

Boat inspectors implement winter rules

Starting Oct. 1 boat inspections at Lake Tahoe will move to select launch ramps and winter hours will begin.

Tahoe RCD inspectors will be stationed at the Cave Rock boat launch from 6am-4pm seven days a week, weather permitting. No inspector will be stationed at Lake Forest boat launch from now through Jan. 2 as work is done on the ramp.

Call the hotline (888.824.6267) for availability of alternative inspection options.

All boats without an intact Tahoe wire seal are required to get an inspection during daylight hours. Decontaminations are available by appointment only for watercraft that are not clean, drain and dry. Decontamination fees apply. Boats with intact inspection seals are permitted to launch at all open facilities including: Obexer's Boat Company, Ski Beach (IVGID), Sierra Boat Company, Tahoe City Marina, Sunnyside Marina, Homewood Marina, North Tahoe Marina, Meek's Bay Marina, Lakeside Marina and Tahoe Keys Marina, but no inspections or decontaminations are available at these locations.

All women ski movie coming to Tahoe

Lynsey Dyer, a premier big mountain freeskiier, is the vision – and star – behind the first-ever crowd-sourced, crowd-funded

all-women's ski movie, "Pretty Faces."

"We are on a mission to make skiing and the outdoors look so fun that no girl will ever want to stay inside," Dyer said in a press release. "Through this project and my nonprofit SheJumps, we want young girls to see positive, strong, and courageous women pursuing their passions and finding success. We want to show females everywhere: 'if she can do it, so can I.'"

What began as a Kickstarter campaign to test the interest for such a project has become something much larger. With help from presenting sponsor Eddie Bauer, "Pretty Faces" is the first crowd-sourced, crowd-funded and most successful action sports Kickstarter campaign to date.

It is launching in Boulder on Sept. 30. It will be shown in Tahoe City on Dec. 7 at Tahoe Arts Haus Cinema and Dec. 12 at MontBleu in Stateline.

In addition to Dyer, other featured female athletes and key figures include Rachael Burks, Elyse Saugstad, Ingrid Backstrom, Wendy Fisher, Angel Collinson, Nadia Samer, Olympian Devin Logan and more.

Then and now: Travel over Donner Summit



Donner Summit
Photo/Caltrans

This single photograph from 1964 depicts the then and the now of highway travel over Donner Summit.

The twisting two-lane road seen on the lower half of the photo is historic "U.S. Route 40," also known as part of the Lincoln Highway. Crossing Donner Summit, it passes Donner Ski Ranch, Sugar Bowl, Donner Lake, and continues eastward through Truckee then on to Reno. It also has one of the most-photographed bridges in the country, the Rainbow Bridge, the design of which includes a curve and a grade.

Highway 40 was the only access north of Tahoe to reach the

Squaw Valley Winter Olympics of 1960.

In 1964, the modern Interstate 80 divided freeway opened. I-80 appears as the parallel white streaks across the top half of the photo.

Old "U.S. Route 40" is known now as Donner Pass Road.

– Bill Kingman

Jones: 'I am the most qualified person for the position'

Publisher's note: Lake Tahoe News asked the two candidates running for District 2 of the South Tahoe Public Utility District board the same questions. The answers are running in the order received by LTN.



Name: Jim Jones

Profession/work experience: B.S. civil engineer, Cal Poly, 1968

M.S. civil engineering, Stanford University, 1972

Consulting engineer, South Lake Tahoe, 1977 to present
Executive director, Lake Tahoe Research Coordination Board,
National Science Foundation, 1974 to 1977, South Lake Tahoe
Sanitary engineer, Environmental Protection Agency, San
Francisco, 1972 to 1974

Hydrologist and civil engineer, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation,
Sacramento and Denver, 1968 to 1972

Registered civil engineer in California, Nevada and Hawaii
California Community College instructor credential

Age: 71

What organizations, committees or groups are you or have you been involved with?: Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers

Kiwanis Sunrisers of South Lake Tahoe, member and president,
25 years

Tahoe Tallac Association, founding board member, 22 years

South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, member 28 years.

Why are you running for the South Tahoe PUD board?: The prosperity of our community is directly related to the services provided by the district. With my education, training and experience, I feel that this is where I can best serve the community where I have lived and owned a residence for 40 years. I am deeply concerned about protecting the \$1.6 billion investment that we have in infrastructure and improving our fire protection facilities. I have the time, enthusiasm and the energy to carry out the duties of a director.

Why should people vote for you over the other candidate?: With my knowledge and understanding of the "Water World", I am the most qualified person for the position. I have represented the district on the regional, state and federal level. I have been heavily involved in lobbying and obtaining over \$90 million of federal funding to rebuild the wastewater treatment plant in the '80s, replace the export pipe line in the '90s and most recently to obtain matching funds for fire protection in the

basin. I was the chairman of the MTBE Committee for the Association of California Water Association and testified before Congress in the successful effort to have MTBE banned. We also won \$69 million from the oil companies for cleaning up their pollution of our groundwater and wells.

What do you think is the most pressing issue facing the district and how will you deal with it?: As for the water distribution system, we have about 250 miles (1.3 million lineal feet) of waterlines. Most of these lines are more than 50 years old and at least 10 percent are under sized or failing. We desperately need to upsize many of these lines, most of which are in the older parts of town such Al Tahoe and Sierra Tract, for fire protection. The cost of replacing the old water lines about \$1 million per mile and we should be replacing at least 1 percent or 2.5 miles per years. Many of sewer and water pump stations are more than 50 years old and need upgrades and significant repairs.

Would you consider merging administrative services with the city of South Lake Tahoe so there would be a reduction in cost to ratepayers? Why or why not?: The jurisdictional boundaries are not the same and the county would not be included. If in the unlikely event that city and the county were to be combined, there might be some benefits. At this point in time, because of the unique mandates of the district, I don't see any significant benefits in combining STPUD with the city. I don't think anyone would suggest merging the school district into the city for a similar reason.

The district is seen by some as a cog in the wheel for economic development. Recent examples are charging \$50,000 to add a small bathroom to a business and \$500,000 for a Laundromat to move. What are your opinions about the district's fees?: The district is a publicly owned entity by the 17,000 property owners within the district boundaries. The value of the district infrastructure is about \$1.6 billion meaning that everyone has about a \$100,000 investment in water

and sewer facilities. Connections fees for new or expanded projects partially pay for a "buy in" to the existing system. Thus the existing owners are not forced to subsidize new development.

The sewer units go with the property and cannot be moved. When a Laundromat was recently forced to relocate, they were given an estimate of about \$250,000 (not \$500,000) to buy approximately 50 more sewer units to install the Laundromat in an existing building. They then decided to move into the Raley's building at the Y where there were already enough sewer units at no cost.

As for the reported \$50,000 fee for adding a bathroom, the staff at the district has no idea where that came from as the cost for adding a sewer unit is about \$5,000 in an existing residence or commercial building.

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: The board works under a long and complicated list of regulation and laws implemented by the state and federal governments. These regulations include not only water quality and environmental issues, but how the district deals with labor issues. Education and experience are necessary in dealing with many issues. When every board member understands the issues and implications, it is easier to come to a resolution. Board members are encouraged to attend meetings, workshops or conferences of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) or the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) to learn the "water business" and how to be the best director as they can be.

What needs fixing at the district and how would you go about fixing it?: The funding mechanism is out of whack! For the last eight years, the majority of the board has not seen ready

to raise the rates to cover the cost-of-living increases or to adequately fund capital improvement projects. Because of the lack of funding, staff has constantly had to modify the 10-year master plan, ignore the 20-year plan and scramble to delay repairs, upgrades or replacement of infrastructure.

For years, I have not supported the budget prepared to reflect the lack of increased fees. I have advocated gradual, modest increases to cover the long-term master plan. We are now on a course that will at some time lead to high annual rate increase over multiple years.

We should be building for the future, not stealing from it!

How many board meetings in the last year have you attended?:

In the past year, I have attended 22 of the 24 board meetings, missing two meeting when I represented the district at Association of California Water Agencies conferences. Additionally, I have attended monthly Operation Committee and other ad hoc committee meeting. I also represent the district at monthly meetings of the El Dorado County Water Agency of which I am the current chairman.

Do you know what a special district is and how familiar are you with the governance of a special district?:

Special districts are created to provide a specific public service for a community under California law. These district boards are often the ones most closely chosen and regulated by the local community when compared to larger state and federal departments. They reflect the flexibility that local communities want that larger state agencies cannot provide.

With a constrained budget, how would you prioritize projects involving the delivery of potable water, the collection and treatment of wastewater, and the export and reuse of treated wastewater?:

I have long advocated a long-term master plan of at least 10 and possibly 20 years. Some districts actually plan and save for 50- to 100-year capital improvement master

plans. Our staff will establish priorities based upon potential failure factor which is multiplied by the impact of failure. Other factors such as regulatory deadlines and availability of grants are used in the evaluated. Priorities are evaluated annually and may be changed as conditions change.

Because of fiscal restraints, many higher priorities projects have been pushed back or kicked down the road. I have argued against the lack of fiduciary responsibility in protecting the districts assets for our customers.

In order to reduce water and sewer rates would you be a proponent of a reduced level of service by the district? Why or why not?: The district has a list of minimum levels of services which the board will periodically reviewed and revised. At this point, I don't believe there are any significant changes that we can implement without adversely impacting the environment or the lake. Additionally, we do not want to reduce the services that might impact the tourist industry that the city thrives on.

An example of issues that threatened to impact the tourist industry was the MTBE pollution problem. The district immediately implemented a policy of not providing water with any detection of MTBE even when the state set a higher standard that would allow a possibility of some smelling the pollutant. People were calling the district and the chamber of commerce to see if they should bring their own bottled water.

The district has been criticized for providing a higher compensation package than other entities in Lake Tahoe. Do you believe this package is justified? Why or why not? If not, what is fair and what will you do to change things?: The staff is full of highly trained individual with special skills, training and one or more state certifications. We need to and are required by state legislation to compensate them on a level comparable with the rest of the water/sewer districts in

the state. There are legislative mandates that the district adhere to in negotiating with labor union for public agencies. Salaries need to be comparable with similar jobs in similar agencies for recruiting and retaining high quality employees.

It should be noted that the district has never provided post-retirement benefits that have threatened the financial health of many other agencies in California and the nation.

As a board member how would you represent all district customers and not just the small percentage of people who comment or complain to you?: As a civil engineer with 45 years of involvement in water issues, I have always been concerned with doing the right things to make the systems work efficiently and protect the district's \$1.6 billion investment for all of our customer/owners. I look at the whole picture and not to anecdotal stories and the small minority of the usual suspects that don't represent the 17,000 that we serve.

Tell the voters something about yourself that they may not know: Back in the early 1980s, I was involved in Baja off-road racing and got mixed up with a group in Southern California that were tied into Toyota. They had access to a supply of Toyota mini-truck that they converted to 4X4s before Toyota had factory built 4X4 mini-truck. I was marketing these super trick trucks to Toyota dealers as far north as Portland and east to Denver. I was selling 4X4 trucks to Shehadi Toyota.

Letter: Urging support of SB850

Publisher's note: *This letter was sent to Gov. Jerry Brown on Sept. 26 and is reprinted with permission.*

Dear Governor Brown:

I am writing to you to urge your signature into law of SB 850 ("The Bill") by State Senator Block. The Bill as is valuable to our State's future to increase the education and training of residents of our State.

The Bill also creates an opportunity to allow for the Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC) to apply to be one of the pilot sites and offer a baccalaureate degree to students in South Lake Tahoe. This latter point is particularly important because of our remote location and distance from other public four-year colleges. The South Shore needs a trained population base to grow a viable and diversified local economy and create opportunity for all segments of our diverse economy.



David Jinkens

This communication is a follow-up to my email communication to your office today in support of SB 850.

In summary, please allow me to offer the following additional reasons you should support this Bill:

- "California needs to produce one million more baccalaureate degrees than the state currently produces to remain economically competitive in the coming decades." California business and industry need to hire trained Californians first and foremost to reduce unemployment and grow the State and local economy.
- Offering a baccalaureate degree in South Lake Tahoe would

complement the excellent work being undertaken by the Lake Tahoe Community College and the renowned preparatory work being conducted by the Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

- Every motivated person should have an opportunity to pursue a baccalaureate degree at a place that is convenient, accessible, and affordable.
- Careers in public safety, technology, and health services now often require baccalaureate degrees even though they may not have required them in the past.
- 63 percent of job openings will require some college education and 33 percent will require a bachelor's degree.
- Nationally, community college baccalaureate degrees have proven to be cost effective. In a time when student debt is a national concern, low cost, quality degree programs are vital.
- Authorizing community colleges to offer limited, targeted applied baccalaureate degrees will increase access for underserved areas and populations, benefit the State economy, remove barriers to completion, and compensate for the lack of university programs or capacity in certain fields. • Community colleges have a proven record of meeting local workforce demands in applied and technical areas, supporting underrepresented students, and providing affordable, accessible quality instruction.
- 21 states have authorized community colleges to award applied baccalaureate degrees that help meet workforce demand. I urge and encourage you to support SB 850. This is not a partisan bill but rather a good-government measure.

I have no other interest in the matter except to see all who live in our community and State prosper and become productive residents and citizens. Our community's and the State's future depend on having an educated and qualified work force. Thank you!

David M. Jinkens

Find out about LVFPD's Measure H

Lake Valley Fire Protection District is putting on an educational forum on Measure H on Oct. 8 from 5:30-7pm at Fire Station 7 at 2211 Keetak St in Meyers.

Measure H is on the Nov. 4 ballot. It is a special flat rate parcel tax for properties served by the Lake Valley Fire Protection District to fund the following programs: wildfire prevention and suppression programs, the Angora Peak Fire Crew, and equipment and facilities repair and replacement.

The district serves the California side of the South Shore outside of the South Lake Tahoe city limits, east to the state Line, north to Emerald Bay, south to Pickett's Junction in Alpine County, and west to Twin Bridges.

For more info, go online.

King Fire 84% contained and not growing

Updated 8:40pm:

Winter-like weather is allowing firefighters to continue

getting the upper hand on the King Fire.

It is 84 percent contained, with no growth on Sept. 27. The acreage burned remains at 97,099. The arson fire that has been raging east of Pollock Pines since Sept. 13 is burning in mostly rugged terrain, with little threat to population centers.

Officials are monitoring roads in the burn area for the threat of mud and debris flow. Firefighters have put sandbags in front of some homes and other buildings.

Quintette and Volcanoville no longer have any evacuation warnings. The Apple Hill area is also evacuation-free.

However, the fire as of Sept. 27 was still a threat to 289 structures. Twelve houses have been reduced to ash.

More moisture is in the forecast Sunday.

“With hunting season starting [Saturday], we want to remind visitors that the Eldorado National Forest closure is still in effect,” Eldorado Forest Supervisor Laurence Crabtree said in a statement. “Although we are gaining ground, the King Fire is still active, and there are a lot of firefighting resources still in the area. I intend to open more of the forest as soon as it is safe to do so.”

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

TAP gearing up for holiday festival

Tahoe Arts Project is hosting the third annual Holiday Festival on Nov. 15-16 at South Tahoe Middle School's multipurpose room.

That Saturday the event is from 10am-4pm. It ends at 3pm on Sunday.

It will feature art, craft and food vendors, entertainment, raffle prizes, and a visit from Santa. Admission is free.

For more info, call 530.542.3632.

Tahoe Arts Project is a nonprofit organization that presents performing arts in the schools and community of South Lake Tahoe.

Advocates consider expanding Calif. recycling

By Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

The fact that you drag that recycling to the curb doesn't mean it escapes the landfill.

In the years since California enacted a recycling framework, subsidized by the deposits paid on cans and bottles, people have generally been willing to do their part. Cities and counties have reflected that receptiveness by expanding the universe of materials eligible to be picked up curbside.

But putting recyclables in a bin forms just one link in a long chain allowing containers to live second lives as repurposed raw material. Once discarded goods arrive at a processing facility, their fate is governed by a simple business decision: given the resale value, is it worth the time and money to collect, separate or process?

A recent Californians Against Waste report found that most most cartons containing milk and juice end up intermingled with garbage – despite the fact that more and more cities encourage residents to toss those containers in with other recyclables. Styrofoam is technically recyclable but often becomes garbage.

“It’s important to make a distinction between collected and recycled,” said Mark Oldfield, a spokesman for CalRecycle. “It quite often comes back to, what do they have locally in terms of processing capability?”

California’s foremost recycling advocacy group hopes to expand that capacity. Fresh off a resounding victory as the Legislature passed a ban on the single-use plastic bags that gum up recycling machinery and clutter waterways, Californians Against Waste is contemplating legislation to expand the type of materials covered by the state’s program.

Read the whole story

Private security outfit raids Calif. pot farms

By Dylan Scott, TPM

They wear camouflaged uniforms, bearing military-style insignia. They ride helicopters over the forests of Mendocino County equipped with firearms, where they cut down illegal marijuana. But they aren't the army. They aren't even the police. They are Lear Asset Management, a private security firm that is attracting a lot of attention for the work it's doing – and even perhaps some work it hasn't done

KCBS in San Francisco described them as “mysterious men dropping from helicopters to chop down” pot plants. Rumors swirl in the area's marijuana community about heavily armed men choppering onto their private land and cutting down their marijuana plants without identifying themselves or answering questions about who they are. Lear has become a boogeyman of sorts for a certain population in Northern California.

But they aren't hiding. Paul Trouette, Lear Asset Management's 55-year-old founder, spoke with TPM for more than 30 minutes earlier this week to describe what his company does and why they do it. They see themselves filling a void that law enforcement cannot. Trouette at one point invoked the Pinkertons – the private detective agency notorious for, among other things, violently busting unions and chasing Wild West outlaws – to demonstrate the historical precedent for what they're now doing in this county of 88,000 on the edge of the California Redwoods.

“Law enforcement just doesn't have the means to take care of it any longer,” Trouette told TPM. The 2011 murder of Fort Bragg City Councilman Jere Melo by an illegal trespasser tending poppy plants as Melo patrolled private land for a timber company made a big impression on Trouette, he said. Lear was incorporated the same year, and the company has worked with a nonprofit founded in Melo's memory.

Read the whole story