

Rice: Stateline revitalization No. 1 issue in district

Publisher's note: *Lake Tahoe News* asked the three candidates for District 4 Douglas County commission race, which covers Lake Tahoe, to answer the following questions. Two of the three responded.



Wes Rice

Name: Wesley Rice

Hometown: Minden

Age: 75

Occupation: Deputy constable

Education: Mount San Antonio College and L.A. State University

What elected, civic, nonprofit boards or groups are or have you been affiliated with and in what capacity?: I was on the Douglas County Lake Tahoe Library board, chair of the Round Hill General Improvement District, trustee Douglas County Lake Tahoe Sewer Authority, chair of the Nevada Republican Rural Caucus. I am a member of the Navy League, the International

Footprinters Association, as well as being a member of the American Legion.

Why do you want to be commissioner?: I want to continue to support my community and all the citizens of Douglas County by assuming a new role of leadership at a higher level.

Why should people vote for you over one of the other candidates?: I retired as a lieutenant with the Pasadena Police Department as the head of the detective section. I spent 15 years as senior deputy patrolling Lake Tahoe for the Douglas County Sheriff's Department. I have served 12 years as a trustee for the RHGID. I am a trustee on the newly reorganized Douglas County Lake Tahoe Sewer Authority. I have been the Rural Caucus chair for the Nevada Republican Rural Caucus for 14 years. I have been on the executive board for the Douglas County Republican Central Committee since 1996. I have been endorsed by Congressman Mark Amodei, state Sen. Jim Settlemeyer, Assemblyman Jim Wheeler, Sheriff Ron Perini, the Douglas County Sheriff's Association, the Douglas/Carson Valley Farm Bureau, Former Lt. Gov. Brian Krolicki, Constable Paul Gilbert and the Nevada State Republican Party Chair, Michael McDonald. I have the experience, the integrity and the support to do the job.

How are you going to resolve pension issues?: At the moment we have no pension disputes in Douglas County.

What are the attributes you would look for in a future county manager?: The ability to take direction from the county commissioners and carry out their directives and policies.

When would you want a permanent county manager to be hired?: Not an issue in Douglas County.

Should the government be responsible for solving the affordable housing issue as well as homelessness? Why or why not to both? If yes, how would you solve those issues?: Douglas County needs to promote affordable/attainable housing.

Homelessness is not, so far, an issue in Douglas County. We do need to zone for multiple housing in appropriate areas. Those who are born and raised in Douglas County should be able to find employment and affordable housing. The retirees moving here from California are driving up the cost of housing making it difficult for locals to reside here.

What are your thoughts of making Lake Tahoe its own county?: California side or Nevada side? On the Nevada side it would be problematic. Where would the county seat be located? Would people want to drive to the North Shore to conduct business? Incline or State Line? The process would be fraught with logistical problems.

What entities would you not take money from?: So long as there were no strings attached, anyone. My voice and vote are not for sale.

What is the No. 1 issue facing District 4 and how do you propose to resolve it?: We need to help revitalize the Stateline area. I support building the proposed convention center.

What is your opinion about recreation marijuana?: As a 50-plus year veteran of law enforcement, I think that nothing good will come of the legalization of marijuana. We have enough societal problems as it is. Driving under the influence will become a giant problem. When people drive into Nevada, they do not realize that any detectable amount of marijuana in the system is prima face driving under the influence.

Do you believe vacation home rentals should be allowed in the valley? Why or why not?: Vacation rentals should be allowed but only if regulated and there needs to be an avenue developed so that when a property becomes a problem the county can fine or revoke the owners' ability to continue as a VHR. The problems with VHRs at the lake should be resolved before venturing into the valley.

What changes would you make to the VHR ordinance affecting the lake?: I think \$1,000 fines are a bit excessive. On the Douglas County side, we need some form of regulation and enforcement.

How does climate change play a role in how you would make decisions affecting the county?: Solar farms have been banned in Douglas County and wind farms are probably out of the question. I would support reasonable changes to the TRPA regulations.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know: I was widowed at the age of 35. I was left with four daughters who I raised alone for three years. After three years I married the wonderful lady I have now been married to for 38 years come this August. She helped me raise and turn our five daughters into wonderful human beings who have now given us 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.