

Bijou School thanks community

To the community,

Besides having a wonderful, hardworking staff with teachers who put in endless hours making school a wonderful place for its students, Bijou Community School has seen the generosity of many community organizations this year.

We just wanted to take a bit of time to thank all the different groups who have contributed to Bijou this year. Where do we start? Well, this past fall, we received grants from Barton Health Foundation for the prizes for our walk-a-thon along with playground equipment for every classroom. Shortly thereafter, El Dorado Community Foundation stepped up to support our library, a character education curriculum, supply costs, and books for our Two-Way Immersion Program.

Bijou also received donations from Big George Ventures, Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe, Heavenly, and our own PTA for the conversion of our dirt play area into a grassy field [that will occur this spring].

Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation also contributed by funding the 10 after school clubs we started with the help of dedicated parent volunteers. Bijou Community School was also supported by local restaurants including Chevy's and Ernie's Coffee Shop which held fundraisers for us.

And the list continues ... Heavenly Mountain Resort through its Echo grants gave contributions to the Two-Way Immersion Program as did the Serendipity Fund and Foresight Fund of the Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation.

Lastly, the Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe has also reserved its entire volunteer day for our school ... they will be making improvements and helping clean up our school on April 24.

In times like these, it is truly amazing to see so many organizations working so hard to contribute to our local children. We really cannot find the words to express my gratitude. We sincerely appreciate the time and effort so many people are putting towards our children, our families, our staff, and our school.

Thank you!

Kathy Haven

SLT Women's Center brings awareness to sexual assault

To the community,

April is Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month, South Lake Tahoe Women's Center is raising funds to support our local Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The team promotes the health and healing of adult and child sexual assault victims, holds sex offenders accountable for their crimes, and helps prevent further sexual violence from happening in South Lake Tahoe.

Our El Dorado County SART is a multidisciplinary group of local professionals that include Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), South Lake Tahoe Women's Center advocates, law enforcement, and the District Attorney's Office, who work together to care for adult and child survivors of sexual assault and child abuse and hold the offender accountable in the criminal justice system.

Our El Dorado County SART has been in operation for more than

15 years. When one of our community members is the victim of any form of sexual violence, the Sexual Assault Response Team is called into action. Each agency responds to the different needs of the victim through the medical, reporting, legal and healing process.

Currently our SART is missing a key component and this is having a direct impact on children in South Lake Tahoe. There are currently no child Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners at Barton Memorial Hospital. When a young child has survived sexual abuse and needs to have a medical exam for evidence and wellbeing, they must travel more than two hours from South Lake Tahoe to Nevada where there is a hospital with a SANE on staff. In California, the closest hospital is in Oakland.

For adults, we only have two SANEs, which aren't enough to cover the need, and adults must travel to Nevada as well. This means that after the victim has been sexually assaulted they must travel more than two hours for medical attention to address the unique needs of a sexual violence victim. This is unacceptable.

Throughout April the Women's Center will be having various events and fundraisers to raise funds to support the El Dorado SART. We need your financial support to send registered nurses to training to become Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and to purchase equipment for evidence collection. With these desperately needed funds, victims of sexual assault will be spared the emotionally taxing wait to receive services. It is our responsibility as a community to support our most vulnerable members, so victims will be supported right here in South Lake Tahoe within minutes of the sexual assault disclosure.

Please call Leanne Wagoner for more information on how you can help at (530) 544.2118; visit our website at www.sltwc.org for the calendar of events scheduled for April; or stop by our business office at 2941 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

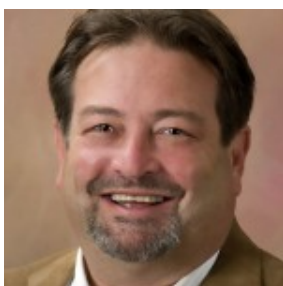
Leanne Wagoner, executive director of the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center

Putting perspective on SLT's proposed redevelopment area

Dear City Council,

I am a 35 year resident with 16 years as a restaurant owner at the Y. I have also run several other Y area businesses. Sadly, I must say that the buildings in that area are predominantly the same ones that were already old when I moved here in 1974. The area is a strip development frozen in time and behind in competition with other tourism towns and under-equipped to compete even with RDA 1 in our own town.

While some might say too bad for those businesses because they bet on the wrong end of town. I disagree because RDA 1 was voted on by all our citizens and business owners so an unfair advantage was created through RDA 1. It wasn't done on purpose. Most of us believed that the improvements would continue throughout our community. We wanted more than just a welcome mat into Nevada. But it was the logical place to start with large businesses willing to take the risk.



Duane Wallace

I clearly remember the very few jobs in place on those parcels at the state line prior to redevelopment. Now there is a clear advantage. The signage permitted is better at the state line, and the ability to walk from business to business that shoppers love is also in place. Redevelopment worked well on that side of the street. We have also learned lessons from the side of the street that didn't work well. RDA is currently one for two. But had we not taken that risk, those paltry jobs that were there would have also seen a slow death. We are partially competitive now as a result of our bold risk. We need to take another.

While I do not believe government creates wealth but rather lives off it, there is an opportunity to rectify the tilted playing field the Y finds itself in. It is risky to do business in Tahoe. That is because there are more government agencies eating at the trough.

As a former elected official, I saw firsthand how each agency did not consider what other agencies were doing to projects by piling on to the point that projects either failed due to the delay in time to complete them or because the fees were endless as everyone took pieces of a pie that had not yet been baked. Or the agencies fought over which one had dominance over a project. It is a death by a thousand cuts.

Thousands of room nights, restaurant meals, bags of groceries and sales of all types have been lost each year as a result. Each of those losses meant more lost stable families for our schools. The reality was partially masked. For instance, as the actual number of rooms rented plummeted, prices rose for a while leaving revenues to local governments appearing stable.

Now a stark reality has been discovered because the economic downturn exposed the fact that business was already dying here. Raising prices to increase business has the opposite effect. Governments, including TRPA, now realize that they only survive if the businesses and projects they regulate

survive. As local governments raised their prices for services their revenue dropped as projects stopped. At the macro level the federal and state governments are seeing it as well. Even those including the unions who often have animosity toward big businesses had their retirement funds invested in the stocks of those very same companies. The down turn in the economy exposed the failure of the process by exposing the actual relationship of government needing a thriving business community in order to survive themselves.

The project really is the fix. By allowing better square footage, adequate parking, a third story with appropriate setbacks and mixed use including housing, we can put more locals back to work. Not only through the construction work itself creating jobs but also through the subsequent jobs created by businesses that are able to make it by taking a shared risk in a public private partnership. This can all be done at the Y while still being environmentally responsible. In fact the poorly drained business that are replaced by better designed businesses will accomplish what staying frozen as a monument to the '60s has never accomplished.

I do not want to be accused of ignoring the hole in the ground at the state line. It isn't our best foot forward as a community. My answer is that real estate seeks its own level. At some point the cost of doing a project there will lower because of the drop in land values or because the reduced size of the project makes it more feasible. It will happen eventually.

I clearly remember how desperate the mostly motel owners at the state line were for a project as their only hope to end the slow death they were slipping toward. Without the financial ability to remodel on their own leaving a non competitive product in place they were more than willing to take a chance on redevelopment. Someday that land will produce jobs again. We, as a community, must insist on that.

And although Monday morning quarterbacking makes geniuses of us all, the truth is that what was there would not have survived. We had more of that type of room than tourists were willing to rent. With 6,000 motel rooms on the California side and the growth of timeshares and vacation rentals motels couldn't fill up. Then as our main economic engine [gaming] sputtered due to not being able to make the changes they needed to compete and the advent of Indian gaming we became a Saturday only town. If it weren't for our ski areas going through the expensive gauntlet of the master plan process for increased investment things would have been even worse. However, we must learn from our mistakes and make RDA 2 a better project. But, act we must.

I don't know for certain how we will make it succeed, but I am certain how we will fail. That is if we do nothing. So let's take a calculated educated risk on improving the opportunity for more jobs in our town. Let's put our finger pointing aside and work together with each other to reinvigorate the lives of our families by giving them a place to earn a living. Both our chambers, our county, our city and all the agencies including the utilities need to cooperate to create the buildings that create the jobs that keep us all enjoying and protecting this beautiful place.

Respectfully,

Duane Wallace, South Lake Tahoe

Drug Store Project promotes

healthy choices

To the community,

On March 30, 325 6th-grade students from South Tahoe Middle School, St. Theresa and Zephyr Cove Elementary participated in another successful drug prevention demonstration called The Drug Store Project.

A massive project like this is only successful thanks to the time, effort and financial support of many who care. In fact, the many consisted of 38 agencies and more than 150 volunteers all with the same concern; providing our youth with information to prevent them from ever becoming involved with drugs.



Tahoe-Douglas
fire Capt. Jim
Anti, who is
part of the
bomb squad
talks safety
with kids
Tuesday.

Photo/Laurie
Brazil

The Drug Store Project is a reality-based demonstration which focuses on “choices”. We as adults can teach information concerning the dangers of drugs to our children, we can intervene when we know something is occurring, but it is the

individual child who will make the choice when the time comes. We hope that learning how choices affect not only them, but the many friends and family who love them, will help children to make the right choices for their futures.

On behalf of Tahoe Youth & Family Services I'd like to thank the amazing volunteers who participated in this year's event. I'd also like to thank the following agencies which make this program happen: Barton Health, Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement, California Conservation Corps, CalSTAR, California Highway Patrol, California National Guard/DDR, Douglas County Probation, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, El Dorado Community Foundation, El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, El Dorado County Mental Health, El Dorado County Probation, El Dorado County Public Defender's Office, El Dorado County Public Health, El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, El Dorado County Superior Court, Embassy Suites South Lake Tahoe, Harrah's Harveys Lake Tahoe, Harrah's HEROs, Kiwanis, KTHO, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, McFarlane Mortuary, Optimist, Partnership of Community Resources, Pro Leisure, Rotary, St. Theresa School, Sierra Community Church, Soroptimist, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, STHS Friday Night Live, STMS Leadership, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, and Vitality Lake Tahoe.

The collaboration of the Lake Tahoe area is an example for other cities and counties. We are fortunate to live in such a caring community.

I am honored to be a part of your team.

Lisa Huard, Drug Store Project coordinator

Tahoe Youth & Family Services

SLT city manager talks about consolidating services



Dear Publisher,

As I mentioned at our recent public workshop on the new RDA Project Area last week, it is time for STPUD and city officials to seriously explore developing joint facilities and exploring the option of a merger and consolidation of services. While we could have done so earlier, it is never too late.

STPUD and City government should not be or appear to be competing. We both have valuable services needed by our customer base.

Do we have to have two “city halls”, two corporation yards, two road maintenance crews, two finance operations, two clerical staffs, etc.? How much can we save by consolidation of services and maybe even agencies? Is it possible that by coordination and consolidation of services and agencies those taxpayers in the county and city will benefit in their pocket books by avoiding yearly utility rate and other fee increases? Is it possible that with one-stop district and city permitting as part of an overall efficiency improvement plan for our organizations, we can better serve our customer base and reduce our overall operational costs?

We will never know unless we take a serious look at this

option.

There are examples of this going on all over California as noted in the article below. Has our time arrived?

Dave Jinkens, city manager South Lake Tahoe

Thinking about fire safety



To the community,

If a fire broke out tonight while you were sleeping, would you and your family get out alive? Today is a great time to develop a home fire escape plan.

Teach it to and practice it with your family on a regular basis. Check your smoke detector and replace the battery at least once a year.

And finally, remember, if there is a fire, teach everyone to get out and stay out. It's your best fire- safe response.

Sallie Ross-Filgo, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department

Questioning land swap and land use in South Tahoe

Dear California Tahoe Conservancy Board members,

The Conservancy may eventually make two important decisions regarding the city's request to become the owner of two Conservancy properties. The uses of these properties will consequently change.

First, the city wants to annex property along Barbara Avenue for the purpose of building affordable housing. I have been wondering why it would want to do so since logic suggests that affordable housing would more appropriately be built in one of the two contemplated transect nodes. There, shopping, employment, public transportation and recreation are all within walking and biking distance. Public housing situated in one of the two nodes will have a mutually strengthening effect on both, helping to create some synergy between the various uses and activities that will hopefully thrive in these concentrated use areas.



South Lake Tahoe would like to own and then pave this lot at Los Angeles and Harrison avenues.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

The city's proposal to build affordable housing in the middle of town and on the periphery of it will have just the opposite effect. Most important for the future of our town is the importance of building some viable alternative to the car as the usual means of getting around. This goal is negated by city's proposal. If we are serious about building a public transportation system that works, the various involved agencies, the city and public must together give it consistent and solid support.

The second property that the city wants to purchase or use is adjacent to the *Tribune* building. It is a large parcel that has never been built on. Along with some large beautiful trees, it is covered with the biological diversity characteristic of this region. It is especially attractive since the Conservancy did such a sensitive job of thinning out smaller trees. The city wants to put a parking lot on this lovely parcel. Now, I have some sympathy for the city's parking lot predicaments and to some extent the Conservancy shares them. But is the appropriate use for this parcel a parking lot, especially since the Baily coverage limits for Al Tahoe have been well exceeded? And again, the question: Do we really want public transportation to have a fighting chance at South Lake Tahoe? Every additional parking lot and tiered parking structure undermines the effort.

Nor can we achieve an aesthetic balance, the sense of ourselves as a coherent town, when so much highway frontage is solid black pavement and parked cars.

I realize the Conservancy has many difficult and controversial decisions to make. I wish you well in having to make these two additional decisions.

Very truly yours,

South Tahoe defends redevelopment plan



Dear City Residents and Neighbors of South Lake Tahoe,

I am writing this letter to provide you with information in addition to what you recently received from our friends at the South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD).

The city of South Lake Tahoe has been engaged in a process that we hope and intend will support and encourage the growth and diversification of the city's economy as a means of improving the lives of our residents, improving the built environment, and providing for environmental improvements. A strong economy and environmental protection go hand in hand and are essential ingredients for our future.

Plan Your Work, Work your Plan

To this end, city officials are moving forward with the adoption of a new city General Plan [that includes an economic development element], the Tahoe Valley Community Plan, and implementation of the city's Sustainability Plan. All of these local plans are important and inter-related to the future well being of the Tahoe area, but some funding mechanism is needed to help to make them work. That is why we are proposing

Redevelopment Project Area No. 2. No, RDA cannot finance everything we want and desire as a community, but it can help.

We see the adoption of a new redevelopment plan as helping us to do the following:

1. Attract businesses locals want in town and encourage local shopping.
2. Provide loans/grants to smaller existing business owners for business expansion.
3. Foster the growth of more local jobs.
4. Help to develop quality workforce housing.
5. Help support green rehabilitation of homes and businesses.
6. Generate more dollars for street reconstruction, storm drainage improvements, sidewalks [where needed] and lighting as appropriate.
7. Assist in developing a green technology park for new business.
8. Assist in financing needed improvements to water systems for fire suppression response under a public-private partnership.

We Made Our Best Estimates, but We Do Not Have a Crystal Ball

RDA dollars do not grow on trees. We know there are some cautions from our friends on the board of STPUD about the adoption of the new redevelopment area. We have had meetings with staff and the board, and we hope to be able to demonstrate that implementation of our plan will provide many benefits to our 24,000 residents and all agencies including new STPUD customers. We have shown them that if we can grow the local “economic pie” sufficiently [at an average of around 6 percent per year] that this will result in the mitigation of

almost all possible losses in property taxes they may sustain. STPUD customers and all residents will not pay more property taxes as the result of a new Project Area.

Even with a slower growth rate of 5 percent per year, the average annual loss to the district would be less than 1 percent of the total revenues budgeted by the district in 2009-10. We can partner with the district and help to finance district capital improvements in the project area that would offset any negative financial impacts if they occur.

The growth projections could be lower in these unusual economic times with or without RDA. Our experts and our experience tell us that we are more likely to see economic and property value growth with the help of RDA than without it.

When we take actions to improve our economy as we have proposed, quality workforce housing is built, new commercial is attracted to town and new green jobs are created, this improves STPUD revenues as well. No one wins in a no-growth local economy.

Doing Nothing is Not an Option

We cannot create prosperity in our community without new capital investment. Without putting our collective planning efforts in place, and then having some means to finance these plans [in part through redevelopment], our chances for economic growth and local prosperity will be minimized if not substantially curtailed. City government will continue to aggressively pursue Federal and State grant funds as well to pursue our economic growth and community improvement objectives. With new vigorous economic growth all levels of government benefit and most importantly the people of our community benefit. Failure in our efforts is not an option. As John F. Kennedy said, "a rising tide lifts all boats."

No RDA Eminent Domain/Your Property is Protected

As you may have heard as well, the new RDA Project Area No.2 plan does not give the Agency the power of eminent domain. We will build our community the old fashioned way ... by voluntary cooperation and mutual respect.

City staff and I welcome your questions and comments.

Sincerely,

Dave M. Jinkens, city manager/executive director STRA

NDOT touts 511 road information



To the community,

The Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT) 511 Nevada Travel Info system has served more than 2 million calls for instant, free road weather and construction conditions.

Motorists can dial 511 toll-free, 24 hours a day for automated Nevada state road conditions, construction updates, weather forecasts, chain controls and scheduled event road closures. Newly-enhanced, hands-free voice recognition allows voice commands without pushing number selections. Out-of-state callers can dial 1-877-NV-ROADS to receive the same information. The road listings are also available on-line at www.nvroads.com. Online and by phone, users select their chosen road by state route number.

The service was activated for testing in August 2006 and officially introduced to the public in November of that year. In December 2009 alone, the system received 154,315 calls. The peak call month of January 2008 saw 223,160 calls for road information.

511 is an invaluable tool for the most up-to-date state road conditions, and we've been able to serve 2 million calls for information, NDOT Director Susan Martinovich explained. With the spring and summer construction season arriving soon, the service is ready to provide important road construction information to even more drivers.

The systems ongoing maintenance and long-distance charges are funded by NDOT's roadside logo sign program at no taxpayer expense. The 511 system was developed by transportation and meteorological technology company, Meridian Environmental Technology.

For safety, motorists are encouraged to dial or log on before driving.

Nevada Department of Transportation

6th-graders to get dose of reality about drugs

To the community,

On behalf of Tahoe Youth & Family Services we'd like to remind all 6th-grade students on the South Shore and their families that they will be participating in The Drug Store Project on March 30.

Choices, What are Yours? is the day's focus.

Together, 38 agencies and 180 volunteers will provide this reality-based drug prevention presentation during the school day.

For more information on the event, contact Lisa Huard at lhuard@ymail.com.

Lisa Huard, event coordinator