

Letter: Expand 'straw smart' thinking

To the community,

I would like to commend the students who participated in the event the "Last Straw" because they are creating awareness as middle school students.

It would be great if the students that are involved in the Sierra Watershed Education Program (SWEP) could be more involved with the college students here at SNC to give them more opportunities to get their ideas out into the community more. They are currently working with IVGID which is a start to making Incline Village a better place. If the students that have been spearheading the Outreach program continue to create awareness in the community, the community can help those who enter such as tourists, this summer season to be "straw smart."

We should help this movement become just as powerful as the saying of "Keep Tahoe Blue."

During the summer, Incline Village and Kings Beach become a hot spot for summer fun on the lakefront. We as locals in the community are the ones who have to deal with the aftermath of all the trash and excess litter.

If we can downsize the amount of plastic being littered around the lake by just reducing the straw usage, the lake can be a much cleaner and more respected place to be viewed as a get-away not a party scene.

Gavin Ryan-Massa, junior at Sierra Nevada College

Editorial: Strengthening Nev. ethics regulations a worthy pursuit

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the April 16, 2018, Las Vegas Sun.*

On March 21, the *Reno Gazette-Journal* published a story raising questions about Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani's expenditure of more than \$1 million in campaign funds on services provided by her late husband's political consulting firm.

Five days later, in what was obviously no coincidence, Commission Chairman Steve Sisolak unveiled a package of proposed ethics and transparency reforms that included a prohibition on payment by candidates to family members or their businesses.

He didn't mention Giunchigliani, but you can be sure he wouldn't object if Nevadans drew their own conclusions, as both Sisolak and Guinchigliani are seeking the Democratic nomination for governor.

Competitive politics aside, however, Sisolak's ideas deserve consideration in a state where transparency requirements and ethics laws are an unfunny joke.

Read the whole story

Opinion: El Dorado County and SB54

By Don Ashton and Michael Ciccozzi

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has closely followed the issues surrounding Senate Bill 54, which is known as The California Value Act. SB54 made numerous amendments to state law and has been criticized for infringing local law enforcement's ability to collaborate with federal immigration officials. While the key conflict surrounding SB54 remains between the federal and state governments, the county remains concerned with how SB54 may affect its ability to carry out its law enforcement responsibilities in the most effective means possible.

The Board of Supervisors also understands that the alleged conflicts between state and federal law involves complex issues that cannot be meaningfully assessed by the county without the expenditure of significant staff time and resources to analyze the intricacies of SB54 and federal immigration law. Objective analysis of the complex legal issues is expected in the near future.

Specifically, the United States has sued the state of California in federal court claiming that SB54 violates the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution. The United States moved to enjoin California from enforcing SB54, and this motion will be heard by the federal District Court on June 20. The decision on the United States' motion for preliminary injunction will require the court to evaluate the merits of the United States' challenge to SB54 and other state "sanctuary" laws (AB450 and AB103).

The Board of Supervisors also understands that Orange County recently sought to intervene in the federal lawsuit, and

Orange County's motion to intervene is set to be heard June 5. As Orange County's motion to intervene demonstrates, intervention is a complicated legal issue and seeking intervention would require the expenditure of significant county resources. Instead of expending limited resources at this time and taking away from other pressing county projects, the Board of Supervisors believes the more prudent avenue is to await the upcoming guidance from the court on whether a county is a proper party to the federal lawsuit.

Another more limited option to present the county's perspective in the federal lawsuit would be to file a "friend of the court" brief. At this time, five such amicus briefs have been filed, and the federal court indicated that any additional "duplicative or cumulative arguments will not be considered." Because the motion for preliminary injunction will be heard in less than two months, any such brief would also be untimely. The county will continue to watch the federal lawsuit and evaluate whether such a brief in support of a future motion or appeal would be a prudent expenditure of county resources.

Don Ashton is chief administrative officer for El Dorado County and Michael Ciccozzi is county counsel.

Letter: VHR rules will be the downfall of SLT

To the community,

We recently received talking points from a local public relations firm relating to how we could handle the adverse publicity which occurred due to the CBS morning show about the

draconian VHR ordinance and subsequent \$1,000 fine enforcement.



Jim Morris

We, as property managers and owners, have been requesting support from the chamber of commerce, LTVA, and the lodging association in helping us fight the selfish attitudes of some locals regarding their entitlement to Lake Tahoe without visitors to their neighborhoods. We requested support of these groups to come to the council meetings and support our industry and now we have these onerous fees, regulations and fines.

Now the facts are getting out in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Reno Gazette Journal*, *USA Today*, CBS News, and other media outlets about the treatment of our visitors which we have been cultivating for decades.

In a recent interview Mayor Wendy David defended the council's actions by their reliance on a socio-economic study which the city had paid \$75,000 for. The study did not address the economic impacts which was required in the initial contract. Plus, the statistics relating to VHR complaints were exaggerated by 400 percent due to erroneous data supplied by the city. According to David, this was the reason for the city imposing all the latest restrictions, fines and a VHR cap of 1,400 because of this erroneous report. See the **video here**.

It has been said that you deserve the government that you have. South Lake Tahoe soak it up because if you don't put an end to this craziness, it will take us years to recover.

Jim Morris, Lake Tahoe Accommodations owner

Opinion: Orange County, the new Gotham

By Joe Mathews

Why does a place as big and beautiful as Orange County behave in ways so small and ugly?

In recent weeks, county supervisors first voted to oppose state sanctuary laws, thus aligning themselves with President Trump, who has targeted California in a campaign of lies and mass deportation, and against the county's own immigrant families.



Joe Mathews

Then the county abandoned a plan to house hundreds of homeless people in temporary shelters in Huntington Beach, Laguna Niguel, and Irvine, after protests from people in those cities.

Protecting its own immigrants and providing housing for its own people shouldn't be a heavy lift for a wealthy county with 3.2 million people—more than the populations of 21 states. Orange County, the sixth most populous in the United States,

is one of the richest jurisdictions on earth, with a bigger economy than Greece or Portugal.

But the recent decisions on immigrants and the homeless weren't surprising. Orange County has an especially bad case of a California malady: Our local governments simply can't meet the challenges and standards of our diverse and globally oriented communities.

"We think of ourselves as Mayberry," says Fred Smoller, a Chapman University political scientist who studies Orange County, "when we really are closer to Gotham City."

The decisions on immigrants and the homeless reflect Orange County's fundamental confusion about itself. County officials often portray themselves as weak, playing the victim. On immigration, they somehow saw themselves as targets of a state bullying them (albeit to protect their own immigrants). In the homeless case, the official pretense is that Orange County and its cities can't afford to house a few thousand homeless people.

Logic is often twisted. In opposing the immigrant sanctuary laws, the county supervisors portrayed themselves as honoring federal supremacy—even if it means collaborating with mass deportations that increasingly target non-criminals. But when supervisors dropped the homeless plan, they posed as defenders of local sovereignty, as a federal judge demands action on the homeless.

There are dangers to this Mayberry complex. By clinging to its self-image as a collection of NIMBY-ish small towns, Orange County has made itself profoundly vulnerable to mismanagement and corruption.

Two decades ago, local officials couldn't stop treasurer Robert Citron until his bad investments bankrupted the county. More recently, the county has failed to confront public official corruption in its law enforcement structure, even

after its previous sheriff went to prison.

A long-running scandal has shown that both the district attorney's office and the sheriff's department "secretly operated unconstitutional scams with jail snitches to win convictions, hid exculpatory evidence from defendants and juries, and, when necessary, committed perjury in hopes of masking the cheating," as the *OC Weekly* put it. Judges have condemned the misconduct, which so far has led to the dismissal of 18 cases for murder, attempted murder, and felony assault.

But the district attorney and sheriff haven't lost their jobs. Instead, these same county law enforcement agencies now claim to be defending California from criminals by siding with the Trump administration's mass deportation strategies. It's right to be cynical about this. Is Orange County using the immigration issue to distract from law enforcement's own troubles? Or, even worse, are the sheriff and the district attorney trying to curry favor with federal authorities and thus blunt federal investigation into their own misconduct?

The county's Mayberry complex doesn't just hurt people caught up in the criminal justice system, or the homeless or immigrants. It has given Orange County a government that's out-of-step with the desires of the people who live there. In a new **Chapman University survey** of 706 Orange County residents, 83 percent of respondents said they wanted to find a way for undocumented immigrants to stay, and 64 percent said immigrants "contribute more than they take" from the economy. The same poll found that assisting the poor and homeless was the second biggest issue in the county among residents (with 24 percent citing it).

California Democrats have fantasies of turning the historically Republican Orange County into a blue place that will support a statewide progressive agenda. That won't happen, and it shouldn't. The poll shows that Orange County's

residents are very much in the middle, disgusted with Washington, D.C., and with both parties, and worried about their kids and the cost of housing and living here.

Ideally, Orange County could pursue a moderate path that is true to its people's real views, which embody a practical California libertarianism: skeptical of costly regulation while championing entrepreneurialism, immigrants, open government, limits on law enforcement, and preservation of its natural treasures.

But that would take a county with new leadership that thinks in ways as big and beautiful as Orange County itself.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.

Opinion: Stop telling me my active daughter might get hurt

By Leslie Kendall Dye, Washington Post

At school pickup, I stand outside the chain-link fence that separates the kindergarten playground from the parents. Our 5-year-olds walk in orderly lines from the building to the yard. They blink in the afternoon sun, disoriented after many hours indoors.

The bell rings and, freed from their teachers, the children run with sudden energy to the yard's small jungle gyms. The gate swings open to usher us in. Some kids enjoy the slides, others play hopscotch or draw on the concrete with chalk, and

a few curl into their parents' or babysitters' laps to release the tensions of the day.

My child runs straight for the 15-foot fence and begins scaling it. Picture a cross between Spider-Man and the Flash, and you have my daughter. I consider it my greatest achievement that I have never lost her; her agility is matched only by her speed. I often place a large red bow in her hair as a visual tracking device. It helps me spot her dangling from trees or hanging upside down from scaffolding. Once we leave our apartment, I am always trying to catch up with her.

Read the whole story

Editorial: Bankrupt public-employee pensions a looming crisis

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the April 16, 2018, edition of Investor's Business Daily.*

As the media relentlessly focus on the federal government's burgeoning debt, a new report says that states face their own ticking debt bomb: the exploding liabilities for lavish state and local public-employee pensions. Reform won't be easy, but there is no choice.

A new report by the Pew Charitable Trusts shows that the problem is getting out of hand. In 2016, the most recent full year for which data are available, states were more than \$1.4 trillion in the red. Pension debt has increased for 15 straight years, and shows no signs of abating.

Indeed, as Reason blogger Eric Boehm notes, “The really scary part is that pension debt keeps increasing despite the fact that taxpayers’ contributions to state-level pension plans have doubled as a share of state revenue in the past decade.”

[Read the whole story](#)

Opinion: Working together to protect shoreline

By Joanne Marchetta

Lake Tahoe’s shoreline is a place of majestic beauty with sandy beaches and secluded, boulder-strewn coves. It’s where residents and visitors alike go to enjoy Tahoe’s famously cold, clear water, whether they are dipping their toes in for the first time or launching their boat, kayak, or paddleboard for a daily outing.

TRPA and nearly a dozen partner agencies and groups have been working together for two years to update Lake Tahoe’s shoreline regulations for the first time in decades. We continue to move forward with this initiative and aim to have a broadly-supported shoreline plan up for consideration by the end of 2018.



Joanne

Marchetta

These 72-miles of shoreline have been one of Tahoe's most difficult planning areas. TRPA has proposed updates to its shoreline regulations many times, but each attempt faltered as various groups rejected plans put forward.

This time, TRPA took a more collaborative and inclusive approach. The agency invited stakeholders like the Lake Tahoe Marina Association, League to Save Lake Tahoe, and Tahoe Lakefront Owners' Association, as well as other public agencies, to work together to identify key issues and craft a plan that protects Tahoe's environment and scenic beauty and improves recreation access to the lake.

The collaborative approach is working. This spring will mark a major milestone in the initiative, with the release of a draft environmental review for a proposed shoreline plan.

That draft review is slated to be released for public comment in early May. It examines a proposed shoreline plan that was endorsed by the Shoreline Steering Committee members and TRPA's Regional Plan Implementation Committee, as well as several other alternatives to regulate shoreline structures such as piers, buoys, boat slips, and marinas.

With a functioning plan in place, we can see beneficial redevelopment as shoreline structures are upgraded or relocated from sensitive areas like stream mouths, as well as scenic improvements and better recreation access to the lake.

The proposed plan would authorize two new public boat ramps, 10 new public piers, and up to 128 new private piers. Private piers would be authorized gradually, and the program would prioritize piers that serve multiple properties or retire pier development potential on other properties. The plan would also authorize up to 1,486 new buoys for lakefront properties and homeowners associations and create a reserve pool of 630 buoys

for use by marinas and public agencies.

No new marinas would be allowed under the proposed shoreline plan. But marinas could expand or reconfigure if they become certified as a "clean marina" and incorporate environmental improvements into their projects, including work to control aquatic invasive species, reduce stormwater pollution, or provide cleaner, more efficient boat rental fleets.

The proposed shoreline plan includes new environmental protection provisions for rentals and concessionaires and storage racks for non-motorized watercraft and would maintain Tahoe's 600-foot no-wake-zone to prevent shoreline erosion and reduce conflicts between motorized and non-motorized watercraft. It would expand this no-wake-zone to include all Emerald Bay, the most heavily-visited site on the lake. TRPA is also working with marinas, law enforcement, and state parks on ways to improve education and enforcement of the no-wake-zone to help protect people who enjoy non-motorized watercraft.

The proposed shoreline plan includes various low-lake adaptation strategies. The last drought left many piers, buoys, and boat ramps unusable as water levels fell below Tahoe's natural rim. These strategies aim to keep such structures functional down to an elevation of 6,220 feet, allowing property owners to install an additional buoy block to be able to move buoys into deeper water as lake levels fall, allow public boat ramps to be temporarily extended further into the lake, and allow marinas to install an additional row of lakeward buoy anchors and temporary floating pier extensions for use during low lake levels.

TRPA looks forward to the release of this draft environmental review in May, and to receiving and incorporating public comment on the shoreline plan proposals. There will be community workshops, public hearings, and many other opportunities to share your thoughts and ideas as this plan

continues to progress in coming months. Please go **online** to learn more about this draft plan and the process guiding it, or to request a presentation on the shoreline plan from TRPA staff.

We have made great progress working together on this difficult issue. By continuing to work together, find common ground, and build consensus, we can develop a shoreline plan that protects Lake Tahoe's environment and scenic beauty, while also helping more people enjoy one of the greatest recreation experiences in the world.

Joanne Marchetta is executive director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

Letter: Heavenly workers volunteer at B&B

To the community,

Since 2010, Bread & Broth has been funding our Monday meals through the Adopt A Day of Nourishment program. The Monday meal served every week at St. Theresa Grace Hall provides a hot, tasty and nutritious dinner to any individual who comes to our doors.

In addition to the full course meals, our dinner guests can pick up a food giveaway bag filled with fruit, vegetables, dairy products, canned goods and bread/pastries, and can stay until 5:30pm to grab cartons filled with the dinners leftovers. For many of the dinner guests, the Monday meal is a pleasant evening enjoying a wonderful meal and visiting with friends.

For a donation of \$300, individuals, organizations, businesses or church groups, can sponsor an Adopt A Day and host a meal that will feed up to 100 individuals. Thanks to Vail EpicPromise grant funds, Heavenly Mountain Resort sponsors six Adopt a Days annually. On April 9, Heavenly sponsored the Monday meal and members of Heavenly's product, sales and services department, Kellie Rochioli, Raymond Marshall and Randal (Wil) Wilson, volunteered their time to serve as the sponsor crew assisting the B&B volunteers with the evening's meal.

"It feels good to get involved with helping the residents of our community," commented Rochioli after working on the serving line. "It's good food for the soul."

Heavenly and its crew members are always ready to serve others and lend a hand, and their sponsor crew members frequently express how humbling and uplifting the experience is.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: Throwing away food is not the answer

By Nancy Chang, San Francisco Chronicle

Some 4.9 million Californians face food insecurity – our neighbors, a fellow PTA parent, the children running down your street. Yet, as Californians worry about where they will get their next meal, bags full of groceries end up in dumpsters.

As our state's population rises and the food waste problem is expected to grow, we can't let these precious resources

continue to go to the landfills.

Our Legislature has taken an important first step in scaling up food recovery efforts. The California Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, signed into law last October, legalized the donation of food past its sell-by and best-by dates. Most items are good long after these dates, which are proxies of quality and not of safety. These misleading dates are responsible for an estimated 8 billion pounds of food wasted nationwide at the cost to consumers of almost \$30 billion annually.

Read the whole story