the *Bee*, citing a failure to fill out paperwork. “Obviously he didn’t put some things down that some people think he should have,” Weiner told the *Bee*‘s editorial board. “He’s a country boy who works in the woods who happens to be a politician.”

The paperwork failure alleged in the complaint against Nutting is no small oversight. Form 700 is the principal tool state and local governments in California use to track political corruption. When an elected official fails to disclose all sources of income, it’s impossible to know when official acts – an appointment to a government post, for example, or a vote for or against a contract – serve to line the politician’s own pocket.

The final count in the criminal complaint accuses Nutting of violating state conflict of interest statutes when, as a member of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, he voted for contracts in which he had a financial interest. Specifically Nutting approved a series of contracts for two different local resource conservation districts worth more than $300,000. The board members of these districts sit on a joint powers authority that approved the state brush-clearing grants Nutting received.

In a long piece defending his action posted on his private website, raynutting.com, Nutting states that the El Dorado Board of Supervisors “has no involvement either directly or

indirectly, in the oversight, administration or management of the grant program.” The supervisor and his attorney strongly suggest the prosecution is politically motivated, an allegation that DA Pierson dismisses as “silly.”

Nutting is a controversial figure who has accumulated his share of political enemies during his 13 years on the El Dorado board. Thus it is reassuring that his case will be prosecuted jointly by the El Dorado district attorney and the California attorney general.

But whether or not he is found guilty, he’s demonstrated a startlingly poor judgment by not recusing himself on resource conservation district contracts and failing to fully disclose income on his Form 700s.

Letter: Tahoe Arts Projects grateful to community

To the community,

Bueno, Marty and Tracy Kettlesen of Bert’s Café recently hosted a Spaghetti Night fundraiser for Tahoe Arts Project. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by many.

All of us at Tahoe Arts Project would like to thank Crystal Dairy, Bonanza Produce and Rainbo Bakery and of course the staff at Bert’s for helping to make this fundraiser a success.

A big thank you to all of you who had dinner with us that evening and to Wendy David, Curtis Fong, Deb Howard and Carol Chaplin who helped serve our guests.

Thank you to Bueno and Marty for your continued support.

Tahoe Arts Project is a nonprofit organization that brings professional performing arts into the schools and community of South Lake Tahoe. Event proceeds will benefit over 5,000 K-12th grade students who see our programs.

If you would like to know how you can support Tahoe Arts Project, please call (530) 542.3632.

Thank you,

Peggy Thompson, executive director Tahoe Arts Project

Letter: Sierra House PTA says thanks

To the community,

On behalf of the families and staff of Sierra House Elementary School, the PTA would like to thank the following for their generosity and support. Their contributions toward our “Sierra House Rocks It, Vegas Style” fundraiser on May 18 are greatly appreciated.

All proceeds will go toward our annual 5th Grade Naturebridge Field Science Program at the Marin Headlands.

We’d also like to thank those who attended and John and the members and staff of the American Legion.

What a fun night!

Thank you to:

American Legion

Café Fiore Italian Restaurant

Steamers’ Bar & Grill

Fat City Food Company

Straw Hat Pizza

Cakes by Grace

Harrah’s/Harveys Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe Beach & Ski Club

Lake Tahoe Golf Course

Sierra-at-Tahoe

Elements Day Spa

Lake Tahoe Massage & Skin Care

Moxy Fitness

Jump4Fun

Reno Aces

San Francisco 49ers

Lake Tahoe Cruises

Imagine Salon

Adore Boutique

Tahoe Bowl

Classic Cue

Sessions Salon

Acqua Hair Design

Mont Bleu Resort & Casino

Stateline Brewery

Tahoe Tot Spot

Grocery Outlet

Jennifer Bronken

Sober Grad Night Board of Directors

Robert and Jennifer Hart

Anthony and Erin Howard

Jill Rice

Chris and Heather Wildman

Jo Anna Chamarro

Kristen Perry

Shandi and Nick Ashmore

Edna Schwartz

Kellee Koeppen

Allison McClea

Ryan and Carey Galles

Morgan Cook

Merete and Jim Smith

Heather and Nick Bauer

Melody and Matt Levitt

Theresa and Brent Wolfe.

Sincerely,

Theresa Aguillon-Wolfe, Sierra House Elementary PTA secretary

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Opinion: Fire prevention is up to everyone

By Steve Burns

Two consecutive dry winters, including the driest January, February and March on record, may increase the potential for wildfire this summer. Help prevent wildfire in the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding areas by following these simple steps and please encourage others to do the same.

By working together, we can help protect our homes, the community and our public lands from wildfire.

Dispose of cigarette butts properly. Don’t toss cigarettes out of car windows. Dispose of butts in the car’s ashtray or a bottle of water.

If smoking outdoors, make sure to have a 3-foot clearance from anything flammable and grind the cigarette out in the dirt, not on a log or stump. Do not leave butts behind as litter.

Abide by campfire restrictions. When and where campfires are allowed, be sure to keep the fire to a manageable size and never leave unattended. Use water to extinguish the fire and make sure the ashes are cold to the touch before leaving. Remember, fires are not allowed on Forest Service beaches or in the general forest.

Leave fireworks to the professionals. Remember fireworks and

sparklers are illegal in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Enjoy a public fireworks display instead of taking the risk that using illegal fireworks brings to you, our community, and the forest.

Be careful with propane and charcoal grills. Follow local ordinances on their use. Grills should be located away from structures. For gas grills, make sure to turn off the knobs and the propane bottle when you're done. For charcoal grills, make sure the briquettes are cold before disposing of them.

Use spark arrestors. When operating equipment such as chain saws or leaf blowers, or operating vehicles such as tractors or motorcycles, make sure they have an approved spark arrestor.

Be careful to not park on vegetation. Parking on vegetation can cause a car's catalytic converter to spark a fire.

Comply with rules for burning residential debris. When residential burning is allowed, make sure to do it safely. Check with the local fire department on the day of the burn to confirm weather conditions are favorable. Burn in a cleared area, and never leave the fire unattended.

Prepare your home and property for wildfire with defensible space. Clear pine needles off roofs and make sure fuels such as wood or other flammable materials are not stored on or below decks. Remove flammable plants, such as junipers and other debris like dead vegetation, low hanging branches and rake pine needles. Learn more about defensible space by going online.

The Forest Service will likely implement fire restrictions this summer. For the up-to-date information on fire restrictions on National Forest System lands in the Lake Tahoe Basin, go online.

Steve Burns is acting fire management officer of the U.S.

Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

Letter: Austin’s House thankful for generosity

To the community,

There were three recent events in the Carson Valley that produced donations to Austin’s House from our generous neighbors.

The Carson Valley Middle School Drama Club performed the play “Goldilocks on Trial: at the CVIC Hall in Minden. This “Kids Helping Kids” event was a rousing success and raised a total of $2,150.

Ella Dillwith, 13, who started the Carson Valley Middle School Drama Club with her mother, Jen Dillwith, presented the money to Patty Clark, founder of the Austin Kirby Foundation.

Austin’s House is named in honor of Austin Kirby and the Austin Kirby Foundation has been the largest donor to Austin’s House every year.

Patty Clark also organized a “Parking Lot Sale for Austin’s House” at her business, Century 21 Clark Properties. Nearly $2,000 was raised selling donated items in one day with the assistance of the real estate agents and generous community members.

Keri Sheering, owner of the O2 Yoga & Wellness Center and the “Dharma Zephyr Insight Meditation Community” held a yoga and meditation workshop in Minden. Patty Clark’s granddaughter, Taylor Allmett, made a presentation about Austin’s House. As a

result, the people at the workshop donated almost $700 for Austin's House. It was a terrific outpouring of generosity for one afternoon.

Austin's House is the only emergency children's shelter in rural Northern Nevada. Austin's House provides services and care for up to 10 children from infants to age 18. The children are placed at Austin's House after being removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. Austin's House provides the basic living necessities including proper nutrition, hygiene, rest, nurturing, recreation, companionship, life skills training and education. The facility depends on continued generous support from the community to keep the doors open.

If you would like more information or would like to make a donation to Austin's House, call (775) 267.6711.

Conrad Buedel, Austin's House

Opinion: Questioning if it's ever OK to manipulate photos

By Margaret Sullivan, New York Times

A powerful picture taken by the Swedish photographer Paul Hansen last year, of men carrying the bodies of dead children through the streets of Gaza City, was artfully composed and filled with anguish.

But was it authentic? After it won a prestigious award, selected photo of the year by World Press Photo, questions arose about whether it was a digitally altered composite.

Hansen denied that, and last week, World Press Photo confirmed that the image was genuine.

The challenge to the photo, called “Gaza Burial,” illustrates a point: In news photography, manipulation of images is strictly forbidden. At the Times, such rules have been stated and vigorously enforced for many years. Whether from the South Bronx or Syria, news photos must represent unaltered reality.

That hasn’t changed, but in one corner of the *Times*, different rules prevail.

I stumbled across this last week when I wrote a blog post about readers’ objections to a fashion photo spread in *T*, the monthly style magazine. I asked its editor, Deborah Needleman, about one objection: that the cover model was too skinny. She responded that she, too, felt that many models were too thin, and with this one she had considered “adding some fat to her with Photoshop.”

John Schwartz, a *Times* reporter, was among the first to react. On Twitter, he called her comment “jaw-dropping.” That reflected how deeply most journalists feel about the integrity of photographs.

“That is inviolate, and the standards are very clear,” Michele McNally, assistant managing editor for photography, told me. The *Times* does not stage news photographs, or alter them digitally.

But *Times* editors see the fashion photography in *T* as an exception. “Fashion is fantasy,” McNally said. “Readers understand this. It’s totally manipulated, with everything done for aesthetics.”

Philip B. Corbett, the associate managing editor for standards, agreed. “This is a different genre of photography,” he said. “It has different goals, different tools and techniques, and there is a different expectation on the part

of the reader."

When I followed up with Needleman, she too said that fashion magazines abided by different standards than news organizations do. In *T*'s fashion photography, she confirmed, "images are sometimes retouched," she said. "Red taken out of someone's eye, a wrinkle in a skirt smoothed, a model's tattoo removed." But even within *T*, various standards prevail. Only with "fashion/glamour photography" is manipulation allowable, she said. A travel article or personality profile would be subject to traditional rules.

These *Times* editors agree that readers' expectations are important here. After all, no one opens Vogue with the expectation that they're seeing Gisele Bundchen looking like she does when she wakes up. In a 2009 article in the *Times*, the style writer Eric Wilson noted how pervasive photo alteration was at fashion magazines: "It now seems fresh, even exclamation-worthy, when a magazine presents an unvarnished image."

The editors are confident that readers know the difference.

But here's the catch: *T* magazine is still a *New York Times* editorial product. Although it generates (and is intended to generate) plenty of advertising revenue, its content is not "advertorial," that strange hybrid that looks like journalism but is actually advertising copy. *T* is produced by journalists who are part of the newsroom structure, and readers might reasonably have the expectations that standards are the same across the board.

I asked Stuart Emmrich, editor of the Styles section, about fashion photography there. He responded that Styles adheres to traditional rules: "We strictly forbid any altering or manipulation of photos that have been shot for Styles, including fashion shoots." I heard the same from Kathy Ryan, director of photography for the *Times* magazine, which also

allows no manipulation. (In all cases, minor color-toning and brightening for production purposes are acceptable.)

Photos from outside sources may have been altered before they reach the *Times*, Emmrich said. “We can’t control everything, but our photo editor does look closely to see if she can spot any heavy retouching,” he said.

And sometimes, in various parts of the *Times*, the label “photo illustration” on what Ryan calls a “high-concept” picture makes it clear that this is not a rendering of reality. It is all part of making sure readers know that what they are looking at is authentic.

Granted, a dramatic news photo from the streets of Gaza is a far cry from a magazine’s fashion spread. Maybe readers intuitively get the difference. But they may not. In the words of one surprised reader, Fred Zimmerman, “Is such doctoring allowed at the *Times*?”

Newspaper people sometimes assume too much about what readers know — for example, the difference between the opinions expressed in editorials and those expressed by a news-page columnist, or even the difference between a staff-written obituary and a paid death notice.

It would be best if all the photography produced by the *Times* newsroom could be held to the same standard. If that is deemed unrealistic for some parts of a fashion magazine, some transparency (and not the kind that has to do with gossamer fabrics) is needed. For example, a brief statement in each issue of *T* stating its photo practices would help.

Being forthcoming with readers is the answer to many of journalism’s trickiest questions. The world of fashion photography — where a waistline may shrink or a tattoo may disappear at the tweak of a few pixels — is distinctive in many ways, but not in that one.

Letter: Patience needed regarding Chateau project

Publisher's note: ***This letter was submitted to the city in regards to the Chateau project. It is reprinted with permission.***

Members of the city of South Lake Tahoe Planning Commission:

As a former member of the Planning Commission for approximately 13 years, I am well aware of the difficult task that you have before you in recommending action to the City Council regarding the stalled Convention Center and Retail project. I served on the Planning Commission in the early stages of the project and saw it as an engine for driving the economy of the city as well as a good land use for the properties involved.

The commission at that time saw the project in its entirety and supported it as a complete project, not one to be completed in stages. As time has passed, that vision has seemed to become difficult to complete as originally planned. I urge you to look to our actions involving the then Embassy Vacation Resort as a successful guide as to how to proceed involving such a complex project to be completed in stages. Our actions consolidated all the parcels, abandoned all the streets and assured that the project would be built in four stages.

I strongly urge you to recommend to the City Council that the project be approved under the following conditions:

1. That all the parcels of the project, not just the six being considered, be consolidated at this time. This will work to

insure that the complete project be completed.

2. That all the streets in the complete project area be abandoned, not just the one you are considering. This will show developers that the city is looking ahead and continues to support the project as initially envisioned.

3. That no action be taken until all the original property owners in project area be financially be made “whole”.

We are on the verge of finally seeing this long stalled project come to completion. I urge you to not be rushed into a hasty decision. Look to the past for successful actions on how to proceed in order for us all to prosper.

Thank you,

Patrick J. Frega, South Lake Tahoe

Opinion: Plan to rough it a bit after disaster

By Tracy Franklin

This is the fifth of a series of articles highlighting emergency preparedness. Use these tools to prepare yourself for an emergency. More information is available in the city’s website.

Choosing comfort over inconvenience:

Coping with the impact of a disaster is never fun. However, much of the inconvenience and discomfort the disaster causes can be reduced by planning alternative ways to take care of

your needs.

Acquiring emergency supplies:

At first glance, the list below may seem totally overwhelming. At second glance, you'll find that you probably already have many of these items.

Lighting:

Caution: The use of candles is no longer recommended as a source of emergency light. Experience shows they are responsible for too many secondary fires following the disaster. Additionally, they are very dangerous in the presence of leaking natural gas.

• Flashlights and extra batteries

• Camping lanterns—store extra fuel, wicks, mantles and matches

• Lightsticks—these can provide light for 1 to 12 hours and can be purchased at many camping supply

Cooking:

Caution: Never burn charcoal indoors. This could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

• Camp stoves, sterno stoves, or barbecues – store extra propane, charcoal or sterno, lighter fluid, and matches,

• Fireplaces—do not use until the chimney and flue have been inspected for cracks. Sparks may escape into your attic through an undetected crack and start a fire.

• Paper plates and cups

• Plastic utensils

• Paper towels

Pets:

Always keep a week’s supply of food and water for your pet on hand. Toilet bowl water is an excellent supply of water for pets following an emergency event.

Protecting stored foods when the power goes out is very important.

• Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

• A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to six hours.

• A full freezer will maintain safe temperatures for up to two days.

Foods to be concerned about are categorized into groups:

• Potentially hazards foods are the most important. These include meats, fish, poultry, dairy, eggs, soft cheeses, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, custards, puddings, etc.

• Some foods may not be hazardous but the quality may be affected. These foods include salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter, margarine, produce, hard cheeses, etc.

• Some foods are safe. These are carbonated beverages, unopened bottled juices, ketchup, mustard, relishes, jams, peanut butter, BBQ sauce, etc.

How do I know if the food is unsafe to eat?

• You cannot rely upon appearance or odor. Never taste food to determine safety.

• Some foods may look and smell fine but they’ve been warm too long, food poisoning bacteria may have grown enough to make you sick.

• If possible, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the foods. If potentially hazardous foods are colder than 45 degrees, they are safe.

Sanitation:

• The lack of sanitation facilities following emergency events can quickly create secondary problems unless basic guidelines are followed. If the water lines are damaged, or is suspected, do not flush the toilet.

• Avoid digging holes in the ground and using these. Untreated raw sewage can pollute fresh ground water supplies. It also attracts flies and promotes the spread of diseases.

• Store a large supply of heavy-duty plastic bags, twist ties, disinfectant and toilet paper.

• A good disinfectant that is easy to use is a solution of one part liquid bleach to ten parts water.

• If the toilet is not able to be flushed, it can still be used. This is less stressful for most people than using some other container. Remove all the water. Line bowl with a heavy-duty plastic bag. When finished, add a small amount of deodorant or disinfectant, securely tie the bag, and dispose of it in a large trash can with a tight fitting lid.

• Portable camp toilets, small trash cans, or sturdy buckets lined with heavy-duty plastic bags can be used. Those with tight fitting lids are best.

Emergency information:

Obtain a battery powered radio and supply of extra batteries.

South Lake Tahoe emergency preparation:

As part of the city’s initiative to increase communications, we will be offering a 12 part monthly series during 2013

highlighting emergency preparedness. Use these tools to prepare yourself for an emergency.

Tracy Franklin is the public information officer for South Lake Tahoe.