

Letter: Supporting Turnbull for LTUSD board

To the community,

You may have heard of Bonnie Turnbull thanks to the excellent presentation she has been giving in multiple venues around town on global climate change, how it may affect Tahoe, and how we as a community can work together to slow climate change.

I love Bonnie's presentation because it is simultaneously fascinating, realistic, and optimistic. After watching it I not only feel empowered to tackle solutions, I feel excited about embarking on this problem particular to our era.

Now, Bonnie Turnbull is running for the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board, Area 3. I am certain that Bonnie will bring her natural sense of what engages people to her decisions on the school board. Bonnie believes that all of the schools in our district should have arts, health, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and environmental education as part of the curriculum. She also believes in supporting teachers through weekly collaboration time, allowing them to use their expertise to make content engaging and providing curriculum training. Bonnie is also extremely well-organized and will come to meetings prepared and ready to work with the board and community to make great decisions for our schools.

Please vote for Bonnie Turnbull for school board.

Karen Fink, South Lake Tahoe

Letter: Davidson for LTUSD board

To the community,

Annie Davidson is the right choice for school board in trustee Area 1. Annie came to Tahoe with a strong background in education. Annie understands our educational system. And most importantly, Annie is trustworthy, forthright, and kind.



Kathy Haven

And while Annie is a very good listener and collaborator, Annie is also intelligent, strong, and determined to do an exceptional job. Annie is one of those people who can come into the room and make everyone feel welcome and help everyone work together effectively.

Furthermore, Annie understands the relationship between a school board and all of the public school staff. And very importantly, Annie has a long-term plan; An educational plan for our children to reach their highest potential and become confident, contributing citizens in our community and for our country.

I strongly endorse Annie Davidson as she is the best choice for our LTUSD school board.

Kathy Haven, South Lake Tahoe

Opinion: Teaching in era of gun rights is scary

By Jervey Tervalon

Now that Texas' "campus carry" law, that bit of cowboy legislation that empowers everyone over 21 with a concealed handgun license to carry a pistol into a public university classroom is in effect, those of us who teach are watching with dark fascination. What could possibly go wrong?

I don't become easily flustered at the prospect of violence. I grew up in Black Los Angeles in the "body count" '70s, and taught in an inner city high school for five years during the rock cocaine epidemic. I became desensitized to prison-like security and sworn officers of the law putting young people in headlocks—and the sound of gunshots in the distance. Then, after leaving for graduate school and receiving my MFA in creative writing and selling my first novel, my life as a publishing novelist afforded me the opportunity to teach at many of the better universities in Southern California.

Still, some of the entitled—and barely conscious—students I have since encountered at these prestigious schools make me nostalgic for the daily grind of the high school classroom. At the college level I usually grade generously because a fiction workshop is subjective by nature. But with one student I couldn't bring myself to give him an A. He wrote smug and mean pieces that left me depressed. I gave him a B+ instead of the A- he coveted. As soon as I submitted grades I received an angry email from him.

"You have 24 hours to change my grade to an A- or else..."

I was alarmed, but less so when I bothered to read a few sentences down to see that he hadn't threatened to kill me, rather he'd get his parents to sue me. I laughed it off, but then a female student who was in the same fiction workshop emailed me this:

"This may seem strange or out of the blue to you, but it has worried me the past few days and I thought I would email you about it. I'm sure you have heard about the tragedy at Virginia Tech that happened yesterday. Today the news released information about the gunman, who was also student. Classmates and teachers of the gunman have talked about how he was a creative writing student who wrote disturbing plays and stories in class about murdering people. His teacher reported him to the school administration, and nothing was done. I don't know if you remember this, but one of the students in our class wrote a story that was disturbing to say the least. It talked about stalking female students and included graphic details of several murders. I don't know his name... I don't really know what I'm asking you to do, but I wanted to possibly trigger your memory about this. The mere thought of something happening on our campus terrifies me, and if this kid is deranged, or 'troubled' as the papers have described the VT gunman, the administration should know about it immediately. I may sound paranoid, but I think when something like this happens there's no reason to take any chances."

She was describing the student trying to intimidate me into changing his grade. I reported him to the administration, but he kept writing vaguely threatening emails to me even when he was told to cease contacting me.

A few years later another student, a guy who seemed pleasant and a little goofy, made a comment before class in the hallway in front of his fellow classmates that his next story would be about killing his classmates. Suddenly half my students were

skipping class (before attendance had been great). Again, a female student told me that students were frightened of the goofy guy. The student boycott got the attention of the university higher-ups and he was interviewed after I talked to him. He had no idea of the panic he caused, or that armed undercover campus security officers were in the hallway ready to handle the situation if I called them in.

I teach at UC Santa Barbara now, the school I graduated from. It's a university that has experienced its share of tragedy. I was on campus on May 23, 2014, the night when Elliot Rodger killed six people in Isla Vista, the college town abutting the university. I had just finished class in the late afternoon and noticed an email to the campus community:

May 23, 2014

To: Campus Community

Re: Campus Wide "Responding to Distressed Students" Training

The offices of Student Mental Health Coordination Services, Student Health, Counseling & Psychological Services, and the UC Police Department invite you to a "Responding to Distressed Students" training on May 28, 9:00 – 11:00 am. The goals of the training are to provide attendees with a context for student mental health, to introduce and review the distressed student protocol and appropriate campus resources for students, offer suggestions on how to refer students, and review potential distressed student scenarios. This interactive training is open to staff and faculty and all are invited and encouraged to attend.

Please join us on Wednesday, May 28, 2014, 9:00 – 11:00 am in the Multipurpose Room of the Student Resource Building. Coffee and bagels will be provided.

Unfortunately Elliot Rodger wasn't a student at UCSB eligible

to receive counseling services and coffee and bagels. David Attias, son of film director Daniel Attias was, but he didn't seek counseling back in 2001 when he ran over five people in Isla Vista. Both young men had families who knew their sons were troubled and desperately tried to intervene to prevent tragedy, but the efforts didn't work.

About a year ago I brought Elise, my 15-year-old daughter, to sit in on the fiction writing course I teach at UCSB, so that later we could celebrate the birthday of my older daughter Giselle, who was then a global studies major at UCSB. Our plans were scuttled when the university was put on alert and locked down. No one could enter or leave the university while the campus police searched for a shooter. Seemingly it was a drug deal that became a dorm robbery that resulted in a massive response including multiple helicopters circling campus. It felt strangely like being a kid in South L.A. when the police were chasing somebody down.

As a kid I feared being killed because there was epidemic of shootings around me. Pootbutts (nerds) like me got shot along with gangbangers: Friends shot friends as well as family members and bystanders. I learned then that having a gun isn't a magic talisman that keeps bullets from finding you. The tortured logic is that maybe you can avoid being shot because you'll shoot first, or get a shot off if the shooter misses – and then that baby in the stroller gets a bullet in the brain. I had guns pointed at me four times; once out of anger, twice out of mistaken identity and, the last time, as part of a family dispute. In all of these instances guns were pointed at me suddenly and without opportunity for escape. The last time it happened all I could think to do was stare down the barrel of a shotgun and smile stupidly. The lesson I learned in L.A. was invaluable: When your neighborhood becomes awash in guns, no one is safe and you need to find somewhere sane to live, or spend your life inside of the house, hiding in the bathtub. What I dealt with as kid, fear for my personal safety, I

wouldn't now tolerate for myself, or my family. Sadly professors at these public universities in Texas—with possible gun-wielding students—have to carefully consider what it means to teach in a potentially militarized classroom.

The Texas Legislature must believe more guns equal more safety, and that gun ownership is such an unmitigated good that it should be a largely unregulated right shoehorned into all aspects of daily life. The consequences remain to be seen. I can imagine being a professor at the University of Texas and leading a critique of a lousy story of a potentially armed student. Or the joy of explaining his failing grade during office hours behind my bullet proof partition, my own pistol close at hand deep in the heart of Texas.

Jervey Tervalon is the author of six books including "Understanding This", for which he won the Quality Paper Book Club's New Voices Award. He is currently the executive director of Literature for Life, an educational advocacy organization. His latest novel is "Monster's Chef."

Letter: Again Placer County supervisors?

To the community,

Tuesday morning we attended the hearing inconveniently held in Auburn and it was clear that the [Placer County] Board of Supervisors were going to approve the Martis Valley West project (760 homes and 6.6 acres of commercial on the ridge above Tahoe/Truckee) no matter what.

The first clue was how relaxed and jovial Kurt Kreig and Blake

Riva, the developers aka Mountainside Partners, were. Jennifer Montgomery again, was the lone vote against it, but this time she didn't even bother making an initial motion to deny. On Oct. 3, although it's too little too late, the Trust For Public Land and Truckee Donner Land Trust pulled out of the deal to buy the east parcel for a mere \$15M because the project is so contentious, and still the supervisors approved this lousy trade.

As the final blow, Placer County planner Stacy Wydra told the supervisors the public could use the land even though the project report (FEIR) clearly states the owner doesn't have to allow it.

What a Christmas present for SPI (Sierra Pacific Industries) from Placer County. SPI gets to develop our ridgeline for big bucks and log the east parcel while the public maybe gets to use the east parcel if SPI thinks it's OK. You are wondering who will enforce this? So are we. Stay tuned as our buddies at Placer County haven't bothered with those important details.

Ann Nichols, North Tahoe Preservation Alliance

Opinion: How librarians quietly shape the future

By Ian Collins

“Librarians? They're still around?”

It's one of countless sarcastic jokes about my profession that I've heard for years, each of them landing with all the comedic force of late-period Carrot Top props. If you search

online for the combination “libraries” and “dead” you’ll find various articles proclaiming the same sentiment.

I get where this perception comes from. Google and Wikipedia can answer a lot of basic questions that we librarians used to tackle. Issues arising from unglamorous arguments over budgets or the government have also made times difficult for libraries, librarians, and other information professionals. But now that we’ve acknowledged those truths, it’s important to mention another: That librarians today influence the cutting edge more than ever before. We use our skills to bring pieces of the future to wherever you are.

Perhaps that’s why ours has become one of the professions that fixed-gear, bike-riding, tattooed hipster types have moved to in droves, as reported in an obnoxious style section article in the New York Times. Maybe that’s why some of our profession’s lingo, words like “metadata” and “curation,” have now found their way into the popular culture and lexicon. Seriously, you can’t throw a stone and not hit someone who is a “curator” of some obscure material or pursuit.

In any case, the idea of the librarian just sitting there in a quiet large building, wearing a cardigan and waiting for you to visit, is the only thing that is caught in the past. Even though we do love a good visit, and always have a cardigan ready for when the building’s climate control inevitably lets us down.

This might even be a golden age for librarians, sometimes now categorized as “information professionals.” Our culture seems to have reached peak curation, where almost every form of content is carefully chosen and presented for consumption, and the tech world is rushing to organize (and monetize) the insane amounts of information available at our fingertips. We librarians are right at the middle of it all, collaborating on all sorts of new projects and applications.

Look no further than Spotify, the streaming music application used by millions every day. It collects and provides access to millions of songs, features a searchable catalog, and curates quality choices that cut through the maddening amount of material that's available. That sure sounds like the kind of things librarians do every day.

So it shouldn't be a surprise that companies like Spotify and Facebook do in fact have librarians (more than one even!) on staff who collaborate with developers and other bright people to cultivate an experience that has become embedded in your daily internet habits. Of course, they may or may not be called "librarians" in these positions, but the skillset is the same. Cataloging, curation, metadata creation, data management, programming. From the visual presentation of the app, the extensive organization of the information, down to the algorithm that selects songs for your Discover Weekly playlist—our fingerprints are appearing in the core of these new media applications.

Librarians are also innovating via new initiatives within more traditional spheres, pooling our resources and brainpower to build systems and applications that bridge past ideals with current trends and future possibilities. One result of these efforts has been a push to build portals that harness existing digitization efforts to make archives and special collections materials more available to people where they live, via mobile phones and the internet. This offers researchers the information equivalent of one-stop shopping.

Take the creation of the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), a major leader in this realm. Using metadata records as its engine, this portal brings together millions of items from museums, academic libraries, and public libraries from all over the country in one searchable site. For example, if you were searching for information about the Gold Rush, you could pull whatever materials are available via your local library or university catalog, but DPLA gives you the

opportunity to find materials documenting different experiences via libraries in California, Washington, or beyond with one search.

Furthermore, all of the data is open-access, which means any librarian anywhere can grab it and transform it to develop new applications and unique experiences for users. Omnia, for instance, merges all of DPLA's data with all the entries from another large European library portal, creating a searchable timeline.

Silicon Valley companies have enviable research and development budgets, but they often lack the collaborative spirit and greater-good mentality that drives public-sphere librarians. In the meantime, many libraries, especially in public and academic institutions, have money to keep the lights on and provide key services like reference and outreach, but don't always have the means to innovate or build new projects. We have to hunt for outside funding opportunities, competing to score grants to push new initiatives. A frustrating number of good ideas can't find funding and miss their window of opportunity.

Burnout from this battle for dollars is one of the most significant threats to public sector librarianship as it currently stands, dis-incentivizing librarians to dream up creative ways to make knowledge and information available to the wider world. Yet we're a more resilient bunch than you think. We've already survived the transition to the computer age, Google, even e-books—what's another set of challenges?

It's officially time to toss those old jokes into the vortex where Borat impressions now reside and allow our perceptions of the librarian to evolve. We're constantly adding new skills, services, and technologies to our expansive toolkit, even if sometimes we have to implement them in the scrappiest way possible. This gives us the ability to move across various industries and shape them with our influence.

I'm not sure where it's written in the ancient library tomes just how much flexibility and evolution this profession actually requires. But the nature of our work ensures that, despite claims to the contrary, we'll never be stuck in the past. For librarians, the future is always right now.

Ian Collins is an American writer with a British name and is currently the digital services librarian at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Letter: Casino HEROs return to Bread & Broth

To the community,

Harrah's/Harveys' HEROs hosted Bread & Broth's evening meal on Sept. 26, providing the funds and help to feed the 103 dinner guests who came to St. Theresa Church Grace Hall for the weekly Monday evening dinner.

For over 27 years, the hungry of the Tahoe South Shore community know that every Monday a hot, nutritious meal will be provided to everyone who attends the dinner. For the last seven years, the meals have been funded by B&B's Adopt A Day of Nourishment sponsors like the HEROs.

The HEROs have sponsored many AAD dinners over the years and B&B truly appreciates the support our program receives from the Harrah's/Harveys' employees' organization. Representing the HEROs at the dinner was first time volunteer Jeff Colameco and his seasoned sponsor volunteer crew members Jacalyn Andrews, Stephanie Bartholomew, Pat Frega and Darlene Winkelman. It is always a pleasure to see returning sponsor

volunteers who enjoy their time spent with the dinner guests and B&B volunteers.

“Everyone was very helpful contributing to a very well run operation,” observed Bartholomew. “There were healthy food choices, seconds and food for the people to take home. It is very hard to see so many in our community in need, but grateful that B&B can help them.”

Kudos to the Harrah’s/Harveys’ and their HERO employees and all of B&B sponsors for making the meals and food available to the those struggling in our community.

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

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Editorial: Collin, Laine for SLT City Council

Publisher’s note: The following endorsement is from Lake Tahoe News after a team of seven community members gathered to discuss who should be on the South Lake Tahoe City Council.

Even with 10 candidates running for South Lake Tahoe City Council, *Lake Tahoe News* was left wanting something more. Maybe there isn’t that ideal, perfect candidate out there.

The two, though, who eventually rose to the top were Jason Collin and Brooke Laine. With Collin, we get someone with new ideas who is a bit of a maverick in the world of recreation. After all, recreation is what the city and the entire South Shore is hanging its economic hat on. With Laine, we get

experience and someone who can jump into the job without needing a learning curve.



Jason Collin

Collin is charismatic, a community guy, a family man and someone who can be relied upon to think for himself. While we aren't taking a stance on whether his lawsuit to stop Measure T was right or wrong, we admire that he was willing to put his neck on the line – especially while running for election. We aren't convinced he paid for all of this on his own, but what matters is he stood up for his convictions and in a manner that was neither abusive nor confrontational in a detrimental way. At the end of the day that is the type of person we need on the council – forthright, opinionated, determined and able to stand up for his beliefs.



Brooke Laine

Laine's enthusiasm for this town is unwavering. She was born here and has no plans to leave. On or off the council (she has served six years) she does what she believes is best for South Lake Tahoe. Our reluctance with Laine is that she represents a bit of the old guard. We need vision beyond one county; and we

need the details for how to achieve those goals. She was involved in some of the redevelopment projects while on the council in the 1990s, which will serve the community well as it goes through a bit of a renaissance. However, just reading the council agenda is not enough to know what is going on in the city and elsewhere.

While we support the one South Shore concept, we hope Collin and Laine will remember they are being elected to represent South Lake Tahoe first and foremost, not the Nevada interests who support them.

Hal Cole's departure from the council means there will be at least one new council person.

Four years ago *Lake Tahoe News* endorsed JoAnn Conner for council. We can't do so this time around. In 2012, we were excited that she would be a voice for a segment of the community that wasn't getting heard, that she would bring a perspective that was missing.

What we got instead is someone who is not able to work well with others – and that's putting it mildly. When *LTN* asked her what she got out of the lawsuit she filed against the city that she didn't have before the settlement she said the agreement answers that question. *LTN* has read the agreement and has written about it. All that changed is Conner can now email staff directly. This cost her more than \$30,000 and the taxpayers \$100,000. Her answer to how she justifies the city's costs is that she was not a party to the decision for the city to defend itself.

Her total lack of remorsefulness is appalling.

Being on the City Council is not a game. It is not a popularity contest. It should neither be a way to curry favor from the public or other public agencies, nor be used to enhance one's own business.

There are serious matters the city takes up each month. We need serious people who see the big picture. We need people who will work as a team. This doesn't mean we advocate for 5-0 votes. Disagreements are fine. It's how one goes about disagreeing that matters.

No matter what happens with the two tax initiatives, the council is going to have to be diligent in how it spends those dollars or creative in coming up with other revenue sources to accomplish its goals.

Finances, development deals, environmental issues, roads and tourism – those are just a handful of the issues that regularly come before the council. Collin and Laine have the ability to understand the complexities, the time needed to do the job, the ability to work with the other three council members and most of all the ability to make decisions for the greater good of South Lake Tahoe, the South Shore and the Lake Tahoe Basin.

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Why we said no to the others:

- For candidates Patrick Jarett, Trey Riddle, John Shearer and Bob Topel we believe they would benefit from joining a city commission to further their knowledge base before running for council again.

- It is an ethical decision not to endorse Danny McLaughlin. No one in the media, even someone working in ad sales, should ever be in an elected office.

- Ted Long has proven himself untrustworthy in the past. He will say just the right thing to potentially get elected, but his record as a councilmember here and elsewhere are reasons enough to say no.

- Tami Wallace, while she has experience on the Planning

Commission, clearly doesn't have a grasp of how the city really works. She touted experiences as a spouse of an elected official as her own in her answers to *Lake Tahoe News'* questions. She wants to return to the fundamentals of when the city was born – to focus on police, fire and snow removal. We need someone with vision who is living in the 21st century, not the 20th.

Letter: Fire a threat to Martis Valley project

Publisher's note: *This letter was sent to the Placer County Board of Supervisors.*

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I am submitting **this article** for the record for the Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan as further evidence that the MVWPSP FEIR did not into take in consideration the threat of wildland urban interface. A CalFire representative was consulted by Planning Commissioner [Wayne] Nader who had extensive conversations about the location and the problematic terrain and ability to adequately protect and evacuate the public among other issues when a fire erupts.

Note the attached article brings forth the 10 most expensive fires in the West's history. Six of the 10 fires are in California in locations that are similar forested areas much like the proposed MVWPSP.

Ellie Waller, Tahoe Vista

Editorial: Vote no on Measure T

Publisher's note: *The following endorsement is from Lake Tahoe News after a team of seven community members gathered to discuss Measure T.*

It was in 1911 that California became the 10th state to offer the initiative process to voters. Now 24 states allow initiatives on the ballot.

At the state level it has evolved into a business where companies – for a price – will gather signatures, provide legal oversight, consulting and even campaign for the cause. In California it's big business. The Nov. 8 state ballot has 17 statewide initiatives.

A variety of reasons exist for people to want to use the initiative process. The basic reason is to get a topic before the voters that the electeds can't or won't address. It's also a way to circumvent the normal legislative process.

At the local level it is still very much a grass-roots process.

South Lake Tahoe voters next month will be asked a question about the loop road that was brought forward by a group of citizens who are against the project. The goal of Measure T would be to force the city to go back to the voters once a preferred alternative is chosen to ask them to vote yes or no on the loop road.

Writing the rebuttal to the initiative were Steve Teshara, as interim CEO of Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce –

though he is also the chair of the Tahoe Transportation District board, and Sharon Kerrigan, executive director of the South Lake Tahoe Board of Realtors. Their argument has more to do with why they like the loop road than whether the voters should have a voice, or even anything to do with the actual ballot question.

While the bulk of the project would be in the city limits, the Stateline casinos would also be impacted. Both state transportation departments would be involved and the feds are the lead because this is a project spearheaded by the Tahoe Transportation District. Really, anyone who ever drives Highway 50 through the South Shore would be affected if this project goes through. The proposal is to take the highway behind Harrah's and MontBleu, then turn the current highway from about Pioneer Trail to Lake Parkway into a city-county street.

The project is complex and is more than just rerouting a road. But the merits of the project are not what Measure T is about.

Measure T would bind the hands of the city when it comes to staff and electeds being able to do their jobs. We have a problem with that. We need to allow our elected representatives to do just that – represent us when it comes to the loop road and the sundry of other issues.

That is why it's important to have people on all elected bodies who represent your beliefs, why it's important to make your beliefs known to the electeds and to the public, and why being engaged early and not just at the eleventh-hour is important.

By saying no to Measure T *Lake Tahoe News* is not taking a stance on the loop road itself. Nor would the voters.

We are saying no to Measure T because it is poorly worded, is open to litigation, has and will continue to cost the city (which is the taxpayers) money that could be spent for better

uses, it's a waste of time, and the ultimate outcome is meaningless. If it passes, there will be a court hearing Dec. 5 to address the lawsuit brought to stop Measure T.

If Measure T is upheld by the court and therefore a special election would be required down the road, at a minimum that would cost the city \$10,000.

And while money should not be the overriding reason not to pursue one's beliefs, the cost involved in terms of real dollars and time spent is a waste with no benefit to the residents of South Lake Tahoe.

We say this because even if Measure T passes and the next question is a direct yes or no to the loop road, it won't matter. TTD and the state transportation agencies can do what they want without the city's blessing.

For those wanting to stop the loop road, it would be better to lobby the individual members of the TTD board, get in front of the people who have the money, and go to the state transportation agencies.

Letter: Northstar volunteers on trails projects

To the community,

On Sept. 17, more than 100 volunteers of Northstar California Resort gathered to reinvigorate the surrounding natural landscape. Northstar's volunteers united in support of Vail Resorts' annual EpicPromise Day and represented a portion of roughly 2,000 employees, nationwide.

Approximately 100 volunteers constructed almost two miles of the Elizabethtown Meadow Trail. The terrain is facilitated by the Truckee Trails Foundation and connects the Waddle Ranch Preserve and associated trails into the Tompkins Memorial Trail and connects to the Martis Valley area. An additional 20 volunteers landscaped Pocket Park in downtown Truckee including planting over 150 native plants, gathering over 50 pounds of trash ranging from micro-trash to large pieces of rusty metal and pipes, as well as clearing over 60 pounds of debris from Trout Creek to improve water quality.

“EpicPromise is a remarkable program and a strong example of Northstar – and the greater Vail Resorts’ – commitment to environmental sustainability and to the people in these mountain towns,” said Beth Howard, vice president and general manager of Northstar California Resort. “We appreciate the North Lake Tahoe area communities and are proud to partner with them for the greater good.”

EpicPromise acts year-round to uphold sustainability of the resort-area natural environment. Originally established in 2010, EpicPromise organizes 20,000 hours of company-sponsored employee volunteer time, executes on a variety of environmental initiatives annually, and contributes \$7.8 million in charitable donations to 250 nonprofit partners. In 2015, Vail Resorts implemented the EpicPromise Foundation, which now allows the company to also support employees experiencing personal and financial challenges.

Cass Walker, Northstar