

D'Agostini surges ahead to take EDC sheriff's race

By Kathryn Reed

After the initial results came in, John D'Agostini was surprised, but not worried. He felt confident the numbers would turn in his favor.

He was right.

D'Agostini is headed to be El Dorado County's next sheriff. With 100 percent of the precincts reporting, he has a 51.16 percent lead over Craig Therkildsen who has 48.55 percent. There are 1,287 votes separating the men.



John
D'Agostini

"The first thing after the swearing in is getting to know everyone, getting to know folks, who has the best skills in what areas," D'Agostini told *Lake Tahoe News* early Wednesday morning. "I will have to dive into the deficit head first."

He praised interim Sheriff Fred Kollar for the job he has done tackling the budget to date.

The next sheriff takes over a department that has been accused of sexual misconduct by deputies, is facing \$1.6 million in cuts for the 2011-12 budget, has already sustained staff cuts with more pending, and a structure that no longer calls for

having an undersheriff.

There is also the longstanding us vs. them mentality that divides the West Slope and Lake Tahoe.

D'Agostini campaigned on wanting to bring a change to the department. He said it remains at the top of his list after dealing with the budget.

"Then I make culture change with customer service. I do it by being an involved leader and setting an example, setting expectations and holding people accountable," D'Agostini said.

D'Agostini and Therkildsen were the last two of six standing after the June primary.

The choice voters had was someone from inside the department – Therkildsen, who is a captain; and someone from outside – D'Agostini, who has worked for the Amador County sheriff's and district attorneys offices. One thing that separates them is D'Agostini has been elected before – to the school board for Pioneer Union School District.

The vacancy in the department was created when Jeff Neves quit last December. Undersheriff Fred Kollar took over. At that time the job of undersheriff was done away with by the Board of Supervisors. Kollar will retire in January when the new sheriff is sworn in.