

Opinion: Take out LT Golf Course, protect trout in river

By Huey Johnson

In the 1960s, while I was with the Department of Fish and Game, it was my sad task to study the trout of Lake Tahoe. Few remember that an atrocity against Tahoe occurred there, an atrocity comparable to the slaughter of the once great buffalo herds of the Great Plains: the completion of the nation's first Federal Bureau of Reclamation dam.

Derby Dam blocked the Truckee River and killed the huge run of trout that had, for thousands of years, come from Pyramid Lake upriver to Tahoe. That first year, the new dam blocked tons of huge trout trying to spawn while the dam's beneficiaries – desert hay farmers – pitchforked wagonloads of fish, which they used as fertilizer.

Back then, lovely Lake Tahoe had such a large trout population that it supported a commercial fishery. Dams like Derby disrupted that.

Read the whole story

Huey Johnson is president of the Resource Renewal Institute, a Mill Valley nonprofit.

Film raises disturbing questions about Sept. 11, 2001

Publisher's note: *The American Legion in South Lake Tahoe will have a ceremony for Patriots Day at 11am.*

By Kathryn Reed

Filmmaker Dylan Avery calls his film "Loose Change" one based on facts, not one based on conspiracy theories.



It was first released in 2005 and has had subsequent updates. The latest version came out in 2009. That is the one I recently viewed.

It's all about Sept. 11, 2001. The documentary goes back in history to Hitler's rise in Nazi Germany, includes events leading up to the day the Twin Towers were leveled, and delves into the aftermath in the years that followed.

I wasn't in the country Sept 11. I wasn't inundated with news stories. I didn't fear for my life in ways others did in thinking the United States would be struck again by terrorists.

As a journalist and ardent supporter of the First Amendment, I was alarmed to read about the government cracking down on journalists who sought the truth and questioned the government. What was there to hide? Why were the powers that be scared?

Our government never deserves our unquestioned allegiance. Look at what we did to our citizens of Japanese descent after

Pearl Harbor was bombed. Look at how we shuttled Native Americans off to reservations – a nightmarish issue that continues to have repercussions today. Look up Tuskegee syphilis experiment if you want to know what the government has done. Look in the produce aisle to see altered food products without substantive testing on them to know what they will do our bodies in years to come.

Could the government have brought down the Twin Towers in New York? Yes. Did it? I don't know.

The film raises chilling questions.

What were those puffs of smoke that appear to be detonation charges from various floors of both towers? Why did it seem to implode like a planned destruction more than it resembled an explosion?

I didn't realize the steel from the buildings was immediately hauled overseas. Why wasn't it kept on U.S. soil for structural engineers to analyze the integrity of the steel, to learn from this collapse to know how to fortify future buildings?

When I flew back to the States from South America in December 2001 it was to New York (via Miami) to spend New Year's Eve with Mom and my sister, Pam.

We were fortunate to visit Ground Zero the day it opened to the public. Rubble remained. But it was more like a crater.

Until this film, I had never seen footage of the plane hitting the first tower.

I had not realized until this film that no debris from the planes that hit the Pentagon and crashed in Pittsburgh was found. Like the filmmaker, I wonder how this is possible.

I wonder to this day how we took the great leap to assume Saddam Hussein and those still missing weapons of mass

destruction had something to do with 9/11. I wonder why my nephew has served two tours in Iraq. I worry about his safety even more now that in July he graduated from Special Forces training and is a Green Beret. Yes, it's his choice. He freely joined the Army.

As his aunt, I still worry – about him, and all the other men and women our government sends to fight its battles. I have yet to have someone explain to me how this is our war. *Our* being the people of the United States' as opposed to the *our* the government wants us to believe in.

Seeing "Loose Change" further confuses me and infuriates me.

On this somber ninth anniversary of 9/11 all I can do is feel empty.

Opinion: Prop. 22 comes with consequences

By Lou Paulson

Every time an election rolls around, we Californians face a new stack of propositions. They sound enticing to the naked ear but have a lot of hidden consequences. That fine print often carves out set-asides for special interests at the expense of taxpayers and public services.

Such is the case with Proposition 22, the latest, deeply flawed attempt by cities to keep the state from shifting local revenue to balance the budget.

On the surface, the measure sounds seductive. Protecting local tax dollars makes sense – so much sense that voters did it

four years ago by passing Proposition 1A.

That measure was balanced and reasonable. Prop. 22 isn't.

Under the guise of "reform," Proposition 22 locks a bulletproof shield around special pots of money for redevelopment agencies.

Read the whole story

Lou Paulson is president of California Professional Firefighters, representing more than 30,000 local, state and federal first responders. He lives in Walnut Creek, where he works as a fire captain. Lou Paulson is the president of the California Professional Firefighters.

Opinion: Stop state's looting of local tax dollars

By Chris McKenzie

By voting "yes" on Proposition 22 on Nov. 2, voters can stop state politicians from raiding local taxpayer funds that should be used at the local level for vital local services like emergency 911 response, police departments, fire departments, libraries, parks, and transportation improvements.

For years, Sacramento politicians have used loopholes in the law to take billions in taxpayer funds dedicated by voters to local government and transportation services.

These billions in state raids and losses of revenue due to the declining economy have forced deep cuts in local services

people depend on every day.

For example, Redwood City cut a dozen police positions, took a fire engine company out of service, cut park maintenance, cut street maintenance and announced that approval of building permits and processing would take longer from now on. In 2009-10 the city was forced to “loan” the state \$2.9 million of property taxes, which cost the state of California steep interest payments to Wall Street bankers and reduced funding for other services. This “loan” comes on top of \$5.4 million each year in property tax shifts from the city by the state.

Read the whole story

Chris McKenzie is the executive director of the League of California Cities. For more information visit www.savelocalservices.com, join our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter @yesonprop22.

Lake Tahoe News: Thank you for a wonderful first year

Thank you.

Without all of you, *Lake Tahoe News* would not be celebrating its one-year anniversary today.

☒ The proverbial they say it takes a village to do just about anything. That sentiment is certainly true when it comes to operating a successful 24/7 news site.

It's readers, sources, writers, comment contributors, advertisers, financial donors, news tipsters, friends and family who make *LTN* what it is. It's a collaborative effort –

even if your contribution is only to read stories. I use the word “only” lightly because if no one is reading the stories, then there is no point in what we do.

Lake Tahoe News has more than 25,000 readers a month in more than 50 countries and more than 1,000 cities. It’s not just people living in Lake Tahoe who care about Lake Tahoe. This point is evident by the millions who visit each year, the thousands who have second homes, and the billions of dollars that are spent in keeping the water pristine and the mountains healthy.

Lake Tahoe isn’t perfect. No place is. *Lake Tahoe News* isn’t perfect. No media outlet is. But what the basin and *LTN* have in common are the desire and struggle to be better than we were the day before.

Our first major story was the parade through South Lake Tahoe celebrating the release of Jaycee Lee Dugard after 18 years of captivity. It’s a story that is likely to be on the website for years to come. It’s a story that touches the core of humanity.

We will continue to bring you a mix of stories that capture what is going on in the basin, along with articles involving issues that affect people connected to the basin.

We are always looking for contributors via guest columns, freelance writers or story ideas. Email info@LakeTahoeNews.net if you want to contribute.

We are also always looking for advertisers. With *Lake Tahoe News* being the only place to get news about Lake Tahoe seven days a week, and the readers near and far, it’s the logical medium to reach your clients/customers. Rates are on the website – just hit the Advertise button.

We are always grateful for checks that arrive in the mail or cash via PayPal as a donation.

We will continue to offer free subscriptions. Just go to the Home page, near the bottom right add your email address. This will give you an email every morning listing what has been posted in the last 24 hours. Scan the headlines or click on one to get the full story.

Personally, the biggest story of the year was losing my Dad unexpectedly in April. He was a faithful reader of *LTN* – a subscriber. He and Mom made the first monetary donation to *LTN*. But it wasn't ever about the money. It was great to discuss stories with him. He was a retired construction consultant, an engineer – oh, the dialog we had about the stalled convention center. He read the whole operating agreement. I wonder how many council members or city employees have. He would call to say a link was broken. He would want to know stats about readers. He asked about ad sales. Sometimes I felt like he should have been the publisher. Mom brought a bottle of Champagne with her this past weekend to toast *Lake Tahoe News'* first year. Both of my parents have a lot to do with the success of *Lake Tahoe News*. I can't thank them enough.

I can't thank all of you enough. Here's to all of you!

Kathryn Reed, Lake Tahoe News publisher

Chamber thanks everyone for successful Sample the Sierra

Dear Publisher,

Thank you to all members of the South Shore community and visitors who attended the inaugural Sample the Sierra on Ski

Run Blvd last month.

The event, presented by Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and El Dorado County, drew more than 600 people who enjoyed the delicious foods offered, as well as sipping the various wines and beer that were paired. The “local” aspect undoubtedly reinforced the value and importance of community partnering together to celebrate the diverse bounty that the Sierra Nevada region has to offer.

Sample the Sierra featured food, produce, wine and beer tastings from the following, Bear Moon Bar & Grill, Harris Tree Farm, Mad Dog Mesa, Jodar Winery, Black Bear Inn, Rainbow Orchards, Latcham Vineyards, Blue Angel

Café, Perez Produce, Wofford Acres Vineyards, Bistro Danielle, Beals Orchard, Storm Valley Ranch, Chevalier Winery, Latin Soul at Lakeside Inn & Casino, Z &

B Ranch, Perry Creek Winery, Kids Inc Pie Shop, Tahoe Tallac Brewery, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Lava Cap Winery, 4 Seasons Soup & Salad Café, Sacred Paths Farm and Madrona Vineyards. Thanks to all for participating.

Sample the Sierra could not have happened without the support of generous sponsors including, the South Lake Tahoe Endowment funded by El Dorado Community Foundation, Weldon Wulstein Financial Services,

Buckingham Tahoe Rentals, Winter's Electric, Heavenly Mountain Resort, Deb Howard & Co Real Estate, Tahoe Beach & Ski Club, K-Tahoe, Tahoe Daily Tribune, Lake Tahoe/Outside TV and laketahoenews.net.

Kudos to the Boys & Girls Club, California Conservation Corps, Whittell Leadership Class, South Tahoe High School Cheer Squad, South Lake Tahoe Sustainability Commission, LTCC Future Business Leaders Club and all

the other volunteers who helped. Additional kudos to Pine Tree Printing, DIY Center and Kelly Moore Paints for donating supplies for the event.

Once again, thank you very much to everyone who helped make the inaugural Sample the Sierra a success. See you next year.

Sincerely,

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce

Rules about when officers may use Amber Alerts

To the community,

The amber alert system has become a powerful tool for the community and law enforcement when it comes to protecting our children. One of the main criteria in order to “activate” the system is an abduction actually has to occur.

There are no procedures to use the system when an actual abduction has not occurred. I copied the below text from the CHP webpage which lists the criteria:

“Criteria for activating an AMBER Alert

Law enforcement agencies ensure these conditions are met before activating an AMBER ALERT:

The investigating law enforcement agency confirms an abduction has occurred.

The victim is 17 years of age or younger, or has a proven mental or physical disability.

The victim is in imminent danger of serious injury or death.

There is information available that, if provided to the public, could assist in the child's safe recovery."

We waited to release the information to the press about last month's attempted abduction until we had the composite sketch completed. We wanted there to be a picture to go with the words so the public would have a better idea of what to look for.

We did notify surrounding law enforcement agencies when the incident occurred, and they assisted us with our initial investigation and search for the suspect.

In the future we'll work to get the preliminary information out to the press more timely.

The safety and protection of members of our community – especially our children – is something the South Lake Tahoe Police Department takes very seriously.

We appreciate and are very thankful for the assistance provided to us from the community when these types of incidents occur.

Thank you,

South Lake Tahoe police Lt. David Stevenson

Opinion: State park fee is just a scam

By Patrick Dorinson

We all love our parks, but parks aren't really what this initiative is about.

This is about ballot-box budgeting, plain and simple, which allows Sacramento lawmakers to continue the fiscal shell game they are playing with voters. It tests us to see just how far they can go before we cry "uncle."

Proposition 21 is an illustration of all that is so wrong with Sacramento "politics as usual" by allowing legislators to engage in budgetary sleight of hand, diverting all of the state's current budget allocation away from parks, and use it for entirely different purposes.

You thought Prop. 21 would add money to the general fund parks budget? Think again. Instead of adding to the parks budget, this measure is likely to have the effect of taking away the general government revenue from parks.

The vehicle tax will become the main funding source for state parks, which eventually could end up as a budget reduction.

Read the whole story

Patrick Dorinson is a political communications strategist and commentator in Sacramento.

Lawmakers could change rules to save counties with special elections

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the Sept. 4, 2010, Sacramento Bee.*

California's legislators talk a good game about saving taxpayer money. But handed a common-sense chance to do just that, they have completely flubbed it.

The secretary of state's office, the California Association of Counties and county officials could not find a single lawmaker – not one – willing to step forward and carry legislation to allow mail-only balloting for a Jan. 4 special election in the 1st Senate District.

With minimal impact on voters, that change could save the dozen cash-strapped counties in the district hundreds of thousands of dollars, including an estimated \$250,000 in Sacramento County and \$55,000 in El Dorado County.

Read the whole thing

Explaining what can be done about Tahoe's clarity

By Harold Singer

In the late 1960s the average depth of clarity at Lake Tahoe was measured at more than 100 feet. Lake clarity, like a person's temperature, is a sign of the health of the lake. A change in a person's temperature signals a health problem, but it does not tell you what is causing the problem. Similarly, a decline in lake clarity is a sign of a problem, but does not tell us what is causing the problem.

Since that time in the late '60s, lake clarity has declined about 30 feet. Also, in the last decade the amount of algae along the lake's shoreline appears to have increased

significantly – another sign of a problem.



Harold Singer

During the previous few decades, scientists believed the primary cause of clarity loss was increasing algae growth in the lake. This algae growth was due to increased nitrogen and phosphorus entering the lake from stormwater runoff and atmospheric deposits into the lake. Phosphorus was primarily associated with soil particles. So, restoration and water quality improvement projects focused on controlling erosion, capturing and trapping stormwater runoff before it reaches streams or the lake, and reducing fertilizer use. These efforts appear to have contributed to the slowing of the loss of clarity that has occurred over the last few years.

However, more recent studies have determined that reductions in clarity are influenced more by the presence and persistence of very fine sediment particles remaining in suspension in the lake, rather than algae. More than two-thirds of these fine sediments are generated in the developed areas around the lake and mostly from the roads. The remainder comes from locally generated air pollution that is deposited onto the lake surface (16 percent), runoff from forested lands – specifically dirt roads and trails (10 percent), and from stream channel erosion (4 percent).

In order to make real strides in addressing lake clarity, we all must focus our efforts on significantly reducing the amount of these very fine sediment particles along with nitrogen and phosphorus that get into Lake Tahoe.

The California Lahontan Water Board and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection have drafted a plan – The Lake Tahoe Total Maximum Daily Load for Sediment, Nitrogen and Phosphorus – to reduce fine sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus inputs to Lake Tahoe. This draft plan incorporates current efforts to reduce the amount of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) reaching the lake while placing additional emphasis on reducing fine sediment generated from the developed areas (local and state roads and developed commercial and residential parcels). In California, this plan would require the city of South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado and Placer counties, and Caltrans to take actions to reduce their contribution of fine sediment by 32 percent over 15 years.

In Nevada, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection will track similar reductions from Nevada road departments. Currently, these entities are required to treat all stormwater discharged to the lake to meet specified standards. The draft plan would give these entities flexibility to focus their efforts in areas that generate the greatest amount of pollutants, thereby providing cost-effective opportunities as compared to current requirements.

Now that we know what is causing the decline in lake clarity, we all have a role in helping the lake recover. All of us living and recreating in the Tahoe basin can do our part to assist state and local governments in this effort. Runoff from private parcels typically drains to roadways. Minimizing this runoff reduces the potential cost for the public agencies. Native soils provide natural infiltration; however, when soils are compacted due to frequent vehicle use or disturbance, more runoff is generated. Paving and providing infiltration systems for legal parking areas combined with restricting vehicle use on dirt surfaces also limits runoff to roadways or storm drainage systems.

The Lahontan Water Board will conduct a hearing Sept. 8 beginning at 9am at the Lake Tahoe Community College, with

anticipation of an additional hearing on Nov. 10 where the Water Board will consider adoption of the plan. The Lahontan Water Board website (<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>) contains a recently released film on the plan along with the proposed plan and supporting science.

Harold Singer is executive director of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.