

# **Opinion: All dogs are emotional support animals**

**By Wes Siler, Outside**

A few years ago, I hit rock bottom. I was pushed out of the business I'd spent seven years building by someone I once considered a friend. Making matters much worse, I badly injured myself in a motorcycle crash, and it took me three months of hard work to be able to walk again. The worst part, though, was that losing my business meant that I'd lost my health insurance.

On top of the never-ending pain, and watching my life's work swirl into the toilet, I was dirt broke, and badly in debt with medical bills. Friends took it on themselves to pay my rent and feed me, which was incredibly generous of them, but man did that screw with my sense of self worth. All of this coming at once was too much—I couldn't see a way out. But then I adopted a dog. Wiley saved my life.

**Read the whole story**

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# **Opinion: SLT deserves better council members**

**By Kathryn Reed**

Thank goodness the employees of South Lake Tahoe are proficient at their jobs because the elected officials are anything but that.

Two employees report directly to the five council members – the city manager and the city attorney. This council has managed to run both of these women off.

One has to wonder if the council's actions will spill over to the department heads and then down the ladder.

Former City Manager Nancy Kerry assembled a capable team, having hired all but one of the directors. Plus, there are employees who have been with the city for decades.

Still, it depends where one works as to whether things are chugging along smoothly or sputtering in chaos.

Part of this has do with the alleged poison pill who helped usher the city manager out the door.

Remember how on the last council meeting **Mayor Wendy David blew it** with calling a special closed session meeting? It was not agendized properly so it could not be held on March 6.

On March 10, *Lake Tahoe News* emailed her asking: Was the meeting solely your idea? David's response was, "No, I was contacted by our city clerk and asked to call this meeting because of an anticipated litigation. Only the mayor can call for a special meeting. I gave my approval to call this special meeting."

This is highly unusual. Anticipated litigation usually goes through the city manager or city attorney. Though, the city clerk could have been the one bringing the litigation.

David was also asked if the litigation item would be on a future agenda – after all, somehow it was so urgent it required a special meeting. David said she didn't know. If she doesn't know, who the heck does?

It's not on the agenda for today, nor was that meeting ever rescheduled any time in the last two weeks.

So, one has to wonder did the threat of litigation disappear with Kerry's resignation? In other words, did the city clerk's "problem" no longer work for the city.

The clerk, Suzie Alessi, has an interesting position. She's elected. She has no set hours. She can come and go when she wants. She has the luxury to show up for work or not. No matter what, she still collects her paycheck.

Of the 478 incorporated cities in California, about 90 have an elected city clerk. Maybe it's time South Lake Tahoe joined the majority of cities and did away with this elected official and brought in a professional who would be accountable to a real boss, not the electorate who pays no attention and has almost zero recourse to get rid of this individual.

As for the city attorney, she is choosing to quit. It's possible the council would have shown her the door after the questionable legal advice she's provided. If only there were some teeth to the Brown Act. It's up to the district attorney to enforce the open meeting law, and he's up for re-election this year – though he is being challenged by one of his deputies.

Anyway, interim City Attorney Nira Doherty, who was once the deputy city attorney here, has given her notice. Her staff report for today's meeting says, "I recommend the City Council discuss its city attorney position as I will be returning to my practice with various other cities and am unable to serve [as] the city's permanent city attorney."

Doherty is a partner with Burke, Williams and Sorensen. That firm was hired last fall to take over when Tom Watson left the city. Doherty was assigned to South Lake Tahoe because she was familiar with its issues. The firm has also worked for the city as special counsel for various cases.

This means the city is in need of a city manager and city attorney.

The City Council seems to have run both women out of town for different reasons, and reasons that remain shrouded in secrecy.

It's a bit of a soap opera these days with the electeds – it's more like "Days of Our Lives" or "As the World Turns."

As one staff member told *Lake Tahoe News*, "Now we are faced once again with leadership change, which will delay any forward progress on any key issues as new leadership will be very conservative until a certain comfort zone is realized. Couple that with a council leadership change coming in November and forward progress may be a long time in limbo. We as staff are not in chaos, we know what we are doing, and we know what needs to be done. It just seems that there is always personal conflict invading plans and process. No holistic thinking within the leadership."

Some fear a paralysis is beginning to grip the city which will stall the momentum that had been generated under Kerry's leadership. The group in town that is so good at saying no to everything, but never has any answers or solutions, might be able to take over with the leadership vacuum at the council level.

It's so bizarre that on today's agenda is the item "discussion and possible direction/action regarding a cannabis ordinance and regulations." There is no staff report – no supporting documents.

*Lake Tahoe News* asked David, Doherty and acting City Manager Jeff Meston to explain where the supporting documents are and what exactly the council would be taking action on. No one responded.

Ultimately, an agenda is up to the city manager to approve.

The council can't legally vote on anything regarding the cannabis ordinance because the public has not been made aware

of what would be voted on. They can, however, give direction.

Councilmembers Brooke Laine and Tom Davis were the cannabis subcommittee members. Laine has been lobbying for her colleagues to move forward with writing an ordinance for recreational marijuana. Her colleagues, for reasons they have not expressed, are dragging their feet and seem to be playing politics as they let Laine flounder by herself.

Three members of this council are up for re-election in November – David, Davis and Austin Sass.

My predictions:

- David won't run because at 70 years old she's never lost an election and doesn't have the ego to handle doing so now. She will have to be accountable for running one of the better city managers out of town and spending about \$300,000 in taxpayer money to do so, and for reasons that still have not come to light. David is a nice woman who has done wonders in the social services area, but clearly is not a leader and is so far in over her head on council it's scary. We need a leader.

- Davis will run because the council is his life. After 20 years or so, it's time for him to go. But he'll run. And depending on who else does, he just might get re-elected.

- Sass will campaign on having gotten rid of Kerry. There are so many anti-Kerry folks – many who are also in the “just say no” crowd – that they were celebrating her departure. It remains to be seen if there are enough of those people to vote for Sass.

It's time the residents of South Lake Tahoe become more engaged before it's too long of a climb to crawl out of the abyss we seem to be slipping into. Anyone can run for office when things are sailing along smoothly. True leaders jump in to right the ship, not sink it or let it flounder.

Here's to hoping there are at least three new names on the ballot in November for South Lake Tahoe City Council because from where I'm sitting I'm scared for our little town based on who's running the show today.

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## **Letter: Warm room thankful for support, to close soon**

**To the community,**

Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless (TCH) hosted an open house on Feb. 15 at the South Lake Tahoe warm room. The event honored the South Shore's faith community for their support since the organization's inception.

In addition to thanking the entire faith community at the event, TCH gave special recognition to the Rev. Hillary Bittman of Unity at the Lake, the Rev. Mauricio Hurtado of St. Theresa Catholic Church, the Rev. Robert C. Kelley of Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church, and Rabbi Evon Yakar of Temple Bat Yam for their extraordinary support.

We would not be operating at the level we are today without the support of South Lake Tahoe's religious institutions. Local faith-based organizations have helped us to raise funds, collect supplies, recruit volunteers, promote awareness, and facilitate our operations.

TCH has announced that the warm room will close on the morning of April 1. The warm room opened for the season this year on Christmas Eve at the Lake Tahoe Community Presbyterian Church.

"All of our staff and volunteers have done an incredible job

coming together this season,” said Annie Davidson, a TCH board member and the organization’s volunteer coordinator. “Even though the winter this season was not as severe as last season, there have been periods of extended cold and snow that would have been extremely challenging for anyone without shelter.”

Although the Warm Room will be closing, our staff and volunteers will continue to engage with the homeless community year round in order to assist with housing and provide access to resources.

TCH is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are welcomed to aid in funding the warm room and TCH’s other operations. Donations made payable to Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless can be mailed to P0 Box 13514, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151. Donations can also be made **online**.

**Marissa Muscat, TCH executive director**

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## **Opinion: How Santa Cruz is going under, like many Calif. cities**

**By Dan Walters, CalMatters**

When Santa Cruz, a picturesque and funky coastal city, first started to feel the pinch of rising retirement costs for city workers, it took several steps to limit the fiscal pain.

As recommended by the League of Cities and other authorities, Santa Cruz issued a bond to pay down its rising pension liabilities, set aside funds to cover increasing demands from

the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), shifted some employees into lower-benefit pension plans and made sure that its workers paid significant portions of pension costs.



Dan Walters

Nevertheless, the impact on the small city's budget continued to grow, leading City Manager Martin Bernal to tell the city council in his 2016 budget message that "our biggest challenge is the skyrocketing increases in health and retirement costs. These costs have gone from 28 percent of general fund salary in 2004 to 43 percent of salary in 2015, to an anticipated 58 percent of salary in 2020."

With operating costs, particularly for pensions, continuing to outpace revenues, even during a generally upbeat economy, city officials projected budget deficits growing to more than \$20 million a year by 2021.

Santa Cruz is not alone. Throughout California, city governments are facing budget shortfalls as CalPERS cranks up mandatory contributions in a somewhat desperate effort to make the gigantic trust fund healthy enough to cover pension promises to millions of state and local government workers.

It has only about 70 percent of the money it says is needed to cover pension obligations – and that assumes that its investments will return profits that many experts believe are unrealistic. CalPERS lost about \$100 billion during the Great Recession a decade ago and has not fully recovered, while payouts to retirees grow due to demographic factors.



City officials have repeatedly appeared before the CalPERS board to seek relief, contending that some cities will be driven to insolvency. But for the most part, CalPERS officials have taken the attitude that making the fund actuarially healthy is their highest priority.

In February, the Santa Cruz City Council unanimously declared a fiscal emergency, preparatory to placing a quarter-cent sales tax increase on the June ballot.

Santa Cruz isn't alone on that approach either. Throughout California, cities have taken, or are planning, sales tax increases.

However, cities rarely cite pension costs as the specific reason for the tax increases, because doing so might generate more opposition. Typically, they just say the money is needed for "police and fire services," which is a half-truth since police and fire pensions are the biggest drivers of rising retirement costs.

Also, a general sales tax increase ballot measure requires only a simple majority vote, while one dedicated to a specific purpose, such as pension costs, would require a two-thirds vote.

"We're in a brave new world of public finance and our community values its municipal services and we do want to be able to fulfill those expectations," Santa Cruz Councilwoman Cynthia Mathews said as the state of fiscal emergency was declared.

Whether those expectations can, in fact, be fulfilled is questionable even if Santa Cruz's voters endorse the sales tax hike.

The \$3 million a year it would generate is just a fraction of the extra \$9 million to \$11 million that the city calculates it's paying to cover CalPERS shortfalls and even a smaller

slice of the \$20 million annual deficit city officials are projecting.

California's municipal finance crisis is likely to get worse before it gets better – if it ever does.

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# **Opinion: Commonalities of gun violence and mental illness**

**By Ana Bourne**

Like so many, I was saddened after seeing and reading about the latest incident of gun violence in America, which took place in Parkland, Fla., at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The unforgettable images of children fleeing from the school, ambulance after ambulance arriving at the scene and frantic students and parents trying to grasp the gravity of what had just transpired were truly heartbreaking.

I am not alone in thinking that this is a time for our country to heal. This is not the time to politicize the Second Amendment, gun control or mental illness, nor is it the time for one side to demonize the other. Rather, it is the time to address these problems head-on.

I am going to leave the overplayed and overused expressions such as “guns don't kill people, people kill people” and “all guns should be taken off the street” out of my discussion. Instead, I am simply going to address the issue of mental illness in our society, as so many have done in the past following these horrific tragedies. But perhaps, in its totality, there hasn't been enough about this sometimes-crippling medical condition discussed in true and meaningful

ways. Almost immediately after each tragic incident, whether they are in Newtown, Conn., Las Vegas or Parkland we find the issue of mental illness addressed on center stage in American society.

True enough, any discussion that can result in saving just one life from gun violence is a necessary one. But opening the difficult conversation about mental illness at such proportions only following an instance of violence is truly disingenuous to the 1 in 5 adult Americans who suffer from mental illness each year. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration found that more than 18 percent of those living in the United States are affected by mental illness; 4 percent of those Americans adults experience "serious mental illness," which limits day-to-day activities such as going to work.

I find it truly disheartening, and it makes me downright angry when I see that there is such stigmatization of those suffering from mental illness in the U.S. And, this mischaracterization is only exacerbated by rhetoric from politicians and lobbyists who pounce on the opportunity to find a scapegoat and cloud the issues behind gun violence with a deep-rooted medical condition.

I truly believe that our country must allocate more resources; including time and money to help those with mental illness. It is not enough to just focus on understanding mental illness, we must build empathy for those with these conditions. Fortunately, I am currently in the planning stages of developing a nonprofit organization for this very reason— to help people in need of such understanding and empathy.

Studies show us time and again that those with mental illness are more likely to be victims of gun violence, especially to themselves, than to be the ones committing such acts against others. Having very tangible conversations about how to stop and mitigate gun violence is paramount. But at the same time,

we must also put mental illness into perspective and realize that it too is a discussion we cannot ignore.

*Ana Bourne is a Lake Tahoe-area resident and real estate investment professional, owner and president of Global Alliance International LLC, and a strong mental health advocate.*

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## **Opinion: Edgewood defends its charitable giving**

**To the community,**

The inaccuracies and subjective opinion of the story posted on Lake Tahoe News compelled us to respond with the facts and true information about the volunteer food and beverage tents at American Century Championship.



**John McLaughlin**

Edgewood Tahoe's executive team requested a meeting with Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe in early February for a briefing on the history of the golf tournament volunteer partnership. During that meeting concerns were raised about the distribution of funds, as it was discovered

after reviewing available tax returns that Soroptimist had been holding approximately \$450,000 in a bank account as opposed to distributing it to the community in a timely fashion. When asked, Soroptimist officers wouldn't provide a plan or timeline for how the funds were to be used. There are many organizations in town that need help and Edgewood asked to be involved in determining a few, knowing that Soroptimist's mission is to assist women and children. We were told flatly that we would have no input in where the funds are distributed – funds that the tournament held at Edgewood Tahoe helped generate. We sincerely appreciate Soroptimists' active involvement over the years and recognize their efforts, but this answer was not satisfactory.

The article also suggested that the Boys and Girls Club would no longer be holding their fundraiser at Edgewood Tahoe. This is not true. The Boys and Girls Club is still holding its 21st annual golf tournament at Edgewood. This event raises between \$40,000 and \$50,000 each year for the club. Edgewood donates the golf course and all food and beverage served in the clubhouse for this event. The club was forced to discontinue an evening wine event the Spirit of Spring because the wine purveyor is no longer involved. With the addition of the lodge, Edgewood now has group bookings year round and the clubhouse was unavailable for the Live Violence Free gala.

Edgewood has a long history of community support and involvement and those plans will continue as part of our long-held operating values. To that end, our team developed a philosophy on charitable giving that remains true to Edgewood's traditions. The overarching beliefs include three different categories: educational, social, and environmental. As it has for years, Edgewood is committed to providing opportunities for local organizations, and the food tents at the golf tournament will continue to generate funds for local nonprofits. That is not changing, but now instead of just one group benefiting from this event there will be opportunities

for other community nonprofits and Edgewood can ensure the proceeds will have a direct and immediate impact.

**John McLaughlin, Edgewood Tahoe president/CEO**

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# **Opinion: A voice for STHS students**

***Publisher's note: The following was read at the March 13 Lake Tahoe Unified School District board meeting and is published with permission.***

**By Shelby Lyon**

In light of the shooting last month in Florida, and recent discussions occurring around school concerning new safety policies, students would like to voice their concerns. Specifically, discussion about putting a fence around the school has been a topic of controversy.

In most school shootings, the threat comes from someone inside, not outside, and if the threat were to come from outside, many students feel that a fence would not keep them safe, but could easily be broken, climbed, or shot through, making our campus just as vulnerable as before. In addition, a fence would prevent students from being able to escape a shooter on campus. We would, as students, be more trapped than we already are.

However, we do feel that because of the world we live in today where gun violence has become so common, that safety precautions are necessary. Furthermore, we believe that money could be spent on more productive precautions than a fence.

For example, bulletproof doors/windows, more security guards, bringing another social worker on campus, or even fixing the bathrooms in the science hall so that doors can be locked during class time.

But more than this, students have overwhelmingly agreed that the best way to make our school campus safer is by creating an environment where no student or staff member ever feels that they are so alone and uncared about to the point in which they can become capable of bringing a weapon on campus and harming someone. The district and our community should be focusing our time, energy, and money into building bridges, not fences. And thus getting rid of the threat of an inside shooter altogether through a school community that is inclusive, accepting, and reaches out to students or staff at risk.

We should be training our teachers to stop bullying in their classrooms. We should be teaching our students how to be empathetic and about the importance of opening the door to relationships, healing, and help.

In closing, we feel that the decision to build a fence is not the best path to take. On behalf of the student body at South Tahoe, I'd like to ask for the vote to be postponed so that our concerns can be heard. We greatly appreciate all that you have done to take our safety so seriously and are thankful that you all are trying to move quickly to make our campus safer; but we feel like putting up fences is not the solution, and we feel that this decision might need more thought.

Thank you for taking our concerns seriously.

*Shelby Lyon is the South Tahoe High School student body president and student representative on the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board.*

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# Letter: Soroptimist takes high road with Edgewood

To the community,

It is with great disappointment that Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe has been informed its partnership with Edgewood Tahoe, during the annual American Century Celebrity Golf Tournament, has come to an end.

Since the very beginning of the tournament, now 28 years ago, Soroptimist and Edgewood have enjoyed a mutual partnership that allowed our members to run, staff and serve the patrons of the celebrity golf tournament through the food concession tents. We have taken great pride in this role, volunteering over 2,500 hours per year and raising valuable funds that go back into our community.

Under the previous Edgewood management, Soroptimist was a trusted and valued partner. We have served countless hot dogs and beverages over our tenure, worked thousands of volunteer shifts and enjoyed a relationship that entrusted us to manage an important facet of guest services.

It is a relationship in which we have taken a great amount of pride and we are grateful to have so many fond memories from over the years. It has also evolved into one of our biggest fundraisers of the year, supporting our community grant and scholarship programs.

Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe's mission is to serve women and children in our community. We regret that Edgewood, under its current management, will no longer be a partner in our work to support our mission.



We have so enjoyed serving you, our community and visitors, during the golf tournament over the years. We thank all of the community volunteers who have offered their time and talents to participate in this event with us, including our sister club Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra. The camaraderie along with the love, work, sweat and tears poured into running the concessions will always be remembered by our members and will be a part of our club's history.

Over the past year Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe awarded 22 scholarships to high school and college students, provided 15 cash grants to community organizations working with women and youth and supported international efforts in partnership with Hope 4 Women International. We are also building a long-term project fund that will make an even bigger positive impact in our community. We look forward to continuing this important work.

With gratitude to our community, visitors and friends,

**Pam Barrett, president Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe**

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# **Opinion: My Calif. lake it too good for you**

**By Joe Mathews**

Stay away from my lake, Californians.

It's too important, for the likes of you.



Joe Mathews

Yes, as a legal matter, I don't own Lake Mathews. But I've always felt a kinship with a Riverside County reservoir that spells our mutual name the correct way, with just one "t." What's more, Lake Mathews serves as the beating heart of the system that supplies water for me and millions of Southern Californians.

Lake Mathews represents an end and a beginning. It's both the terminus of the 242-mile aqueduct from the Colorado River, and a distribution center, sending that water, via gravity, from its elevation of 1,500 feet, around the region.

It's also a singularly forbidden place. All over California, rivers, canals and reservoirs double as sites for recreation and leisure. But not Lake Mathews. It's completely fenced off. And decades of efforts to secure public access have been denied by its owner, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

So in an era when every body of water inspires plans for public access or development or both, Lake Mathews retains a special mystique. My lake is like an old-time movie star—unknowable. And that's probably the way it should remain.

The special status of Lake Mathews is the product of its history. The area, known as Cajalco Canyon, was mostly orchards when the Met identified it as the perfect elevated spot to build a reservoir for Colorado River water that could flow downhill into Southern California. But one landowner, who believed the property contained tin that would make him rich,

waged an epic legal fight against eminent domain. The Met eventually secured the land—completing a dam in 1939 and starting water deliveries in 1941—but the legal cost is one reason why the water district hasn't shared its hard-won lake with the public.

That tough stance embodies the lake's namesake, William Burgess "Billy" Mathews, who, with contemporaries William Mulholland and Ezra Scattergood, fathered the water and power of modern L.A. (While Billy doesn't appear in my Mathews family genealogy, L.A. history is malleable enough for me to claim him.) Mathews was elected L.A. city attorney in 1900, served as general counsel of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, from 1909 to 1929 (doing the legal dirty work to secure Owens Valley water), and then quietly obtained Colorado River water and formed the Metropolitan Water District. But he died in 1931, as the project that would bear his name was just getting under way.

With the goals of preventing contamination and protecting water quality, the Met has repeatedly fortified Lake Mathews—by boosting its capacity and by buying surrounding land to keep development away. The lake got further protection in 1982 with the establishment of Lake Mathews and the area around it as a nature reserve that protects habitat for 65 plant and animal species, including bald eagles.

While other reservoirs in the region—Lake Perris, Diamond Valley Lake—were opened for recreation, Lake Mathews has remained off limits. Riverside County and the city of Riverside have been seeking public access since 1960. The idea remains popular and talked about in the area. But the Met hasn't budged.

Former Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge says the city probably should have annexed Lake Mathews in the 1960s, which would have provided local leverage for public access. In 2012, local Assemblyman Kevin Jeffries introduced state legislation to

open the lake, but the Met forcefully slapped it down. Even if it had passed, the legal protections against public access are “bulletproof.”

Other waterways in California have very limited public access, too—for example, there are limits on access to Hetch Hetchy, the Yosemite-adjacent valley that provides San Francisco water. But there is something especially pristine about Lake Mathews. “A lot of times you have to make compromises and tradeoffs,” says Jeffrey Kightlinger, the general manager of the Met, and allow hiking or other public uses of reservoir. But why should the Met do it at Lake Mathews, where it doesn’t have to?

Recently at the lake, a couple miles off the 15 as it makes its way to San Diego, I drove around the fenced-off shoreline, and then got out and walked for a couple miles. Despite the fence and the warning against trespassing, it felt idyllic, its water deeply blue, with birds chirping everywhere. In the lake, the fish, unmolested by visiting humans, grow so big that they are sometimes removed and used to seed other waterways where the public can fish.

The Met offered me a chance to get inside the fence and get a tour. But I declined. It seemed wrong to intrude on a place that, because it belongs so profoundly to California, doesn’t really belong to any of us.

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

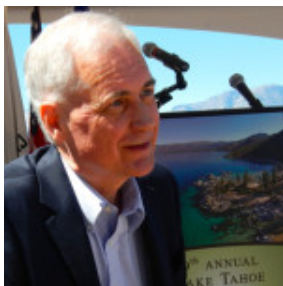
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# Opinion: Tariffs turn abundance into scarcity

By Tom McClintock

Frederic Bastiat, the great 19th Century economist, posed a simple question we need to think about carefully as we consider tariffs and trade wars.

What is better: abundance or scarcity? The answer might seem self-evident, yet protectionists throughout history can't seem to grasp it.



Tom McClintock

If a dollar can only buy one widget from Pittsburgh, but two from Ontario, the path to abundant widgets for America is obviously through Canada. If we slapped a dollar tariff on Canadian widgets to “level the playing field,” then we have just cut our own country’s available supply per dollar by half. It’s a perfect way to create scarcity from abundance.

Similarly, by imposing a tariff on Canadian steel (by far our biggest foreign supplier), the price of steel for Americans rises, and with it, the price of everything from cans to cars.

To the protectionists, this is a small price to pay for “saving” American steel jobs. Yet, as Bastiat reminds us, the unseen is just as important as the seen. We see the American

steel jobs preserved by ridding them of international competition. What we don't see as clearly are the jobs soon to disappear in every American industry that uses steel, as demand for their products declines in response to higher prices. Every producer in a society is also a consumer. No consumer benefits from higher prices and no producer benefits from scarcer materials.

This has been the consistent experience of every nation that has succumbed to the sophistries of protectionism. Thomas Jefferson thought that high tariffs could fund the government and promote domestic manufacturing. The result was a devastating recession that nearly destroyed our fledgling economy. Herbert Hoover responded to the recession of 1929 with the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. It didn't end well.

All trade is the exchange of goods, and both parties must benefit if the trade is to happen. If I pay you a dollar for a cup of coffee, I'm telling you that your coffee is worth more to me than my dollar, and you're telling me that my dollar is worth more to you than your coffee. We both take away something of greater value than we had.

Now suppose someone slaps a dollar tariff on that cup of coffee. I end up buying less coffee, or less of other products to afford the higher price, or switching to tea.

True, some governments subsidize their exports, undercutting their unsubsidized domestic competitors. But how does it harm our overall economy if other countries are willing to help pay for the stuff we buy? As Milton Friedman observed, that's simply foreign aid to American factories and consumers, paid for by the unfortunate taxpayers in the exporting countries. Thank you.

We will lose some of the 140,000 American jobs that produce steel. But the other 6.5 million Americans who manufacture products using steel can make more of their products, causing

their producers to hire more workers and to pay them more. Jobs disappear in the steel mills, but reappear as better jobs in industries that can now obtain more steel at lower prices.

Writing 150 years ago, Bastiat asked the question we still hear today: "What shall we do in case of war, if we have placed ourselves at the mercy of Great Britain for iron and coal?" He answered, "This sort of dependence which results from exchange ... is a reciprocal dependence. We cannot depend on the foreigner unless the foreigner depends on us." If war clouds should gather between Canada and the United States, we may face the prospect of losing cheap Canadian steel, but Canada would face the loss of cheap American resources and products that their steel exports buy. Trade reduces the risk of war because it increases the value of peace.

Bastiat noted how much we invest in ports and harbors, railroads and highways, all for the sole purpose of surmounting the obstacles that nature has placed in our ability to trade. What sense does it make to erect artificial barriers to replace the natural barriers we have overcome?

By that same token, President Trump has set the stage for rapid economic expansion by reducing the tax and regulatory burdens that were crushing our economy, and the economy is responding. What sense does it make to replace the taxes and regulations we have shed with new ones?

*Republican Rep. Tom McClintock represents the California side of Lake Tahoe.*