

Letter: Collin deserves to be on SLT council

To the community,

I have lived, worked and been very involved in this community for 36 years and this is the first time I have been compelled to write a letter in support of a candidate.

I am writing this letter in support of Jason Collin for City Council. I have served on many boards and have attended hundreds of meetings over the years. Starting many years ago, I kept seeing one young man at every meeting I attended. In one way or another, he always seemed to be totally prepared for the meeting and more than willing to participate. I discovered it was Jason Collin.

I continued seeing him, had a chance to talk with him and instantly knew that, someday, he would make a huge impact on our community. Qualities necessary to serve on a City Council are: commitment, time, collaboration, preparedness, civility in public discourse, ability to interact with members of the community and city staff, business experience, leadership experience and problem solving. These qualities describe Jason Collin.

I have witnessed him at meetings involving all facets of our city, as a family man, as a lover of the outdoor activities our area offers and in his very vital role at Barton Health. I cannot think of anyone who is more qualified to help move our city into, what can be, one of the most exciting times in the history of South Lake Tahoe.

I ask you to join me in voting for Jason Collin for City Council.

Paul Middlebrook, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: LT Boys & Girls Club needs a home

To the community,

On Oct. 20, 2016 the Boys & Girls Club held a Lights on Afterschool event for all members and families. The Lights on Afterschool event is a BGCA initiative throughout the country that showcases how important it is to have their doors open for kids.

So far this year, the Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe has had over 740 members walk through their doors. However, despite being a vital community resource, if the club does not find a new home when Al Tahoe Elementary reopens, then the lights could go off forever.

As part of the event, club members were invited to design their dream club. Included in some of the designs were a spa and hot tub room, a ninja room, food courts, a cookie parlor, slides instead of stairs and a pet room. But more serious ideas were a domed library on the roof, a science room, bathrooms for specific age groups and space for recreation.

“This was a fun activity to get the kids engaged in our search for our new home,” explained development coordinator Kili Ongoy. “But it is clearly important to our members the club has both educational and recreational elements.”

Kili spent time talking to parents and visitors about the importance of Measure P in the club’s search for a new home.

If Measure P passes, the new rec center will be part of the solution in finding a new home for the Boys & Girls Club,

however, in addition to using space in the rec center, we will also need a building of our own to house our educational activities, teen center, games room and other activities that elevate our members' time with us.

The club is working with local officials at the city and county level to locate suitable buildings or land that could accommodate the new club. In the meantime, the club hopes that the voters of South Lake will support the club by voting yes on Measure P.

Yes on P is a measure within South Lake Tahoe that approves a modest 2 percent increase in the transient occupancy tax (TOT) paid by visitors to South Lake Tahoe. By law, funds from this measure may only be used for recreation in South Lake Tahoe, and priority will be given to the construction of a new recreation and swim complex on Rufus Allen Boulevard. Measure P does not increase taxes paid by local residents or businesses by one penny.

Jude Wood, Boys & Girls Club of Lake Tahoe executive director

Letter: Camp Rich crew helps feed hungry

To the community,

For the past several years, after busy and fun summer seasons, Camp Richardson Resort has been hosting Bread & Broth Adopt A Day dinners and helping disadvantaged members of our community.

"We are always grateful to be a part of Adopt A Day and St.

Theresa Bread & Broth," said Vanessa Santora.

Santora has been coordinating and arranging Camp Rich's AADs and she has been a wonderful supporter and volunteer at B&B dinners.

Joining her at Camp Richardson Resort's AAD on Oct. 10 were fellow team members Lyric Amsterdam, Mary Griffin, Travis Lauinger, Cheryl Oransky and Charles Rounds. Great team. This group was fun, hardworking and graciously helped with every task that needed to be done. Being a part of helping others at your AAD sponsorship is a great experience and draws sponsor volunteers to return and help year after year.

"It is such a wonderful thing to be a part of this South Lake Tahoe Community and any way to give back or support the people is such a blessing," was Griffin's comment after helping serve the evening's dinner.

Bread & Broth is grateful for our partnership with Camp Richardson Resort and appreciates their involvement and continued support with giving back to our fellow neighbors in need.

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

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Letter: Exline best bet for STPUD board

To the community,

I first met Nick Exline at a climate coalition meeting. I was immediately impressed by his passion and knowledge for making a difference to our community, our environment and our economy.

He is highly qualified for the position, holding a master's degree in land use planning. He has lived in our community for nine years and is dedicated to preserving the environment and improving the infrastructure.

He is a proponent of sustainable land practice and renewable energy and will work to implement projects that will have long-term environmental and economic savings for the community.

Nick practices what he preaches and will work to make our community a great place to live. Nick deserves your vote

Susan Chandler, South Lake Tahoe

Opinion: The future of libraries

By Jim O'Donnell

So what will libraries be like in 2100?

That's not so very far away. The next time you see a tiny baby, bear in mind that she or he has a very good chance of living to see the 22nd century. What will the world of libraries look like then? Nobody can know—but perhaps we can talk about what libraries should be in that imaginable future.

For instance, how many libraries will there be? I can think of

two good answers, both of which I hope are correct—and one very bad answer, which I hope is entirely incorrect.

The first correct answer is simple. There will be a library: one library, globally comprehensive and globally accessible.

That vision means we think of libraries as collections, which is one thing they are. The old model depended on physical collections of material widely and strategically distributed in locations where communities or institutions could create, sustain, and support them. If consulting the “Encyclopedia Britannica” was a good thing, then every library worth its salt had to buy a set periodically and figure out what to do with the old edition it replaced.

Now the “EB “and many other resources are available online. Yet libraries continue to “purchase” (it’s more like a rental at this point) such things, one at a time, at prices they feel are too high and publishers think are too low. The sheer inefficiency of such duplication is preposterous. We continue that way as much out of habit as out of necessity. The necessity that persists is that we cannot think of another way of funding the creation and dissemination of complex information resources except by distributing the cost widely among institutions and users.

That has to change. Once an encyclopedia or a book or a journal or a database is in digital form, there is no good reason why it should not be made as universally and freely available as possible, and no good reason why it should not be centrally held and maintained. Right now, major university libraries harbor knowledge riches galore, astonishing things, really—and we cannot share them. Most people who live on the planet today are unable to have access to sources of knowledge that, from a technical point of view, could be reached on their smartphones today—literally today, within the next hour of the moment you read this, if the provider made the choice to allow the access.

If that has to change, it will change. We will see the consolidation of collections and a consolidation of the technical infrastructure of presenting those collections. (Oh, there will be redundancy and backups, just as there is now for things like Google searches, hosted on many servers in many locations, transparently sharing the load. Such distribution speeds service and improves the resilience in case of disaster or emergency.) And we will see the emergence of business models for paying for what we now think of as “publishing” that allow completely free and open access to the contents of this global library.

The second correct answer to my original question is a little more complicated: There will be 3 million libraries.

Precise arithmetic is beside the point, but I got that number by taking the American Library Association’s estimate that there are now 119,000 libraries in the United States and extrapolating. There is some reason to hope that the growth of human population will top out gently at about 9 billion in the next decades, and so at the per capita rate we now enjoy in the U.S., that works out to 3 million libraries—one for every 3,000 people, which sounds good to me.

But these libraries will have changed. Their physical collections will all be what we now call “special collections”: unique materials they possess uniquely because of where they are and what their history might be. At Arizona State, where I am the university librarian, we have the public papers of Sen. Barry Goldwater. There will never be more than one copy of those papers, but they will retain historical value and we will cherish them. At some point we may also digitize them, but if we do, there will be no good reason not to deposit the digitized version in the global central library and make it universally accessible.

Readers will still make their way to the 3 million libraries to see whatever unique collections they have, but readers will

also find in those places much of what they now go there to find: intelligent people engaged in the work of knowledge and the work of community. Librarians will be there as coaches, mentors, guides, facilitators, and other members of the public will be there as knowledge-seekers, knowledge-sharers, entrepreneurs of the spirit, and entrepreneurs of the world of business. Libraries are the ideal “third place” for a free society and will never lose that powerful attraction.

How confident am I that my first two answers are correct? I surprise myself when I say “mostly.” (I thought I was more cynical than that.) The good news is that if I am correct, then a lot of really good things will have happened to humankind. A single global collection universally accessible will mean that the human family has made great strides to overcome factionalism, division, sectarianism, and political pathology. If the library I envision is accessible to everyone who lives in what we now call North Korea, we’ll know the world is a better place.

I did say I had a third bad answer to offer, the one I hope is wrong. That answer would be a deeply pessimistic one: zero.

There are a lot of ways that pessimism could come true. Disastrous interplay of nuclear weapons, asteroids, and a collapsing climate—the loss of libraries would be one lesser symptom of ruination in a dystopian future. We could also lose libraries to hubris and shortsightedness. “We don’t need libraries any more; it’s all digital”—we’ve all heard some version of that peremptory dismissal, entirely worthy to be heard on the stage of a debate among presidential candidates.

But we do need libraries. In a world of superabundant information, they curate and collect and discriminate and care for the good stuff—the stuff really smart people have worked to create and preserve, the stuff you can rely on when you want to understand the world deeply and accurately, the stuff too complicated to come into existence by crowdsourcing, too

unpopular to be foisted on us by corporations or politicians. Librarians—smart, professional, dispassionate about everything but the truth—are the Jedi knights of our culture’s future and deserve to be respected for that.

And libraries as places will be no less valuable than they are today. For however optimistic I may seem to be, it still seems prudent to realize that good people and smart people and idealistic people will still not be the only people on the planet. They will value then as they do now the opportunity to pursue knowledge and share insight in the company of others.

If we let ourselves be taken in by techno-optimism and carelessness and if we then let libraries fade away, we will be in a poorer place. There are many historical explanations offered for the disappearance of the great ancient library of Alexandria, but my personal judgment is that it did not fall victim to Julius Caesar or Christian monks or Islamic warriors. Libraries are more likely to disappear because the responsible leaders of a community deprive them of support, take them for granted, treat them dismissively.

But I can still be optimistic. The ancient library of Alexandria vanished somewhere in the first centuries of the common era, but it has in fact come back. With all the political, religious, and social challenges facing Egypt today, a gleaming new building on Alexandria’s harbor now completes its second decade as a place to meet, and a place to talk, and—most important of all—a place to read. We’ll always need a place to read.

Jim O’Donnell is professor of historical, philosophical, and religious studies and university librarian at Arizona State University. His most recent book is “Pagans” (HarperCollins 2015).

Letter: Collin is already a proven leader

To the community,

On Nov. 8, I hope you will vote Jason Collin for City Council.

Jason Collin is an easy pick. He stands out in our community as a proven leader, as a trustworthy and dedicated community member, as a family man, and as a great collaborator and communicator. I have known Jason for over eight years now, and in all my experiences at schools, in Rotary, at community events and at recreation activities with Jason, I have noted that his strengths lie in his ability to relate to people. He finds common ground with everyone, he listens attentively to all parties involved, and he collaborates to find effective solutions. He holds strong convictions that make him a stronger leader. He is honest, trustworthy and dedicated to improving our community.

Jason stands for making our community a better place for each of us by finding affordable housing solutions, through recreation improvements, with transportation solutions and road repair, through environmentally conscious decisions, and with community minded choices.

Jason understands that we live, work and play in the most beautiful place on earth and his goal is to make our hopes and aspirations for our community come true. Jason Collin is committed to making our city and our environment a better place for all of us through his collaboration with the citizens, the city employees and his peers on the council if we elect him. I solidly endorse and support Jason Collin for City Council.

Kathy Haven, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: Placer County supes out of control

To the community,

We all know by now that the Placer County Board of Supervisors voted to tentatively approve the Martis Valley West project, which will bring many years of construction, massive ridgeline sprawl, and further urbanization to the Lake Tahoe area.

Rather than taking a thoughtful and measured approach to evaluating the merits or lack thereof of the project, the supervisors, led by Kirk Uhler, who clearly has never met a project he didn't like or an environmentalist he did, voted 4-1 in favor.

In doing so, they brushed aside hundreds of objections from the public and first responders like the California Highway Patrol and the North Tahoe Fire Protection District and, incredibly, their own Planning Commission, who voted to deny. This is an egregious example of putting greed over public safety.

Placer County stands to make millions from this project alone, not to mention the many others in the pipeline. One thing Uhler mentioned during his comments was "per door" traffic mitigation fees, which are collected from new development to help build infrastructure needed as population increases.

That made me curious, and I looked up the fees for Lake Tahoe, which are \$4,846 for each new dwelling. These fees alone will

net Placer more than \$3 million, and they are but one portion of the haul Placer stands to take from this project.

It's easy to see why the supervisors, none of whom live in this area – save the lone dissenting vote, Jennifer Montgomery – thought “Hey, why not?” With thousands of potential units to be developed in and around the Basin, Placer stands to make many millions of dollars for many years to come.

Uhler's district is Granite Bay, where residents have tried to recall him in the past due to concerns over massive development. His and the other supervisors' reckless disregard for public safety, the environment and residents' wishes make it time to call a halt to an out-of-control Board of Supervisors who see Tahoe as nothing more than a cash cow.

Are out-of-the-area officials like Uhler really the ones we want to have in charge of development where we live? Do we want them making the decisions as to how much traffic can be added to our choked roads, and how many more people can be stuffed into Martis Valley and Olympic Valley?

Tahoe is already over capacity, the roads are at gridlock, and things only stand to get worse under Placer County's unlimited development stance. Maybe it's time to start pushing for a different way of doing things or at least different people to do them.

And maybe it's time to bring up the “M” word once again: moratorium.

Coral Amende, Incline Village

Letter: Reasons to vote for Collin

To the community,

As the election race for the two available City Council seats approaches I wanted to send out my support for candidate Jason Collin.

I met Jason in 2010 when we were both serving on the city of South Lake Tahoe Sustainability Commission. At the time, the commission's mission was "to create a healthy and sustainable community for current and future South Lake Tahoe residents and visitors." We supported this mission through the implementation of the city's sustainability plan.

During our term, Jason came to our discussions prepared and he attentively listened to the public. Jason focused on initiatives in our work plan to improve energy efficiency through streetscape lighting retrofits and to create incentives for business owners to improve their properties. Jason also led a subcommittee that worked with city staff to invest in cost-effective sidewalk and bike path capital improvement projects along Highway 50.

Jason continues to serve on local boards and volunteer with small business groups. Through these efforts, he has proven he exhibits the qualities of a dedicated and committed leader. He has a vision and the ability to turn ideas into plans, he is an excellent listener and consistently seeks feedback, he is prepared for meetings and facilitates good discussions, and he offers a fresh perspective on issues.

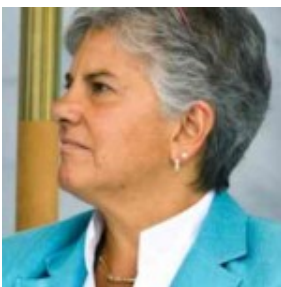
Jason also knows South Lake Tahoe. He is a family man, a friend, an outdoor enthusiast, and a devoted citizen who is accessible, respectful, ready, and excited to serve on our council. Please vote for Jason this November.

Opinion: Housing is a communitywide issue

By Joanne Marchetta

Like many communities that are highly-desirable places to vacation and live, Lake Tahoe has affordable housing problems. Two recent studies commissioned by the Tahoe Prosperity Center and Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation clearly illustrate the housing challenges our region faces.

Median home prices of more than \$500,000 on the North Shore and nearly \$400,000 on the South Shore are simply too high for our region's low wages, putting the cost of home ownership and even rent out of reach for many working people.



Joanne
Marchetta

Lake Tahoe has been a world-renowned recreation destination for decades, a short day drive from major metropolitan areas like Sacramento, the Bay Area, and Reno, all of which are growing and have affordable housing challenges. This proximity to areas with much more diverse economies and much higher

wages is reflected in our housing stock, as more than half of the houses in the Tahoe basin are vacation homes. Many are used only occasionally by their owners and sit empty the rest of the year. Others are rented out as short-term lodging for vacationers.

Full-time rentals are scarce and often unaffordable for many people who live and work at Lake Tahoe, and for other people who must commute into and out of the Tahoe basin each day because they cannot find affordable housing or adequate employment here. Hundreds of deed-restricted affordable housing units have been built at Lake Tahoe, but they are at full occupancy, with waiting lists of one to two years for new tenants.

Affordable workforce housing is a complex, challenging issue here at Lake Tahoe and elsewhere. We are not alone in facing these issues and there's a renewed spirit today in Tahoe to tackle the challenge.

California is wrestling with this difficult topic as we speak. At a summit in Los Angeles this month, local governments, housing advocates, and state leaders met for a broad forum on California's housing woes. In many areas, housing has not kept pace with population and job growth. A shortage of affordable workforce housing now threatens to hamper the state's economic recovery. It is also creating environmental and transportation problems as people commute long distances to and from work.

A shortage of workforce housing options is having similar impacts here at Lake Tahoe. Thousands of people commute into and out of the Tahoe basin each day because they work here but can't afford to live here, or because they live here but can't find adequate employment at Tahoe. Companies and agencies struggle to recruit and retain workers because of high housing costs. Many of our full-time residents are struggling financially to stay in their communities, with housing prices and rents continuing to climb even as wages remain low and

stagnant.

These housing challenges are not unique to Lake Tahoe, or even to California, which had a median home price of \$514,000 in September, according to the California Association of Realtors. Many mountain communities in the American West depend on tourism as their main economic driver and have comparatively low service sector wages like Lake Tahoe. Many also have high land and utility costs, high construction costs, and limited areas available for any new housing development to occur, all of which make building affordable workforce housing a challenge.

Lake Tahoe has some unique challenges in providing affordable housing. Some point to our development rights system and the allocations needed for housing, commercial, and tourist lodging projects as one obvious barrier. These systems were put in place decades ago to protect Lake Tahoe's unique natural environment from overdevelopment. TRPA is leading an initiative to fully examine and improve the development rights system, not only for housing, but to help spur the type of redevelopment projects we now need to restore our environment, revitalize our economy, strengthen our communities, and improve the overall quality of life here for everyone.

The 2012 Regional Plan took clear steps to allow the coverage and density needed for new housing and mixed-use redevelopment projects in our town centers. Affordable multi-family housing projects do not require any development allocations, and there are hundreds of housing bonus units available for these types of projects. These incentives are used only sparingly, indicating that while we do need to improve Lake Tahoe's unique development rights system, there are clearly also other issues involved in solving our workforce housing challenges, including the need for economic revitalization to increase wages and career opportunities for working families.

We at TRPA are encouraged to see a growing conversation about

affordable workforce housing at Lake Tahoe, and to see people pushing for continued dialogue and solutions. The Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation is working to form a regional housing authority to help address workforce housing issues on the North Shore. We hope to see that initiative succeed and be mirrored on the South Shore. Challenges and solutions will likely differ around the lake.

TRPA stands ready to help solve Lake Tahoe's affordable workforce housing challenges, and to partner with local governments, nonprofit groups, and residents to find creative solutions. There is no one silver bullet to solve these complex issues, and no one agency or group that can fix them all on its own. But by strengthening our collective will to work together on this important issue and be creative, we can make needed change happen.

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

Opinion: Restoring forests to tame wildfires means more water

By Richard Bailey, Fresno Bee

Californians have the ability to greatly reduce the likelihood of wildfire devastation in the Sierra Nevada. Making the forests a safe, healthy resource again may seem impossible, but forest restoration in other states is already producing excellent results. Besides cleaner air, healthy woodlands come with the benefit of higher levels of runoff water available to

local farms and cities – exactly what our thirsty state needs.

A hundred years of fire suppression in an effort to protect homes and cities near wooded areas has created dense stands of trees and brush – kindling for the megafires in the Central Sierra for the last decade, causing long-term damage to our forests and watersheds. Restoration in the Central Sierra promises smaller, less-destructive fires, more snowmelt, improved air quality and jobs.

“Restoration” refers to the combined thinning of trees and brush, to produce healthy forests aiming for densities of about 100 years ago. Idaho, Arizona, North Dakota, Hawaii, Wyoming, Kansas and Washington are using such programs, and California appears ready to follow suit.

Read the whole story