

Do we have too many visitors in town?

Many have commented on the number of people visiting Tahoe. Here are some reasons why I believe we're seeing an increase in visitors to Tahoe during the winter.

1. From the Colorado Sun: Vail Resorts' chief Rob Katz on Friday told investors that he expected to sell 925,000 Epic Passes for the 2018-19 ski season, which includes about 100,000 deeply discounted \$99 military passes.

2. From Bloomberg News: "Vail unapologetically sees the smaller ski areas outside the West as feeder resorts, knowing that when those enthusiasts take a trip, they'll most likely travel to one of the other Vail mountains where they can use their Epic pass. While there, they'll pay dearly for everything from Vail lodging to on-mountain burgers, which cost about \$21."

With an almost unlimited (until now) growth in accommodations that, like a ski pass, are a great deal, and the advent of online rental companies like AirBnB, VRBO, HomeToGo and the many other companies that are registered in Tahoe, you can see there is an almost unlimited source for the influx of tourists.

Add to the mix the traffic apps guiding hundreds of thousands of tourists, not only to Tahoe's attractions but our neighborhoods



Kenny Curtzwiler
Tahoe Ski Bum

radical adjustments to the way we handle tourism in our community.

I don't believe we have hit our maximum amount of tourists that we can handle. But we have spread them out into our neighborhoods so they can "live like a local" at the expense of our residents. After living up here for 41 years and having been in the restaurant and construction business, I see both sides of the problem.

Remember when we were tourists back in the day and we slowly became locals, then we became residents and we were able to live here and make a decent living? Too broke to stay and too broke to leave, poverty with a view and a host of other sayings about the lifestyle we chose.

I also remember when the traffic was just as bad and the amount of tourists was just as many. The one thing that has changed is they have left U.S. 50 and have invaded our neighborhoods. That must stop. We need to get them out of our neighborhoods and back into the tourist corridor as was always intended. We will never increase our highway infrastructure, never

neighborhoods.

SECOND: Keep the traffic on U.S. 50 and out of our neighborhoods. We all know that a few years ago we had traffic in Tahoe on Sundays and holidays leaving the basin, but they were all gone by 6 p.m. and we locals had our shortcuts to get home. With the advent of the traffic apps, the traffic is now backed up for 10-12 hours and that includes five to six hours in the neighborhoods from tourists trying to save one minute of time in a traffic backup.

For every one minute of backup, you can add three minutes of travel time to the exodus. U.S. 50 can handle, on a clear day, 1,200 cars an hour over the summit. Throw in an accident or two along with the merging traffic onto U.S. 50 from all the shortcut streets, and you have a problem.

The traffic backup actually begins at the two-lane section by Sierra-at-Tahoe and is compounded by the two-lane section at the summit. People leaving the basin race like hell in those two lanes then fight each other trying to merge back into one lane, which, as we all know, is not allowed by anyone merging back in. "I will be damned if you are going to get in front of me."

So what to do? First, eliminate the traffic apps. We believe we have found a legal way to do this by implementing and enforcing a current law with concerns to elec-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Silke Plueger for California State Senate District 1 in the March 26 primary

The California Democratic Party and the El Dorado County Central Committee have endorsed Silke Plueger.

Her main priorities are:

■ Affordable and accessible healthcare for all Californians, including those in rural areas.

■ Fire resiliency and preparation.

■ Climate change measures that protect our farming communities and winter tourism economy.

■ Affordable housing so that people can live in the community where they work.

■ Infrastructure improvements to support our economies.

On the ballot, Silke is facing off against four Republicans and one person who

is identified as a Democrat, Steven Baird. Baird ran as a Republican against Ted Gaines in 2016 and then changed his party affiliation to Democrat.

In April 2016, Baird participated in a candidate forum hosted by the League of Women Voters. At that time Baird told the audience he would be considered a climate change denier. At that same forum Baird stated that he was at the forefront of the State of Jefferson movement.

This past week Baird announced that he is withdrawing from the Senate Race. Unfortunately his name will appear on the ballot.

Silke, from Truckee, will best represent the values of the Lake Tahoe basin. Please vote for her to ensure that a person who shares democratic values is on the ballot June 4.

Susan Chandler

Chair, South Lake Tahoe Democratic Club

Trying to make contact with family members

This letter is for anyone in Incline Village, Nev., who may know my sister, and brother-in-law.

caring about her. I've just been busy and so has she.

So if anyone in Incline Village knows my sister or brother-in-law, please give them all my best wishes, and that I hope and pray all is well for them. You can call if you want — 510-