

Curtzwiler: 'El Dorado County has lost its focus'

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News asked the two El Dorado County District 5 supervisor candidates a series of questions. All are the same except for one that is specific to each candidate. The responses are being run in the order LTN received them.*



Name: Kenny Curtzwiler

Profession/work experience: Room service waiter at Sahara Tahoe – two years / Bartender-Carlos Murphy's –19 years / Bartender Chevy's – one- year / Bartender Tudor Pub – three years / Nevada Army National Guard – 20.5 years (I held the ranks of E-1, E-2, E-3, E-5, E-6–0-1, 0-2, 0-3, and retired an 0-4-Major.) I own Skibumfamily Inc and dba K & K Services. Pam and I named our business K & K from the initials of myself Kenny and my son Kaleb (Tree Service, Roofing and Construction Clean Up Company) Lake Tahoe Custom Cycles (Motorcycle Repair Shop) Tahoe Skibum, South Lake Tahoe Skibum and Lake Tahoe Skibum (Retail clothing and writer of the Skibum articles in *Lake Tahoe Entertainer* and *Tahoe Mountain News*).

Age: 58

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: It would be much easier to ask which ones I haven't been involved in as I am involved with them all. Specifically the major ones are Christmas Cheer, the

Children's Memorial Tree, American Legion and Boys and Girls Club. I do not belong to any one group with the exception of the American Legion. I feel in this way I can give freely to everyone without breaking any affiliation feelings. My company and family have donated to almost every function this community has had for the last 33 years. I am also a registered non partisan and am not affiliated in any way to a political party, in this way I can vote for what is best for our community and not a certain group whether it be political or special group.

Why are you running for supervisor?: My son asked me to make a difference here in a letter he wrote.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidate?: I honestly feel that I have prepared for this position since I first moved to Tahoe by getting involved with the community and lifestyle this area has to offer. I would also like to hold the agencies and elected officials (yes, that will include myself) accountable for their actions, decisions and commitment to our community, which now includes our friends in Pollock Pines.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing El Dorado County and how will you deal with it?: El Dorado County has lost its focus when it comes to the community and the community needs. It is the responsibility of the government to take care of police, fire and community infrastructure like our roads and facilities. Too often they have gotten lost in the eye candy and smoke and mirrors of certain interest groups whose only focus is to promote themselves first and the community second.

The 56-acre project, which includes Lakeview Commons and the campground on the other side of Highway 50, is owned by the county and maintained by the city. The county has not invested a dime and does not contribute to the maintenance and operations. Would you ask the county to help with paying some

of the bills or would you advocate for deeding the land to the city? Why or why not?: I do not know if the county has invested anything. I would have to check on that and get back with you. To the best of my understanding the county is no different than a landlord, they lease the facility to the city and it is the city's responsibility for T I & M. There are several hundred examples of a landlord not doing anything to their property as long as the rent is paid up here in our community. They see no reason to invest in our community as most of them do not live here, the county is no different, outta sight outta mind. Rather than sell it to the city we need to work together to improve our community, if the county is not willing to work with us then perhaps we should look into transferring stewardship of the site to our community and the people that actually live here.

The city and county are putting together a recreation master plan, but the Board of Supervisors has never voted on whether it would fund the implementation of the plan. Would you dedicate funds to promote the investment of recreation?: See above answer where I talk about out of area landlords. The word Landlords used to be reversed where there were Lords of the Land until the land became a part of the community. As far as investment goes, yes. Obviously, I will take care of our community first.

Being on the board requires working with four others. Give readers an example of how you work well others in difficult situations with differing opinions: My experience in the military required me to work with everyone above and below my pay grade on a daily basis. Contrary to belief the military is not a democracy yet we were required to work as one. The biggest asset I have is that I do not belong to a political party, special interest group or community organization. I belong to this community and will and have always kept that first and foremost in everything I have done in the 37 years I have lived here. I have had a working relationship with just

about everyone in this town through my writings as the Skibum to my business as a contractor and specifically due to all the years as a bartender. I am able to walk into the offices of our officials and work out any differences we may have. We don't always agree but that is what I am here to work out and move on for the betterment of our community. I do not always get what I want but neither does the other side but we do come to a compromise.

What is working in the county and what isn't; and how would you go about changing what isn't working?: What isn't working is the communication between the BOS and the community. It is our, the community's, job to get involved with what is happening but it is imperative that the BOS share with the community what is going on. For too long these agendas have been pushed through for the consultants and their employers as to what we need without full disclosure and communication with all those affected. We need a representative that is willing to ask the question "Really?". Our elected officials need to remember who they work for.

Would you consider replacing the current CAO? Why or why not?: I do not have enough information to comment on this question.

The grand jury labeled the county dysfunctional. What is your opinion of that assessment?: No more dysfunctional than our own City Council. I would agree with the statement based on the fact that I have served on the civil grand jury for a year a few years back and am somewhat familiar with the inner workings. The grand jury is made up of volunteers, community members who want to make a difference yet they have no teeth. Every grand jury report has been ignored and if you read all of them they are almost always the same theme. Our elected officials need to read the grand jury report standing next to a mirror to see what they are talking about.

Agriculture is a huge economic driver for the county. What are your ideas in regards to the drought to ensure farmers and

ranchers have enough water?: I do not have enough knowledge or interaction with farmers and agriculture to answer this question.

The Sand Fire this summer proved El Dorado County was lacking in emergency response coordination efforts. What improvements would you propose?: I will use our Lake Valley Fire Department as an example. We must be proactive and not always reactive. I attended an El Dorado County meeting [in August] where all the fire district chiefs and committees were there. The biggest theme was they are all asking for money and their fair share of tax dollars and what do we need to improve their services. LV has been proactive in seeking grant funds for defensible space and wood shake replacement. I am a Tree Service and Roofing contractor and I can tell you that when they implemented these programs we have done about a thousand jobs for defensible space and the protection of our community. Proactive not reactive. LV is now asking for a new "tax" for more defensible space programs. This money will stay in our community to help our community. I applaud our Lake Valley Fire Department for being proactive and taking care of the community. The problem with the Sand fire was the same problem with the Angora Fire. Too many agency chiefs egos were bruised because all the outside agencies wanted to be in charge when they should have had less egos involved and let one local agency take charge. We needed to be able to cross jurisdictions and power structures without worrying about stepping on another agency's perceived power ego.

How would you improve relations with the city of South Lake Tahoe?: Are you asking what I would do as a person or are you asking as the county? Since the question is stated as "you" I will answer that way. I will be no different in what I have done in the past, present or future. I will still just walk in or call for a talk with our officials. I will still communicate with them only this time we can actually move forward on critical issues not just the issues in my articles.

On Lake Tahoe News you commented how you are proud to collect unemployment in the winter when your business closes down. Ethically, how do you justify this?: Below is the actual wording of what I said. I had Ms. Reed look it up for me as I asked her to show me where I said I was proud.

Jealous Jeff? Yes I do collect unemployment on your dime and enjoy every powder day and have absolutely no regrets or ashamed of what I do. Thanks for your opinion.

My company is a corporation and I am an employee of the company. I receive a paycheck and pay into EDD.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: Someone asked Pam, my lovely wife of 33 years, if she or I was afraid of someone saying something about us that might not be flattering. Her response, "Are you kidding? This guy puts his whole life story out every month in the Mountain News, there is nothing anyone does not know about us." There is probably one thing though, both Pam and I were adopted.