

Triglia to close South Lake Tahoe pot shop; DiMatteo moving into fitness business

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe will definitely be down to one pot club by Aug. 20, with one of the owners staying in town to run a different business.

Matt Triglia on Monday withdrew his challenge to being shut down and agreed to a slew of conditions that allow him to operate Patient2Patient medical marijuana collective until Aug. 20 at the latest.

Gino DiMatteo, who was officially evicted last week from his spot on Third Street where he ran City of Angels 2, has told city officials he is buying Push Fitness.



Tim Christenson's name will have to come off the sign when the sale of the business goes through.

Photo/LTN

Neither Triglia, nor his wife, Erika, returned a phone call July 23.

City Manager Nancy Kerry on July 11 revoked Patient2Patient's

permit because the dispensary was violating various city codes. Triglia initially appealed that action, but since changed his mind after things began to unravel after last week's council meeting.

At the July 17 City Council meeting it was revealed that the Triglias had been detained in Missouri in December and had \$85,000 in cash taken by authorities. Triglia at the council meeting adamantly denied it was him.

Later last week when confronted with police photos from Missouri, Triglia changed his story, according to city officials, to say he was working for Homeland Security. When that story fell apart, officials said, Triglia agreed to close shop.

Triglia has until Aug. 1 to paint the building – which means covering up the illegal mural as well removing unpermitted signs. He must also post a notice to patients stating he will be closing.

“They have removed the illegal growing operation from the Spot,” Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*. The Spot is the business operating in the building closest to Highway 50. Escrow on that building never closed, so ownership will revert to Matt Johnson of Gardnerville, according to Kerry.

The Triglias own the building set back farther where patients enter.

Changing direction

The closure of Patient2Patient and City of Angels 2 means Tahoe Wellness Collective will be the only medical marijuana dispensary in South Lake Tahoe.

While the Triglias' plans are unknown, DiMatteo is returning to his life in the world of fitness.

The phone number DiMatteo used for the medical marijuana

collective has been disconnected. Tim Christenson, who has owned the fitness club for the past several years, did not return multiple phone calls.

In addition to buying the club, DiMatteo is selling his house in the Angora Highlands area – one of two he owns in the area.

But the fitness club comes with outstanding bills.

El Dorado Climbing Walls, based in Colorado, has been trying to collect what it's owed from Christenson for nearly a year.

John McGowan, president of the climbing wall firm, said the legal expenses exceed the cost of installing the wall. He told *Lake Tahoe News* that last week a judge ruled that who pays legal fees is still to be negotiated. McGowan said Christenson wanted that off the table.

A settlement hearing is scheduled for next month, but McGowan believes ultimately the case will be decided by an El Dorado County Superior Court judge.

“I believe it will go to court. But will Push Fitness be solvent?” McGowan wonders. “They could do a sale of assets and close Push. Gino could buy the assets and not the liability.”

(Christenson does not own the building, just the business.)

In addition to the climbing wall firm wanting money, Christenson has regularly not paid taxes. And there is no record of a fictitious business license for Push Fitness registered with El Dorado County.