

Letter: Thanking community for WOWEE help

To the community,

For the past six weeks the STEEC (South Tahoe Environmental Education Coalition) has been busy presenting lessons for our Wonders of Water expanded edition or WOWEE.

Students in grades kindergarten through sixth grades got to experience some outdoor education stations due to the many wonderful agency and community partners that make up our STEEC group.

Once again I am reminded of what an amazing place we live in – not only for the breathtaking beauty of our surroundings, but also for our generous community. Many thanks go to the Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation and the Optimist group for helping to fund this amazing program for our students. We served over 2,000 students. Thank you to the many wonderful presenters and volunteers who helped make this possible.

Beth Quandt, science outreach coordinator Lake Tahoe Unified School District

Letter: Vote for Reilly for LTUSD trustee

To the community,

Having served under many different school boards in my 42 years of teaching in the Lake Tahoe Unified School

District, I know the importance of a dedicated, well-informed group of individuals who work cooperatively for the betterment of all the students and employees of the district.

I support Larry Reilly because he is dedicated to education as evidenced by his 39 years as an outstanding teacher. He is well-informed as to the changing laws and regulations governing education. His years as an athletic coach attest to the fact that he knows the importance of team work.

And most importantly, Larry Reilly is an advocate for all students.

As his friend and fellow educator, I encourage you to vote for Larry Reilly.

Anita Vieites, retired teacher

Letter: Reilly understands how LTUSD works

To the community,

I am urging all voting members of Area 1 to support Larry Reilly in his bid to represent them on the LTUSD board of education.

He has a unique knowledge and insight into the needs of the students of LTUSD, having been an educator in Lake Tahoe for 35- of his 39-year career. His experience as a teacher, parent, coach, and athletic director gives him more insight as to how a district is run than any other candidate. He has prepared budgets, prepared course curriculums, counseled students, and arranged athletic and academic field trips.

As a coach, Larry was on numerous championship teams and knows what it is like to work as a team. Communicating and working with other members on the board as well with community and staff members is his particular strength. I have watched Larry interact with compassion and understanding with students, teachers, parents and administration. Larry Reilly is the most qualified candidate.

Please vote for Larry Reilly for the LTUSD board of education.

Don Borges, retired educator, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: Reasons to vote for Davidson

To the community,

I am writing this letter in support of Annie Davidson for the LTUSD board. She is mother to two LTUSD students and knows firsthand the challenges that our school district, educators, and students face. She has no political ties that might sway her in one direction or another in regards to what is best for our community.

Annie has worked in the field as a researcher, teacher, and leader in education and policy. She has taught at the elementary level, at the university level and has worked most recently, as a research manager conducting studies for diverse educational projects. She tells me that their main goal was to contribute to education for all students by teaching educators how to tap diverse student potential. I love that.

We need someone who has fresh ideas and who is committed to

the joint vision for a future based on input from all of the South Lake Tahoe community, not just those who speak loudest or have been around the longest. Annie is knowledgeable, she is qualified, and most of all, she is willing and able to take on this very important position to make sure that her daughters and mine grow up in a community that cares and acts, instead of just talks, to make LTUSD work for all of us.

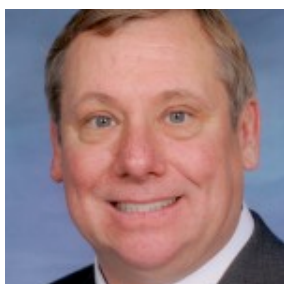
My vote is for Annie Davidson.

Kim Demus, LTUSD parent, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: PAC spends \$60,000 on Collins, Laine

To the community,

[On Oct. 28] I attended the LTCC and South Tahoe (California) Chamber's candidate forum. This forum is designed to allow one-on-one exchanges between members of the public and the candidates.



Bruce Grego

I learned a few things from this forum. Brooke Laine openly declared that she sought the endorsement of the Nevada-based chamber, but was unaware that she would be slated with Jason

Collin. She claimed to have protested to the chamber's political action committee (PAC) that she is not running with Jason Collin, but they told her that they can do what they want and she can't stop them. Jason, on the other hand, seems to welcome all the money that the PAC is pouring into his campaign.

The PAC that is supporting these candidates is the political action committee of the Nevada-based chamber. The PAC that is trying to hijack this election for Jason and Brooke has spent nearly \$60,000 based upon the most recent financial disclosures. From the information I obtained at the forum, most of the other eight candidates will spend less than \$2,000.

Jason also disclosed that "around \$20,000" has been spent to file and pursue the lawsuit against the loop road Measure T. Jason sought to prevent this measure from being placed on the ballot and undermine the will of the people; a judge ruled against him. Jason refused to say whether he will continue to litigate this suit after the election, and refused to disclose the individuals and/or groups that paid for his lawsuit against the South Lake Tahoe voters concerning Measure T.

How can we vote for candidates that are willing to be supported by a PAC or too naïve to understand the impact of such support?

We need to elect independent candidates who will vote their conscience on behalf of the citizens of South Lake Tahoe. Equally important, we need elected officials that appreciate the full consequences of their decision-making upon our community so we can avoid such decisions that lead to Project 3, the "hole".

Let's not allow powerful well-funded PACs to take over our city. Vote for independent candidates and vote yes on Measure T.

Bruce Grego, South Lake Tahoe

Publisher's note: Below is financial documentation provided by the letter writer:

Document 1, Document 2, Document 3, Document 4, Document 5, Document 6, Document 7, Document 8, Document 9, Document 10, Document 11 and Document 12.

Letter: Vote yes on P, U and R

To the community,

As a sitting council member and board member of Lodging Association, I urge voters to vote yes on Measure P – “P” for play and recreation. This would increase hotel taxes by 2 percent throughout the city. The Lodging Association is supporting this measure because recreation is our economy; investing in our economy will encourage more visitors and visitors to stay longer, which in turn supports the rest of our local economy.



Tom Davis

I also urge a yes vote on Measure U, a one-half cent sales tax with a yes on R for roads to direct those funds into our roads. I've been advocating for this investment to roads for many years. My mantra is "Roads, roads, roads." This money will improve our roads for years to come, which in turn will provide good paying jobs and this is what the citizens have told me is their priority. This is a good consistent funding source for roads. If passed, I and the City Council will encumber those funds to be used only for roads – if measure R passes.

To address the housing concerns, I've asked the mayor to host a housing symposium in early 2017 bringing the city, county, TRPA and all adjoining agencies together to develop solutions for housing.

Everyone asks me, "Whom should I vote for City Council?" My answer is to vote for someone who works well with others, who is respectable of other city councilmembers and city staff; someone who listens to our local citizens and hears and treats others respectfully as well as earns the respect of fellow councilmembers, staff and community.

Tom Davis, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: Davidson's experience ideal for LTUSD

To the community,

Annie Davidson should be the next LTUSD school board member from trustee Area 1. Since coming to Lake Tahoe, she has jumped into the community with great energy and commitment.

For example, she is an adjunct faculty member of Lake Tahoe Community College and co-teacher at Tahoe Parents Nursery School with Aileen Yure and Jennifer David. She served as a member of the Sierra House Elementary PTA board as a co-grant coordinator, classroom volunteer, and also volunteers with the Coalition for the Homeless and Warm Room Advisory Council. She led drama and music enrichment classes after school, volunteered with Marcia Sarosik's dance program, and performs with local music groups including TOCCATA. She also serves as an AYSO soccer coach.



John Upton

She also brings experience that would be valuable to our community. Her background includes 20 years of service in education in the Northeast, Nevada, and California. She has public school teaching experience at the elementary level and has worked with pre-service teachers. She holds a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a doctorate from University of Vermont. She has served in state government at the Nevada Department of Education and has worked for McGraw-Hill and UC Los Angeles. Currently, she works as an independent consultant with clients that have included University of Kansas and Educational Testing Service supporting state departments of education. She would bring valuable experience in education leadership to the school board.

While she have only been in the community for the past two years, you can see from the information I have provided that she has wasted no time in getting involved in a broad range of community activities. I believe that broad range of activities

and contacts will make it possible for her to hear from a broad range of people in the community and that will enable her to better serve you as a school board member, if she is successful in her campaign.

Further, as you can see from her background, she has had a lot of experience in other communities in matters that are directly applicable to school board experience. I cannot tell you now whether, how, or when those experiences might be of benefit in her decision making as a school board member, but do believe that the possibility exists.

Please support Annie Davidson for LTUSD School Board member, representing Trustee Area #1.

John Upton, former LTUSD board member

Opinion: Being in good health saves money

By Zócalo Public Square

It might seem odd to try to attach a dollar value to health—like trying to quantify love or happiness. But, in fact, a recent study did attempt to measure the value of the health created or supported by California's county public health departments.

Led by UC Berkeley Health Economist Timothy Brown, the study noted that a year spent in good or excellent health instead of poor or fair health could be valued at nearly \$42,000. The study, published in the American Journal of Public Health, is part of a larger project Brown is leading to quantify how

investing in public health returns benefits individuals and communities. For this Zócalo inquiry into what makes a healthy neighborhood, produced in conjunction with the California Wellness Foundation's Wellness survey, Brown explains how he conducted the study, why the findings surprised him, and how it's possible to measure the value of bad health outcomes that don't happen.

Q: What is the most important finding of the study?

A: With every year of public health funding, more than 200,000 people in California will improve their general health status, and of these people, more than 29,000 will not die. These are causal effects. The value of one year of improved health has been estimated to be equivalent to receiving \$42,000 in additional income for the person whose health is improved. The value of a life saved has been determined by the federal government to be worth almost \$10 million. Therefore, I conservatively estimated that every dollar invested in the California county public health system returns \$67 in improved health. To put that in perspective, every dollar invested by Medicare in programs to treat heart attacks, type 2 diabetes, stroke and breast cancer returned from \$1.10 to \$4.80 of improved health, depending on the condition.

Q: Were you surprised by what you found? If so, why?

A: I was quite surprised. I did not expect county public health programs to have such a large impact on population health. But I think that is simply a function of how difficult it is to see the effects of public health activities. Public health activities primarily prevent bad health outcomes from happening and this effect cannot be easily seen without careful investigation.

Q: What was your objective in undertaking this study?

A: I wanted to determine the return on dollars invested in the county public health system. That is, how valuable is the

entire county public health system in terms of the health that it produces? The impact or effectiveness of the county public health system is difficult to see, since unlike medical care, public health interventions are usually aimed at preventing illness in populations rather than curing sick individuals.

For example, the effectiveness of a medical intervention to cure food poisoning would be easy to evaluate because we would start with a clearly identifiable group of individuals with food poisoning. We could then determine how many of these individuals quickly recovered from food poisoning due to our medical intervention. In contrast, an analogous public health intervention would be designed to prevent food poisoning. One such public health intervention is the inspection of food service establishments. In this case there is no easily identifiable group of individuals who may have been poisoned if the inspection had not taken place. In other words, it is easier to count how many individuals with food poisoning recovered because of a medical intervention than to count how many individuals never experienced food poisoning in the first place because of a public health intervention. The latter can be done; it is simply much more difficult.

Q: Can you briefly describe how the study works?

A: We estimate the causal relationship between the amount of money spent by California county departments of public health and deaths from any cause. We also estimate the causal relationship between the amount of money spent by California county departments of public health and changes in the general health status of individuals.

When examining mortality, we are able to obtain an accurate count of all the individuals who died during a given year in each county, since mortality is carefully recorded by the state. When examining changes in general health status, we analyzed a carefully collected representative survey of individuals in each county, which gave us an accurate

description of the percentage of individuals in each of five different general states of health (poor, fair, good, very good, excellent). This simple self-reported measure of health is actually very predictive of actual health.

We then used sophisticated statistical techniques to mimic what would happen to mortality and general health status in a randomized controlled trial in which counties were randomly given increases in their public health budgets. We expect those counties with higher public health spending to have lower mortality and higher general health status. We do not actually perform this randomized controlled trial for ethical reasons, but are able to mimic it statistically using data on what actually happened.

Q: What are the responsibilities of a county public health department? When we give them more funding, what are we getting in return?

A: Many people do not have a clear understanding of the broad array of activities of their county department of public health engages in. The 10 essential services of public health include: 1) monitoring population health status to identify problems; 2) investigating health problems and hazards; 3) educating people about health issues; 4) mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve health problems; 5) developing policies and plans that support individual and community health; 6) enforcing health-related laws and regulations; 7) linking people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable; 8) assuring a competent health care workforce; 9) evaluating the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services; and 10) researching for innovative solutions to health problem.

Most of the services provided by county departments of public health benefit the average person, without their even being aware of it. The average person may not get sick during flu

season because other people received flu shots provided by the public health department thus reducing the possibility of being exposed to the virus. The average person may not get food poisoning because the restaurant they like to eat in was brought up to code by a conscientious health department inspector. The average person may not become ill from long-term exposure to second-hand cigarette smoke due to public health efforts to establish non-smoking policies. The average person may start to eat more fruits and vegetables due to the influence of a friend who was involved with a public health nutrition program. The average person may not contract a sexually-transmitted disease because of public health programs to reduce sexually-transmitted diseases that someone else participated in. The list goes on and on.

Q: Do county departments of public health save money for counties?

A: I think that is the wrong question to ask. Many public services exist not to cut local government costs, but to improve the quality of life in the county. Examples of public services that are provided primarily to improve quality of life rather than to cut local government costs include public libraries, public parks, bike lanes, the enforcement of building codes, and fire services. These services make an area a nicer place to live in, which indirectly improves property values, allows local businesses to thrive, and over the long term, increases county tax revenues. Many counties are known as desirable areas whose residents have excellent health as can be seen on websites like <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>. Well-funded county departments of public health are an important reason why some counties have better health than other counties.

Timothy Brown is a health economist on the faculty of the School of Public Health at UC Berkeley. His current research areas include public health systems and services, the economics of chronic pain, and reference-based benefits in

health insurance.

Opinion: The cannabis cartel California needs

By Joe Mathews

To legalize cannabis successfully, California is going to need its own cartel.

For the record (and to reassure federal law enforcement), I am not smoking anything. And I am not suggesting that California encourage a criminal syndicate like the Zetas. The California cartel would need to be a legal corporate oligopoly. The cartel members would be a small number of companies with the size and resources necessary to control the distribution of cannabis so that our state can properly track, regulate, price, and tax America's largest marijuana market.



Joe Mathews

Without a powerful force to wrangle the motley cannabis players who operate in remote corners of the state, California marijuana could quickly spawn yet another of the convoluted regulatory messes for which our state is famous.

Early attempts to design regulation around cannabis are worrying. Instead of designing one system to cover all forms of cannabis, regulation is moving right now on two separate tracts. Work is under way on a new regulatory system for medical marijuana. At the same time, voters are considering whether to approve Proposition 64, which legalizes, and proposes regulation of, marijuana's recreational use.

Hopefully, medical and recreational marijuana would be combined into a single regulatory system. But even then, Propositions 64, at 62 pages, is the longest initiative on the November ballot and outlines so many different priorities that a regulatory system based on them would be highly complicated.

How to bring order to the potential chaos? A cartel is by far the best answer.

For one thing, it's proven. Alcohol has long had this sort of three-tier system, with a middle tier of powerful distributors connecting a diverse array of brewers with all the various places that sell beer. For another, a powerful distributing cartel allows for ownership and accountability in the system. The cartel must buy the product from the growers, thus providing a check on supplies and quality and licensing. And the cartel must sell to the retailer, tracking the amounts of sales and the quality of product sold. And by tying together the system, distributors would be the natural vehicle for regulating and taxing cannabis.

The cartel has another important role: keeping the price high enough to protect small players. Without a choke point in the industry, legalization of recreational cannabis in California will likely produce a big drop in price. That's because demand is unlikely to spike after legalization; most of those who use cannabis in large amounts already have access to it, via medical marijuana and the ubiquity of the black market. But legalization is all but certain to increase supplies significantly, as growers move out of the shadows and make

their once illegal businesses more productive.

That combination—a big increase in supply, while demand stays relatively flat —could produce a dangerous drop in prices and encourage more people to use marijuana. Distributors, as middlemen, would by their existence keep prices higher.

So, what sort of person could assemble such a cartel?

My own choice would be someone like Eric Spitz, who has already publicly raised his hand as a person interested in shaping the future of pot in California.

Spitz, who has an MBA from MIT's Sloan School of Management, ran a brewing company and founded a "fast-casual" food chain. He talks messianically about how those experiences, along with the investment in the Orange County Register that brought him to California a few years ago, make him the right man to help the state design a new regulatory regime and structure for the industry.

Spitz's goal? To help shape the system and eventually become a distributor. Spitz is now advising local governments about how to regulate cannabis businesses and he's been talking with former state Attorney General Bill Lockyer. "It's great fun to see how he thinks," says Lockyer.

Spitz says the question is not whether such a cartel (which is my term; he uses the word "consortium") arises, but when, and how it's structured. Will it have only a couple of distributors or many? And will such a distribution system be divided up into regions, or be truly statewide? He says that it should start statewide and then become regional as the number of outlets proliferates and retailers transform themselves from marijuana-focused dispensaries to restaurants or clubs that offer cannabis in the same style that bars offer alcohol.

"We have a responsibility to do it right, not only to make

sure our system works, but because we know how California is going to tilt the scales for the rest of the country,” Spitz says.

And how will you know if the system is working? My own view: When people in the marijuana business stop complaining about all the uncertainty and chaos as their industry emerges from prohibition—and start complaining about the decisions of the cartel in charge.

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

Letters: Golfers assist with Bread & Broth dinner

To the community,

Oct. 17 was a busy and charitable day for the Edgewood Ladies Golf Club. In addition to hosting a Boys & Girls Club golf tournament, the Edgewood Ladies Golf Club also sponsored a Bread & Broth Adopt A Day of Nourishment. It is definitely a credit to the members of the golf group that they are so involved with helping the community.

Attending their first Bread & Broth dinner, Dena Schwartz and Paula Gansinger replaced their golfing gloves with latex gloves as they helped with packing food give-away bags and serving the 85 dinner guests who arrived at 4pm to enjoy the Italian casserole entrée dinner prepared by the B&B cooks.

“This was a wonderful experience, very impressive!” commented Schwartz. “All the guests were so grateful.”

B&B dinner guests look forward to the B&B Monday meals provided every week throughout the year. The tasty and nutritious meals are provided thanks to the funds donated by the weekly AAD sponsors, such as the Edgewood Ladies Golf Club, and the time and energy generously given by the AAD sponsor crews and B&B volunteers. Providing healthy food and a warm secure place to gather is a gift truly appreciated by the struggling members of our community.

Kudos to the Edgewood Ladies Golf Club.

For more B&B information, contact me at 530.542.2876 or carolsgerard@aol.com.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth