

# Opinion: Religious roots of America's love for camping

By Terence Young

Summer 1868 passed as an unremarkable season at Saranac Lake in New York's Adirondack Mountains. The weather was fine, the scenery delightful, and the usual array of 200 to 300 recreational hunters and anglers passed through the small settlement on their way into the wild lands beyond. The summers of 1869 and 1870, however, were an altogether different story.

The weather was more or less the same, and the scenery continued to entrance, but instead of a handful of sportsmen came a multitude of men and women from points east and south to enjoy America's newest recreation—camping.

Almost to a person, they had been inspired by what today, at the beginning of the 21st Century, we recognize as the watershed book in the history of American camping: The first comprehensive “how-to-camp” guidebook, “Adventures in the Wilderness; or, Camp-Life in the Adirondacks,” which had been written in April 1869 by a young minister named William H.H. Murray. Promoting a powerful combination of nature as spiritual and physical cure, and camping as an open and equal activity, Murray's book took a previously quiet region and transformed it into a nationwide destination, and gave Americans a new, reassuring form of leisure.

William Henry Harrison Murray was born in 1840 to a modest New England family whose ancestors had been among the first settlers of his hometown, Guilford, Conn. His boyhood was an enthusiastic mixture of study, farm work, and outdoor recreation. Bill, as he was generally known, learned to shoot, hunt and fish, even as he developed a voracious reading habit

and a taste for literature. Gregarious and energetic, Murray entered Yale College in fall 1858, and upon graduating immediately married Isadora Hull, who also loved the out of doors.

Determined to become a minister, Murray entered the Congregationalist East Windsor Seminary near Hartford, Conn., where he finished his theological studies in 1864. He then served in a succession of increasingly prosperous and prestigious churches in Connecticut and Massachusetts, most famously at the Park Street Church in Boston. During these years Murray earned a reputation as a church leader and as an eloquent, engaging speaker, but he also gained notoriety for enjoying such outdoor recreations as hunting and fishing, which congregationalists generally discouraged because they viewed these sports as undermining pastoral zeal.

Murray took his first camping vacation in the Adirondacks in summer 1864 and returned annually for many years. He canoed and hiked widely; his favorite campsite was on Osprey Island at Raquette Lake. Occasionally Murray brought parties with him, which could include not only his friends, but his wife and his friends' wives. Smitten by the Adirondacks' beauty and the leisure time he enjoyed there, Murray started writing about his trips in a series of lively, often humorous "narrative exercises." Such compositions were common among ministers who worked on animated, cheerful essays to improve their ability to devise engaging sermons. In Murray's case, the subjects included canoeing, hunting, fishing, and the powerful beauty of nature. The voice was steadily self-deprecating and ironic.

Murray never intended his "narrative exercises" for publication—but when a good friend encouraged him in 1869 to publish a book on any subject with the prestigious Boston publisher of Osgood, Fields, and Company, Murray, who liked the idea but did not have a manuscript, bundled the exercises with an introductory chapter and submitted them. Initially

publisher James T. Fields declined Murray's manuscript, but not wanting to embarrass the minister, he reluctantly agreed to read the submission. Two days later, he called Murray to his office with exciting news: he wanted to publish Murray's book that spring. "Your method of interpreting nature and your humor are unlike anything that we have ever seen," Fields said. "This little book, I am confident, is destined to a great career."

"Adventures in the Wilderness" was met with mixed reviews. The *Overland Monthly* dismissed Murray's writing as "gorgeous French, badly translated" while the *Nation* found his practical advice to be "sensible and worth taking." Nonetheless, the book was immediately popular with the public and a tremendous commercial success, making Murray both famous and wealthy by June. We do not know exactly how many copies were sold, but the numbers probably rose into the tens, and perhaps hundreds, of thousands. The book was in its tenth printing by July 7. Years later, Murray recalled that for a long time "Adventures" had sold at a rate of approximately 500 per week.

Within months of the book's release, the sleepy Adirondack region was transformed, as an unprecedented horde of 2,000 to 3,000 recreational campers, hunters, and anglers arrived from New York, Boston, Hartford, Philadelphia and other cities. According to a reporter on the 1870 scene, "Mr. Murray's book ... drew a throng of pleasure-seekers into the lake region. It was amusing to see the omnipresence of this book. It seemed to be everywhere. Hawked through the cars; placarded in the steamers; for sale in the most unlooked-for places; by every carpet-bag and bundle lay a tourist's edition of Murray."

The stampede of visitors, which continued unabated through the summers of 1869 and 1870, came to be called "Murray's Rush" and its instigator gained a nickname: "Adirondack" Murray. By July 1869, demand for "Adventures" was so great that unscrupulous publishers began to produce a knock-off "Tourist's Edition" with 12 pages of railroad timetables and a

map in the back pocket. Railroads began to offer a free copy with each round-trip ticket to the Adirondacks to generate more riders. Soon, it seemed that everyone traveling to the Adirondacks owned "a copy of Murray."

"Adventures" produced its remarkable effect for several reasons. The Adirondacks were more accessible than ever, as railroads and a telegraph line reached the region's margin in 1868. The post-Civil War economy was booming, which increased middle-class wealth and made it possible for more people to buy Murray's book and act on his advice. Finally, Murray's book had substance. Adirondack travel literature published prior to "Adventures" had offered readers little useful information, but the long introductory chapter in Murray's book offered a great deal of practical advice. Murray explained how to get to the Adirondacks, how to avoid pesky insects, where to buy equipment, which qualities to value in a guide, a few names of local guides, and what accommodations were available. He told nascent campers what gear to bring, and what to leave at home.

Furthermore, "Adventures" produced its dramatic popular response because Murray was the first writer to present camping as pilgrimage. In its simplest form, a pilgrim is someone who leaves home, journeys to a sacred place as an act of devotion, and returns home changed; personal motivations vary, but pilgrims typically seek escape from the routine and restrictions of ordinary life in order to find spiritual satisfaction and comfort, as well as other desired objectives like wealth, longevity or happiness.

Pilgrims need not be religiously oriented, and in the United States they have tended not to be. American pilgrims frequently headed out of cities to rural and wildland areas for family reunions, revivals, and the like even before "Adventures" appeared. Murray, unlike his literary predecessors, placed camping within this American pilgrimage pattern. He held out the Adirondacks as a sacred place that

could act as a balm to everyday iniquities. American life had changed rapidly after the Civil War, which had spurred widespread industrialization and urbanization. Growing cities offered enhanced employment options, improved amenities, and a host of other attractions, but also assaulted their residents. Smoke, noise and crowding; shifting gender, class, ethnic and other social relations; increased social diversity and stratification; production schedules and pervasive regulation, and other rapid changes left many city dwellers confused, alienated, and with their sense of identity unmoored and adrift.

Yearning for a sense of belonging and connection, they heard Murray's call to the wild. The minister explicitly blamed urban life for his readers' yearnings and aches, and prescribed camping as cure. "Adventures," he declared, was written for those "who, put up in narrow offices and narrower studies, weary of the city's din, long for a breath of mountain air and the free life by field and flood." These lost ideals, he assured his readers, could be found on a camping trip. Murray repeatedly detailed how one's physical health benefited from an Adirondack outing and, being a minister, argued that camping was essential for one's spiritual vitality. "If a person would know how sensitive his nature is," Murray declared, "he must leave the haunts of men, where every sight and sound distracts his attention ... and amid the silence of the woods, hold communion with his Maker."

Pilgrimage often involves some equalizing of the social divisions that occur in everyday life. Murray broke the gender barrier by insisting that camping was "delightful to ladies. There is nothing in the trip which the most delicate and fragile need fear. And it is safe to say, that, of all who go into the woods, none enjoy the experiences more than ladies, and certain it is that none are more benefited by it." To cement women's interest, his book detailed the components for a "Ladies Outfit," including gloves with "armlets," a felt

hat, a “flannel change throughout,” waterproof footwear, and a “short walking-dress, with Turkish drawers fastened with a band tightly at the ankle.” No woman, in Murray’s opinion, was to avoid camping because she feared for her health or safety.

With Murray as its suddenly famous proselytizer, camping exploded onto the American scene—for men and women, young and old. “Adventures” was a well-written and practical book, but more than that, the public was ready for its message. The Adirondack summers of 1871 and afterward were never again as wild as those of 1869 and 1870, but that was only because Saranac Lake’s facilities expanded, and an ever-increasing number of campers spread out to surrounding regions. When William H.H. Murray told America’s growing middle classes that their cities were profane and that pollution, regulation, and crowding was destroying their sense of belonging, they agreed—more than anyone, even Murray, had suspected was possible.

*Terence Young is professor emeritus of geography at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. He has written numerous books and articles on the American love affair with the natural environment and is the author of “Heading Out: A History of American Camping.”*

---

## **Opinion: Separating health care facts from fiction**

**By Marco Huerta**

Signing up for a health insurance plan can be daunting and time consuming. As a certified enrollment counselor, my job is to make it easier for South Lake Tahoe families and

individuals to navigate Covered California and enroll in a health care plan.



Marco Huerta

With all the talk the about health care, I have heard rumblings and rumors about what is happening with the Affordable Care Act and what is changing with insurance. Get informed. Make a free one-on-one appointment with me or one my fellow enrollment counselors, have your questions answered, and get enrolled for 2018.

Uncertain about the next steps? Below I have tried to separate the myths from the facts.

**Myth:** The open enrollment period is shorter this year.

**Fact:** It is true that all states that use HealthCare.gov (the federal exchange) and Nevada Health Link (Nevada's state-run exchange) only have a six week enrollment period, between Nov. 1 and Dec. 15, to enroll in a health care plan. Covered California (California's exchange) has not taken this federal recommendation. Californians must enroll by Dec. 15 to be insured on Jan. 1, but are eligible to enroll any time between Nov. 1 and Jan. 31.

**Myth:** I should not bother enrolling because President Trump/Congress/others will get rid of Obamacare in 2018.

**Fact:** With all the presidential and congressional talk about health care, you are still able to enroll for all of 2018. If you do not enroll and are not covered by a plan, you will have

to pay a tax penalty. In 2016, the penalty was \$695 or 2.5 percent of your household income.

**Myth:** I can't afford health insurance.

**Fact:** Monthly premiums must be paid, regardless of how well you are. However, if you experience an unexpected injury and are uninsured, you will have to cover medical costs plus the tax penalty.

**Myth:** Anthem Blue Cross is no longer in South Lake Tahoe. Now I will be dropped from my health insurance and don't have any options.

**Fact:** It is true that Anthem Blue Cross of California has decided to no longer serve this area after Dec. 31. If you enrolled in an Anthem Blue Cross of California plan in 2017, an alternative plan with Blue Shield that has a similar monthly premium will automatically be selected for you for all of 2018. If you wish, you also have the option during this open enrollment period to speak with an enrollment counselor and select a new plan.

**Myth:** This is the only time of year to enroll in a health care plan.

**Fact:** Yes, this is the only time frame a person can select health care plan unless he or she experiences a "life qualifying event." After a major life event (e.g. getting married, becoming a parent, or losing a job), a person has 60 days to enroll in a health care plan. One exception: Medi-Cal enrollment is year-round through Covered CA website or by calling the South Lake Tahoe Medi-Cal Office at 530.573.3200.

**Myth:** Getting help with enrollment costs money.

**Fact:** Barton Health offers enrollment support and assistance for California residents at no cost. All potential enrollees must have a photo ID, Social Security number, and their 2016



income. Enrollment assistance is available in English, Spanish, and other languages.

*Marco Huerta works at Barton Health. This is his fourth year as a certified enrollment counselor.*

---

# Opinion: Water data is for fighting

By Joe Mathews

If you thought California's famously bitter water wars were hard-fought, just wait until you see our water data wars.

Digital tools have expanded the ability of governments, companies and nonprofits to measure the uses of California water, and build more water-efficient products, boost water conservation, and replace expensive and inefficient infrastructure.



Joe Mathews

But the abundance of water data—in combination with the scarcity of water—effectively makes every piece of land and every drop of water in California the subject of measurement—and potential conflict. The data also exposes the fragmentation and deficiencies of California's system of water

management.

The state's new conservation requirements add to the stakes of the arguments over data. As Californians struggled to save every drop of water during the recent five-year drought, the state for the first time imposed mandatory restrictions on water use—requiring that 400 local water agencies figure out how to reduce usage by 25 percent in 2015. That shift, which followed 2009 legislation setting a goal of reducing per capita water use in urban areas by 20 percent by 2020, is changing the way that Californians fight over water—away from historic battles over dams and infrastructure, and toward new battles over how to maximize the water we already have.

Among the questions to which new data is being applied: What incentives will convince most people to remove their grass lawns and, if they do, how much water do those removals save? How much water do efficient toilets and appliances really save? Exactly how much water are we losing to leaks—and where can we make the most efficient investments to stop them?

And these questions are small compared to a bigger-picture quandary: can data help us to integrate our water use with our electricity and gas use—making ourselves so efficient that we effectively mitigate the effects of climate change?

The good news is that there is data—from governments, universities, nonprofits and private researchers—to begin answering such questions. The bad news is that there is not yet enough such data, and there are all kinds of questions about the accuracy of the data we do have. How precisely are we measuring, for example, evapotranspiration—the process by which water is transferred from the land to the atmosphere both by evaporation from soil and by transpiration from plants?

Another question is whether we are accurately able to measure land, say with landscaping or dry brush on it, to determine

how much could be replaced by more water-efficient plantings.

This is not easy work. When a state pilot project tried to measure landscape, it found that among 20 water agencies, there was no consensus on defining landscape areas or how to calculate them.

These issues are not petty—they are also questions of justice. How much water savings can we demand from farm worker housing that draws on groundwater in the fields? Or how do you measure the right use of water on a large public park with multiple water meters?

In this context, the highly publicized controversy over the California Water Fix—Gov. Jerry's Brown proposal to build tunnels under the Delta to convey water to the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California—feels like an anachronistic repeat of decades-old dramas about dams and peripheral canals. Instead, California's water world is more likely to divide over who controls the data and what it justifies. The state government and statewide interests, like the environmental lobbies, want more centralized control, while local water agencies want to use data to enhance local flexibility.

The state vs. local tensions are playing out in an ongoing fight over two related pieces of legislation—SB606 and AB1668—that seek to establish a management regime to realize the governor's framework for “making water conservation a California way of life.”

The legislative battle has offered an opening for tech-savvy enterprises—including nonprofits led by younger water war combatants. One L.A.-based nonprofit, ARG0, argues that much of the data undergirding California water use is old or faulty.

In an open letter to Brown this summer, ARG0's Patrick Atwater pointed out that California is watering mostly blind. State water agencies don't have accurate land use information, don't

have landscape area definitions, and don't have accurate service area boundaries for local water retailers.

"There is an urgent need to modernize how California's water agencies manage data," Atwater wrote. ARGO called for a one-year task force to address these issues, with an emphasis on open-source data gathering, a centralized data repository, and more local control of both water management and data gathering.

This sounds hopeful, but it also begs the question: whose data and whose standards?

Soon we may be re-litigating virtually every piece of California's already well-litigated water system. In the long run, perhaps it could lead to a major restructuring—including consolidation of agencies.

But for now, disruption means war. Leave your guns at home, please, but bring your data.

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

---

## **Letter: Tahoe homeless group says thank you**

**To the community,**

A gracious thank you to those who participated in the **Faces of Homelessness** on Oct. 26 at Valhalla, especially our primary event sponsors Temple Bat Yam and the Tahoe Chamber. It was warm inside the great room, with a fire roaring behind our presenters; however, their accounts of being homeless were

quite chilling. Six adults and local middle school and high school youth provided touching accounts of their personal stories of homelessness to an audience of strangers. A common theme the adults echoed was the desire to be recognized and seen, and to find assistance with understanding what caused their homelessness.

The Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless' mission includes promoting awareness related to the causes of homelessness. We know that homelessness can affect anyone, homeless individuals are people who matter, 26 percent of warm room guests from the 2016-17 season were employed, and 87 percent of our warm room guests from the 2016-17 were Lake Tahoe residents when they became homeless.

Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless is appreciative of the donors and sponsors of this event, including: Tahoe Chamber; Temple Bat Yam; Liz Muckerman; Dr. Kandra Yee and Mr. Andrew Zachary; William A. Downey, OD; Tiffany Hetherton Grimes, Chase International Real Estate; William B. Cherry, attorney at law; Bonnie Driscoll and Dave Carneggie; Sacramento Homeless Speaker's Bureau; David T. Mori, photographer; Valhalla Tahoe; Chimayo' Street Grill; Tahoe Party Rentals; Harrah's and Harveys Lake Tahoe; and Girl Scout Troop No. 143. Special thanks to the Boys and Girls Club for use of their van to shuttle guests to the Valhalla event.

TCH is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Donations are welcomed to aid in funding the warm room 2017-18 season. Checks can be made payable Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless and mailed to P0 Box 13514, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151. Donations can also be made on our **website**.

**Marissa Muscat, Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless**

---

# **Opinion: Lives lost in fires should never be forgotten**

**By Carl Nolte, San Francisco Chronicle**

All that is left now are ashes and ruins. The terrifying walls of fire and smoke that rolled over the region are gone. The North Bay fires have almost dropped out of the news. But 42 persons are known dead, and many are still missing. We may never know what happened to them.

It's important to remember the people who lost their lives in the fires. They were people we might well have known, maybe someone's mother, or an uncle who moved up north of the Golden Gate to places with the beautiful names: Mark West Springs, Journey's End, Redwood Valley, Silverado. They were all part of our family.

They say no one is really gone as long as someone remembers them. These are people we should not forget.

**Read the whole story**

---

## **Letter: People of Calif. deserve a voice**

**To the community,**

Liberals have a history of justifying their socialistic/communistic philosophy, because it is "for the good of all." This is perhaps why the Democrat/progressives in Sacramento do not feel compelled to put gas tax increases or

other legislation before a vote of the people.

Only they the powerful know what is best for we the people. This is why I was not surprised that [Gov. Jerry] Brown lied in his 2012 re-election bid, when he vowed he would not raise any new taxes without a vote of the people. And, surprise, surprise; no, your new gas tax dollars will not all be going to repair roads, bridges, etc.

On Nov. 1 our wallets felt a little lighter due to the new 12 to 20 cent gas tax increases, and we have yet to receive our new vehicle registration fees that are expected to increase by \$100 to \$175 per vehicle, per year. Further sticker shock will come when we see how these new taxes will affect what we pay for in goods (food) and services. But wait, there is more to come from Brown and his liberal friends. CARB is expected to increase gas prices another 73 cents per gallon.

Brown fell short on his promise of not raising new taxes without a vote of the people, but it looks like he will fulfill his promise of 2015 when he previewed his "California Climate Change Scoping Plan: 2030 Target," warning, his (Brown's) "climate fight will cost trillions of dollars, disrupting lifestyles."

According to a poll by the University of California, Berkeley, 74 percent of Californians said they opposed sanctuary cities, counties and the state. Also, opposing SB54, is the California State Sheriff's Association, where at their recent conference, Sen.Pro Tem Kevin DeLeon agreed that SB54 (Sanctuary State) is "bad law, but it is good politics." So, sheriff's and safety of citizens matter not?

During his testimony before the Senate Safety Commission for DeLeon's SB54 Bill, he said, "half of my family would be deported under Trump's executive order, because they got a false social security card, they got a false identification card, they got a false drivers license." So, the law matters

not?

We in El Dorado County have lost two residents, due to the policies of liberal voters, Gov. Brown and his cohorts in Sacramento. Sheriff's Deputy Danny Oliver was killed in 2015 by an illegal immigrant who had been arrested four times and deported twice. Also, killed was Placer County Detective Michael Davis. This year, sheriff's Deputy Pat French was killed by an early release prisoner as a result of Prop. 57.

Our sheriff's take an oath to uphold the U.S. Constitution. Sanctuary State Jurisdiction hamstrings law enforcement. The passage of AB109, Prop. 47 and Prop. 57, allows for greater risks to the lives of both citizens and law enforcement officers, who everyday, diligently do their jobs to protect their communities.

Progressives (DeLeon, etc.) are mortgaging your families future. Gas taxes are through the roof. Counties, cities and special districts budgets are being depleted due to the \$1.4 trillion in unfunded liabilities in CalPERS and billions unfunded in the California State Teachers Retirement fund. While most of the country's economy is improving, it was recently reported that California's is beginning to slip.

It's time to pay attention and be engaged. In a few weeks, the petition to Repeal the Gas Tax will begin circulating. Campaigning for the 2018 statewide election has already begun. And, if you like Brown, you are sure to love Democrat candidate Gavin Newsom, whose campaign has already received donations from George Soros, one of the Progressive Party's king pins.

**Terry Gherardi, Cameron Park**

---



# Opinion: EDC needs a real county counsel

By Larry Weitzman

Don Corleone, the godfather in the Mario Puzo novels, had a real consigliere, a lawyer who advised Corleone as to the ups and downs of his business and other moves. As a lawyer he stayed away from the violence of the family business, but as a lawyer and consigliere he advised the family with the pros and cons of all questions asked of him with honesty. Insincere advice or telling your boss something that didn't give him all the info could cost him (the consigliere) dearly.

El Dorado County has their own consigliere or sorts, but instead of telling his bosses the truth and fully explaining the pros and cons of every legal and quasi-legal situation, he tells his bosses who are the Board of Supervisors, not both sides of the issue, but what they want to hear to make them feel good, saying he will handle the problem but not explaining how. That happened when he was asked by the board if they could get their hands on \$6 six dollars sitting in the MC&FP (Missouri Flat Circulation and Finance Plan)? In open session Ciccozzi said effectively, no problem he will get it done, never explaining the sink holes that were before them.



Larry Weitzman

You see, the board wanted to look good and promise the public that they were going to add \$2 million to road maintenance,

“stealing” it from the MC&FP. Ciccozzi said he will handle it, no problem. The \$2 million was added to the road maintenance budget at the Sept. 27, 2016, final budget hearing, based on Ciccozzi’s promise.

Ciccozzi was flat out wrong and the \$2 million from the MC&FP never materialized as I wrote in October 2016 and never would materialize. According to the formation documents of the MC&FP, no one could touch any of the money except for those improvements specified by the MC&FP. County road maintenance was not one of them. Ciccozzi should have known that before he shot his mouth off. I knew the truth and so did many other people, including former Supervisor Jack Sweeney. He had the habit of reading everything.

That’s called bad lawyering and poor advice. Yet this guy continued as our county counsel. Ciccozzi is giving county counsels a bad reputation. And unfortunately, it sets a low bar for the dozen or so assistant county counsels in EDC.

Besides county counsel’s wasting of \$23,000 in a fruitless investigation which only enriched a San Francisco law firm while leaving a plethora of county pot holes unfilled, Ciccozzi told the board and probably anyone who would listen that the Austin case, which is a suit against the county for the refund of over \$32 million of illegally collected building fees under the guise of the Mitigation Fee Act, had no merit. First, he said the Walker case, which happens to be the law of California didn’t apply to EDC. Maybe Ciccozzi thinks we are part of the newly formed state of Jefferson. He was absolutely wrong on that one. And because the county has continued to collect MFA fees illegally, that \$32 million number is more likely \$50 million today.

Ciccozzi said that the money collected after the last five-year “Nexus” findings were protected for five years hence. Wrong again. The law clearly unambiguously said if a five-year Nexus study wasn’t filed timely with the Board of Supervisors,

the local agency as defined by the Mitigation Fee Act which in this case is EDC, the money on account had to be refunded no matter when they were collected. Ciccozzi said that when Diamond Springs Fire bought their new truck, since that money was spent within the five-year period, EDC who holds their MFA money, owed the money notwithstanding the failure to file a new five-year Nexus study. Absolutely wrong again. Either Ciccozzi doesn't want to tell the board the truth as it might not look good for him as he has been aware since 2013 that the non-filing of the five-year Nexus studies as required by MFA was a countywide problem or maybe he is just that bad of a lawyer. I would think the first supposition applies. But that makes him a bad lawyer for not doing the job of a lawyer, tell your client the pros and cons in a legal situation just like Tom Hagen (Robert Duvall) did in the "Godfather." He counseled his client on every side of every issue he was consulted on.

I have been led to understand I am not liked in the county halls for what I have written. I have learned that some county people say I don't know what I am talking about, whether it be the

MC&FP, the pension and budget problems or now the Austin case involving the MFA. The county has admitted in several places in official documents that it is in violation of the MFA, including in its audited financial statements of 2015 and 2016 at pages 63 and 73 in notes 13 and 14, respectively.

In the recent tentative ruling with respect to the Austin v. EDC, et al, which can be found online under El Dorado County Superior Court Dept. 9, see rulings of Oct. 20, 2017, the court clearly struck down the one possible defense that EDC claimed it had, the statute of limitations, which effectively was grasping for a straw. Their theory clearly didn't apply to the Austin case for a multitude of reasons (read the decision) although Ciccozzi still claims they are going to win on appeal. Unfortunately, the case will have to go to trial and judgment before an appeal can be filed, meaning hundreds of

thousands if not millions of dollars will be spent fighting this windmill. Perhaps the board should stop listening to Ciccozzi and get a real lawyer and find out the truth of their position. Better yet, perhaps the board members should read the court's tentative ruling, it is completely understandable. They are paying Ciccozzi about \$250,000 a year and 4th District Supervisor Michael Ranalli voted for a step increase of about \$10,000 for Ciccozzi not too long ago. Call that throwing good money after bad.

If you need a modern-day analogy, try Paul Manafort who was recently indicted for not registering as a foreign agent, money laundering and about a dozen other charges. Manafort's excuse is that they never enforce those laws. Only one person has been convicted of not registering as a foreign agent since 1966 is Manafort's excuse for not registering. Just like Ciccozzi, don't worry about violating the MFA, no one has ever enforced the laws, except now for the Walker case, very possibly the Austin case and those that follow. Ciccozzi made some not so brilliant decisions and told some whoppers (in this case quarter truths) to the board. He's lucky his boss wasn't a Corleone.

Ciccozzi's four-year contract is coming up for renewal. It is time for the board to look for a new county counsel. The one we have now is turning into their worst nightmare. If they don't the voters will know who to blame, Ciccozzi is appointed by the board, the board has to face the voters.

*Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.*

---

# Letter: Heavenly continues to give to B&B

To the community,

“It is a great feeling to know I work for a company that enjoys giving back to the community,” commented Chris Barbar.

Barbar is the assistant manager for ticket sales at Heavenly Mountain Resort and on Oct. 23, through Heavenly’s Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsorship, spent another Monday helping Bread & Broth volunteers feed a tasty and filling spaghetti dinner to the evening’s 95 dinner guests.

Barbar was joined by fellow Heavenly team members Meghan Madrid, product sales and services senior manager, and Kellie Rochioli, assist manager for ticket sales. Thanks to Vail Resorts commitment to encouraging their team members to support and be involved in nonprofit organizations that enhance of the quality of life for members of the local community. Through Vail’s Epic Promise grant program, Heavenly and Kirkwood mountain resorts each sponsor six B&B Adopt A Days annually and always send outstanding sponsor crew members to participate in the meals setup, serving and cleanup.

The three Heavenly sponsor crew members on Oct. 23 were no exception. They were helpful, hardworking and fun to work with. B&B is truly thankful for their partnership of over 8 years with Vail Resorts and its outstanding team members from Heavenly and Kirkwood.

**Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth**

---

# **Opinion: EDC may oppose federal tax plan**

***Publisher's note: On the Nov. 7 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors agenda is a recommendation from CAO Don Ashton for the board to consider sending a letter similar to the one below to representatives opposing the House-passed federal budget resolution that would allow Congress to use a simple majority vote to eliminate the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction on federal tax returns.***

**Dear Members of the California Congressional Delegation:**

As Congress considers options for comprehensive tax reform, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) urges you to preserve the tax exemption for municipal bond interest, as well as the state and local tax (SALT) deduction. These essential and longstanding components of the tax code support vital investments in transportation, water, housing, and other public works projects.

Municipal bonds are the single most important tool for financing public capital improvements and critical infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, schools and hospitals. Under current law, investors are not required to pay federal income tax on interest earned from most bonds issued by state and local governments. The effect of this tax exemption is that local governments receive a lower interest rate on their borrowing than they would if their interest was taxable to investors. Over the past decade, municipal bonds have helped local governments finance more than \$3.8 trillion worth of projects nationwide. Last year alone, over \$445 billion in municipal bonds were issued to fund projects across the country.

Any proposal to cap, or even eliminate, the exemption on

municipal bond interest would, if enacted, result in higher borrowing costs for local governments. At a time when infrastructure demands are great, increasing the cost of financing could have serious impacts on state and local economies.

Furthermore, as the nation's largest issuer of municipal bonds, California would be disproportionately impacted by any such changes.

Another priority for counties in tax reform is protecting the SALT deduction, which allows taxpayers to deduct state and local taxes from their federal taxable income. This benefit, which has been in place since 1913, provides counties with some measure of autonomy over their own tax systems and also incentivizes local investment in long-term infrastructure projects and various county services.

Similar to the tax exemption for municipal bonds, the loss of the SALT deduction would be particularly detrimental to California, where more than 6 million households claimed the deduction in 2015. It should also be noted that nearly 83 percent of those who benefit from this deduction in the state are families earning less than \$200,000 in annual household income. CSAC is concerned that eliminating this deduction would increase the tax burden on middle-class families and hurt our local economies.

Again, CSAC urges you to reject any proposal that would alter the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and the deductibility of state and local taxes. Any such change would have ramifications for both California taxpayers and local governments.

Sincerely,

**Matt Cate, CSAC executive director**

---

# Opinion: How to stop fighting the Civil War

By David Goldfield

It began as a loving effort to heal the South's wounds, to properly mourn the young men who gave their lives for a lost cause, and to extract dignity from the humiliation of defeat.

Immediately after the Civil War ended, the white women of the South went to work. They tended graves, erected modest monuments, and followed former President Jefferson Davis' plea to "keep the memory of our heroes green." The South had lost one-third of its white male population between the ages of 20 and 45. Its economy was shattered, its fields were desolate; and starvation was not uncommon. It was more fulfilling to commemorate the past than to dwell on the present.

While the white South settled in the past, the black South looked toward the future. To the former slaves, the result of the war was cause for jubilation. Reuniting families, consecrating churches, securing an education and gainful employment, migrating to Southern cities, and engaging in political activity consumed their lives. There was no compulsion to continue fighting the Civil War. They had won.

These perspectives on the war and the future were irreconcilable. The result was escalating racial conflict in the decade after the war. White Southerners won that battle, attaining a measure of redemption for their defeat in the war. In fact, those white leaders who wrested control of their state and local governments from aspiring African Americans and their white allies were known forever as "Redeemers."



By the time the last Federal troops left the South in 1877, the Redeemers, along with their allies of the pen and in the pulpit, had made a religion of their history. Stonewall Jackson's last words – "let us pass over the river and rest under the shade of the trees"—became a Methodist hymn. As Southern novelist Thomas Nelson Page wrote in 1880: "The South was dead and buried, and yet she rose again. The voice of God called her forth; she came clad in her grave-clothes, but living, and with her face uplifted to the heavens from which had sounded the call of her resurrection."

Civil War heroes became saints, memorialized in stone and marble. The statues that inhabit the South today, then, are more than historical commemorations; they are religious devotions; they are the icons of a redeemed race. The fierce battles over their continued public existence reflect what these images symbolize.

The symbols also reflected white supremacy. In the 1890s, the first postwar generation of Southern whites and blacks came of age. For whites, the task was to rededicate the South to what they saw as the righteous path set down by their parents. At the same time, young African Americans contested strictures on their work, education, and political activity. Their aspirations challenged the belief that whites were indeed the superior race and that African Americans lacked the capabilities to accrue education and participate in the political process.

The white South responded to black aspirations by legislating disfranchisement and racial segregation, and policing transgressions, real and imagined, by forced labor and lynching. These tactics effectively swept African Americans from any visible participation in Southern life. It was also the era, not by coincidence, that organizations such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans helped to erect a second wave of memorials, statues that populate most Southern towns and

cities.

The saga of the Confederate battle flag highlights the close connection between such symbols and white supremacy. Mississippi and Alabama, for example, redesigned their state flags to more closely resemble the Confederate battle flag in the 1890s. The Alabama state flag is the same as the battle flag except in color: It has a red cross on a white field, a scheme consciously employed to evoke white supremacy. As a historian of the Alabama flag wrote, its purpose was "reminding white people of their common nationhood and common ethnicity," a purpose "identical with the writing of segregation into statute books." Once the racial lines were set in law and symbols, the old Confederate rebel flag receded as a public emblem. Only in the late 1940s, with the beginning of the Civil Rights movement, did the Civil War standard reappear as a symbol for white power.

Those who claim that Confederate symbols represent heritage not hate, and that states' rights not slavery propelled the Union's dissolution, have an increasingly difficult time refuting the historical record that stretches from the 1850s to the present. They claim that extremists like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis have hijacked their symbols. In fact, it was the other way around. The Lost Cause was so larded with white supremacy that it became a natural attraction for these groups.

But today's controversy over Confederate symbols reflects less a battle over historical interpretation, than a loss of power. Power, specifically white power over blacks, propelled the erection of the statues and the unfurling of the battle flag. Those white Southerners who still care deeply about this legacy feel under siege. African Americans hold political offices across the region, textbooks matter-of-factly identify slavery as the primary cause of the Civil War, and millions of people from other parts of the country and the world have moved into the region. And, frankly, they don't give a

damn—about the symbols, the Lost Cause, the old historical controversies, and the war itself.

The South's economic leaders view these symbols as liabilities. The diversity of large professional and corporate organizations has rendered them more sensitive to racial, ethnic, and gender controversies. Given the abundance of alternatives for holding a convention, it became easier to select a site less likely to generate controversy. When South Carolina removed the battle flag from its statehouse grounds in Columbia, for example, the decision ended a nearly 15-year boycott by major conventions and NCAA championship tournaments that had cost the state more than \$16 million.

Still, the Civil War and its aftermath remain deep in the cultural sinews of the South. I know people who are not in the heritage groups, but who have affection for their ancestors and their sacrifices, even if they condemn their racial views. Hodding Carter III, the courageous journalist who stood up to the white supremacists of Mississippi in the 1960s—and later served as assistant secretary of state for public affairs in the Jimmy Carter administration—acknowledged that opponents of the rebel flag are right but confessed, “It still grabs me ... Right or wrong, our ancestors fought, suffered, retreated, died, and were overcome while sustained by those same symbols.”

True, but as the philosopher George Santayana stated, “loyalty to our ancestors does not include loyalty to their mistakes.”

Whatever communities decide concerning their Confederate icons—to dispatch them to a museum, to add explanatory tablets, to erect statues honoring the contributions of Southern blacks—they should not disappear. Their educational value more than transcends their hurtful implications.

There are already templates for coming to terms with the Southern past. Today, if you go to Thomas Jefferson's home at

Monticello; to colonial Williamsburg; or to the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.; or the Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte; or the Civil Rights museums in Memphis, Birmingham; Greensboro, North Carolina, or Jackson, Mississippi, you will find that African American history is no longer invisible. The black story does not negate the white story of the South; it serves both as a complement and a corrective to an interpretation that has prevailed in marble, stone, and fabric for 150 years.

Such inclusion may not result in reconciliation. But for many Southerners (both native and adopted), inclusion will likely generate greater understanding of our history and maybe even tolerance.

If the white South can give anything to the nation from its experience in the Civil War, it is the knowledge that war generates untold death and destruction—and that what good may come from war is often long delayed. African Americans would wait 100 years after this war of liberation to win their basic rights of citizenship. Their struggle did not end at Appomattox. It continued through Selma and Charlottesville, and the broken bodies and shattered lives in between.

What Southern whites and blacks ultimately share, then, is this sense of war's unintended and tragic consequences, the most tragic of which is that it has kept apart two peoples who have shared the same soil for four centuries. It is the common ground of a common heritage.

*David Goldfield is the Robert Lee Bailey professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte and the author of "Still Fighting the Civil War" and the forthcoming "The Gifted Generation." This essay is part of What It Means to Be American, a project of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and Arizona State University, produced by Zócalo Public Square.*