

Ex-parks commissioner against Measure B

By Jerome Evans

Measure B on the November 3rd ballot is no more and no less than a raid on the Measure S funds that were voted by the people of South Lake Tahoe nine years ago. A stealth raid, it may be said.

It would add Little League play fields to projects eligible for funding from Measure S revenues. And not only the projects themselves but also their maintenance, without limit in time or amount.

Proponents of Measure B have said that there is no opposition to what they propose. I assure you that there is opposition in this community, very substantial opposition. That opposition comes not only from members of the Bicycle Coalition but also from residents of our community, young and old, who enjoy cycling to work and to play, and who understand the importance of extensive and well maintained bike trails to visitors, young and old.

Proponents of Measure B have said that the measure has been approved by this council, the board of supervisors, and the Community Facilities District Recreation Joint Powers Authority (JPA). It was the JPA, a three-member body (one council member, the District 5 supervisor, and a representative of the Paradise Park board) responsible for administering Measure S funds, that put this measure on the ballot. It has not been endorsed by the Board of Supervisors and has only now come before this council. And it did not go to your Parks and Recreation Commission for its consideration.

Proponents of Measure B contend that there is a large pot of money generated by Measure S that ought to be tapped for

another purpose inasmuch as it is unclear when additional bike trails will be constructed and need maintenance funds. They ignore the fact that planning for the Greenway project, which will provide a long-dreamed-of bike trail connection between Stateline and Meyers, continues, as does planning for bike trails as an important component of the Lakeside Commons project. No one can be sure when funding for these two major projects will be forthcoming, but it is clear that assurance of funding for their continuing maintenance will be essential to their receiving state support.

Assurances by the proponents, and stated in the ballot argument, that this would be a "temporary" diversion of funds are belied by the wording of Measure B itself.

Proponents of Measure B argue that Measure S promised four new playfields and a practice field but produced only a single playfield. They choose to ignore the fact that our community now has two new playfields surfaced with artificial turf which gives them the capacity, according to Steve Weiss and others, of four grass fields each. They also ignore the fact that the provision of these two fields has greatly reduced wear and tear on the Little League fields on Rufus Allen Boulevard, a fact that has been evident since the first field was completed.

Proponents of Measure B failed to consult with the Bicycle Coalition, which, with Ty Polastri's leadership, has done so much toward making South Lake Tahoe a "Bicycle Friendly Community" (city web site), while they were formulating their proposal. Thus they failed to seize an opportunity to meet and discuss a mutually agreeable result. This despite the fact that many agree that existing bike trails are greatly in need of repair.

Finally, in their haste to move their proposal past the voters, the proponents have failed, as yet, to produce a concrete plan for their project, anything resembling an

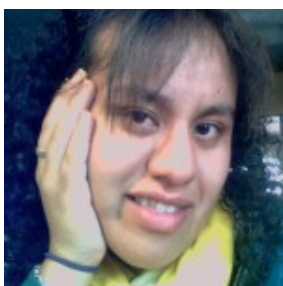
environmental impact statement, or details as to actual costs of their proposal. One might think that they would have learned something from the recent experience of the Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Again, Measure B is simply a raid on Measure S funds, a stealth raid, that should be rejected by this council and the voters. Let the proponents go back to the start, if they wish, put together a solid plan, engage the community, and then give it another try.

That, I believe, is the way we do the public's business in this community— or it should be.

Jerome Evans has been active in the South Lake Tahoe community; he also a former member of the city's Parks and Recreation Commission.

HOPE – all about helping LTCC students



Ana Guzman

By **Ana Guzman**

Hispanos Orgullosos Preparandose para la Excelencia, HOPE, is

a club at Lake Tahoe Community College. Arturo Rangel is the Outreach Technician at LTCC and also the advisor for HOPE.

This club is based on the financial necessities of AB540 students, who for legal reasons are not able to apply for federal financial aid.

HOPE has awarded a total of \$1,170 in scholarships.

HOPE meets twice a month. Meetings involve planning fundraisers, such as a Halloween Dance for high school students. During this fall quarter the priorities of HOPE are the Lake Tahoe Youth Commission and fundraisers.

We are very thankful for the local businesses that support us and for the people in the community who attend our events. We believe that HOPE will help more students, not only financially, but also creating a support system. Everyone enrolled at LTCC is welcome to join.

Ana Guzman is president of HOPE. She may be reached at guzmananalilia@gmail.com.

Rosas – Balancing school and life



James Rosas

By James Rosas

This is my first year attending Tallac, but Iâ€™ve been involved with the school since my junior year. I am also an up and coming artist and Tallac gives me a generous amount of support.

The main reason I appreciate Tallac is that the staff understands we the students have a life outside of school and new problems arise everyday. They try their very best to incorporate our whole life in the learning process not just academics.

The way the school is set up makes it hard to fall behind when the dilemmas outside of school have to be dealt with. Whether it be counseling or simply getting out at noon to go home and get ready for work.

Our school is as misunderstood as the students that attend. Itâ€™s not a punishment to be here, just another opportunity. And acceptance here is just the beginning. Through Tallac Iâ€™ve had many opportunities to meet with community members for instance the mayor and (BlueGoâ€™s) John Andoh. All students get this opportunity, not just me.

My art is graffiti art and, yes, I did write in the streets. But with support and influence from Tallac and a man named Matt Kaufman Iâ€™ve stopped writing in the streets and recently had a gallery show with some friends. My point is *all* students who attend Tallac are good people, and Tallac gives us the chance and opportunity that so many others have denied

us.

James Rosas is a senior at Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

Reaves – Finally, a school that understands



Deawna Reaves

By Deawna Reaves

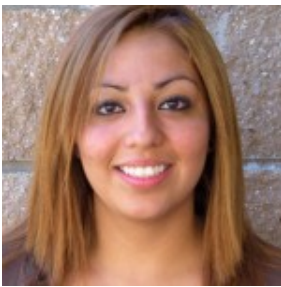
I am 16 years old. I started my 9th-grade year at South Lake Tahoe High School. Now, as a junior, I have gone through independent study, charter community school and Mount Tallac High School.

All the other schools were good, but Tallac just works better for me. I plan to stay at Tallac until I graduate because I feel like I have major support here. I have teachers and counselors who help me and care about my education.

I have had many problems in the past with fighting and people that don't like me for the way I look. This year, I don't care about all the drama. I am here for me and that is all that matters.

Deawna Reaves is a junior at Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

Prieto – Overcoming obstacles



Maricela
Prieto

By Maricela Prieto

Iâ€™m a senior at Mt. Tallac. I am a mother, a daughter, and a student.

At this point in my life I am very proud of who Iâ€™ve become. This past summer I overcame many challenges. One of the biggest obstacles for me was hiking up Jobâ€™s Sister Peak with Generation Green. Seeing how I pushed myself this summer I know I can become very successful and accomplish anything I put my mind to.

I am a senior this year and after graduation I plan to attend our local community college.

Maricela Prieto is a senior at Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

Cyclists to SLT – repeal Measure B

Dear Members of the City Council,

Unfortunately and untimely, I am not able to present this notice in person during the City Council meeting scheduled on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, because I am out of the country. Therefore, I submit the following notice to be read during the public comment period and placed into the public record.

You are hereby notified that on behalf of the citizens of South Lake Tahoe and its bicycle community, I call for the immediate withdraw of Measure B from the November 2009 ballot on the grounds of false and misleading representation that unfairly prejudices the electorate and does not follow the true democratic process of fair and equal representation of an issue.

The proponents of Measure B have willfully omitted a rebuttal to their Measure, knowing there is opposition, with intent of gaining an unfair advantage. They, in collusion with City Staff members, have intentionally avoided contacting members of the bicycle community and when asked, by me, for a response to the Measure it was replied with ignorance of the issue by City management. When I replied to the ignorance, with a reference to the *Tahoe Mountain News* article about Measure B, management replied with a direction to a department director to contact me and that never happened.

Therefore, a unilateral decision allowing the tactic of rebuttal omission, (non-full disclosure of Measure B opposition), for unfair advantage that carries the Measure forward shall represent a community travesty of miss-guided

leadership and abuse of authority with far ranging repercussions â€” the heart of which is community distrust.

Sincerely,

Tyrone Polastri, Community Advocate

PS. Bike path maintenance funds authorized by Measure S is one of the most important achievements made by this community because maintenance funds for bike paths is one of the more difficult funds to acquire. Additionally, Measure S was a key factor leading to the City earning its national designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community because it demonstrated the community's commitment to managing a ubiquitous challenge of funding for bike path maintenance. To repeal Measure S for reallocation of those funds may be sufficient grounds for re-evaluating the Bicycle Friendly Community designation of this community.

Mt. Tallac – more than a high school

Publisher's Note: *Lake Tahoe News will be publishing articles from Mt. Tallac High School students through Oct. 21. The South Lake Tahoe school is having an open house Oct. 21 from 9am-noon. But first, a few words from the woman who runs the show.*



Susan Baker

By Susan Baker

Mt. Tallac High School, in the words of one student, "Is as misunderstood as the students who attend there."

Mt Tallac High School is an alternative approach to education and a high school diploma.

Situated below South Tahoe High School, it is a school of second chances for those who for whatever reason have not been successful in a traditional school model. Many of our students work fulltime while going to school, some are pregnant or parenting while attending school, and some just desire a less traditional approach to education.

Our philosophy is based on the model that all students are capable of success and those successes are built one at a time.

This year we have started a Tallac Leadership Team in which every student is invited to participate. We have student ambassadors who are committed to making Tallac the best school in the district.

This year Tallac has a student who was a homecoming princess, a student who is co-editor of the yearbook and one who is the goalie for the varsity soccer team.

The students have chosen the school color to be purple because that color blends all other colors together. Our mascot is a Phoenix, which symbolizes rebirth and rising up from the

ashes.

Our individual approach to education has fostered an environment where all students, regardless of their path, are able to be successful. I am the luckiest person in our district to be able to work with these incredibly unique students everyday.

Susan Baker is the leader of Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

Olvera – Life's a roller coaster



Stephanie
Olvera

By Stephanie Olvera

I am a really nice person and I always have a smile on my face. I have been through a lot, good things and bad. It's been like a roller coaster, sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down.

It always seemed like I was at the bottom of the loop ever since I entered the high school and became pregnant.

The ride slowly started going up when I met Mrs. Baker, Amy Jackson, and Mr. Debella. They have helped me through tough times when I just wanted to quit everything. They gave me a push.

I have good grades now and my baby couldn't be happier in the school's nursery. I don't know what I would do without them. Tallac has been a big help.

Now I happily see everything from the top of the loop and I'm planning to keep it that way.

Stephanie Olvera is senior at Mt. Tallac High School in South Lake Tahoe.

Share the road reminder

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Now that the heat has subsided, many people are riding bicycles to work and back. This is the time of year when daylight hours diminish leaving riders to commute often in the dark. With safety in mind, Nevada Revised Statutes dictate cyclists and motorists are to abide by the same laws when traveling the streets, and here are a few other safety tips for all residents of Washoe County.

Cyclists are reminded if you are riding at night, please wear reflective gear and use a headlight to the front and red blinking light to the rear of your bicycle. This equipment is readily available at most sporting goods or bicycle stores and will significantly increase your safety on the roads. Riding with traffic on wide, less traveled streets, using signals when turning and avoiding the use of cell phones or headphones

when riding help boost safety on the streets as well.

Motorists are reminded to please be cognizant of cyclists on the roads and give them ample room when passing. Many vehicle versus bicycle collisions occur at intersections and can be avoided by motorists taking the time to slow and pay attention when turning. Every vehicle has "blind spots" so remember there could be a cyclist or pedestrian nearby even if you don't see them.

By taking the time to purchase and use reflective gear, and with a little patience and attentiveness we can avoid vehicle versus bicycle collisions and all enjoy a safe fall season.

Educator touts benefits of preschool

By Vicki Barber

Helping children succeed in school and life is the primary focus of education. We are blessed in El Dorado County to have a K-12 system with high academic standards and safe learning environments where our children can and do excel.

Of the many factors which contribute to school success, a quality preschool experience builds early reading and math skills, and strong early learning foundations. Preschool exposes children to a language-rich environment that increases cognitive development and love of learning. It also provides the opportunity to learn the social and self-regulatory skills essential to peer relationships and classroom success.

In today's tough economic times, some families may think

they need to go without a preschool experience because of challenged family budgets. Families in this situation may not be aware that a child with unemployed parents is qualified for Head Start and State Preschool programs which are offered throughout the county in public school and private preschool settings. As an example, a family of four with monthly income of \$4,188 is still eligible for free state preschool. Families qualify at the time of enrollment, and then, no matter what their changing circumstances, they remain eligible for the program for entire program year.

Studies show that the academic and social skills learned in preschool improve student achievement, lead to increased graduation rates, and as well as increased potential for college attendance. I urge all of our El Dorado County families to support our youngest learners and find a preschool experience for their children which fits their family needs.

For families wanting more information about finding a preschool opportunity for their child, they can call any of the following numbers:

Choices for Children â€” (530) 676.0707

El Dorado County Office of Education â€” (530) 295.2307

Happy Kids Preschool and Child Care Center â€” (530) 676.2223

A Circle of Friends â€” (530) 622.5437

Cool Care â€” (530) 889.1119

Pinetop Montessori â€” (530) 644.4373.

Vicki Barber is superintendent of El Dorado County Office of Education.