

BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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Will Customers Pay for Fires?

PG&E PLAYS DANGEROUS GAME WITH STATE

Utility giant Pacific Gas & Electric is said to be considering a bankruptcy filing within weeks to avoid a possible huge liability resulting from recent wildfires. Also, the state may weigh legislation to aid PG&E in meeting its fire liabilities

In weighing a bankruptcy filing, PG&E officials—whether intentionally or not—are putting the pressure on California legislators to bail them out. It’s a dangerous game, though, as the stock market reaction showed.

The company is said to be considering whether to file for bankruptcy as soon as February to protect itself over billions of dollars of potential wildfire liabilities.

PG&E has declined to comment, saying it doesn’t speak about “market rumor or speculation.”

The San Francisco-based company has lost more than half its market value since the deadliest wildfire in California history broke out in early November. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) is investigating PG&E wires as a possible source of the blaze. That is compounding financial woes the company was already facing after other fires destroyed parts of wine country in 2017.

The issue is coming to a head as incoming Governor Gavin Newsom takes office and the state legislature reconvenes. There have been some signs that PG&E would get relief in one form or another.

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SACRAMENTO COUNTY HOUSING INDICATORS

Slow But Steady Growth

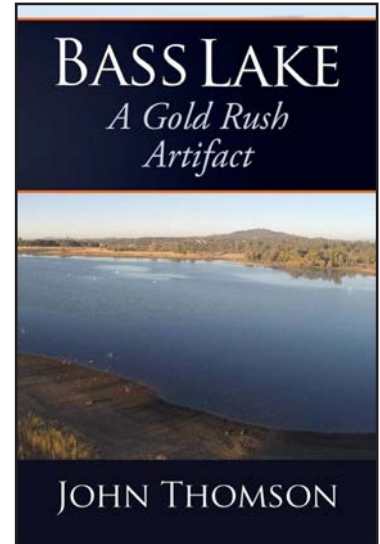
Sacramento County, encompassing California’s capitol and cities like Elk Grove, Citrus Heights and Folsom, is suffering through an elongated economic recovery following the 2008 recession. Home sales volume and construction have stalled, still waiting for the jobs recovery to arrive.

Sacramento was one of the last counties in California to reach an initial pre-recession jobs recovery, and has a long way to go to catch up with population gain. Its lagging recovery can be attributed partially to Sacramento’s dependence on state and local government jobs, which were slow to return.

Many, but not all, of these jobs will be restored when homebuyers return in full force. Jobs will rise to meet the region’s population increase in 2019, fueling wallets and in turn household formations. However, this recovery will soon be followed by the next recession, forecasted to arrive in 2020. Therefore, expect the next construction boom to be delayed as builders meet rising demand in the years following the recession, likely around 2021-2023.

Home sales volume in Sacramento County has steadily increased in recent years, bucking the statewide trend of flat sales volume. Total 2017 sales volume was nearly 10% higher than 2016, amounting to an increase of 2,200 sales. In 2018, sales volume year-to-date is 1.5% below 2017 as of September. This is about the same level of

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ORIGIN OF BASS LAKE REVEALED IN NEW HISTORY BOOK

Clarksville Region Historical Society has just published a history of El Dorado Hill’s own Bass Lake, entitled *Bass Lake: A Gold Rush Artifact*.

Written by local author and historian John Thomson, the new book is the story of the development of the mining ditches of southern El Dorado County, the story of the ditch companies that built those ditch systems, and how and when Bass Lake, originally known as the American Reservoir, came to be a living artifact of the Gold Rush of 1849.

All proceeds from the sale of the book will go to the historical society.

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PG&E *(continued)*

In November, California Assemblyman Chris Holden said a bill would be introduced in January to help PG&E absorb potential liabilities from the latest wildfires. It would extend recent legislation that allows PG&E to issue bonds to pay off the costs tied to the 2017 blazes.

The legislature last year passed SB901 that gave PG&E the right to raise rates in order to pay for expenses resulting from a wildfire, but limited the right to fires occurring in the year 2017 and after 2018.

California Public Utilities Commission chief Michael Picker said that same month that he couldn't imagine allowing the state's largest utility to go into bankruptcy. His agency later began a formal process to evaluate whether to break up or take over PG&E's Pacific Gas and Electric if the utility faced insolvency.

State Senator Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo), an outspoken PG&E critic, said the utility previously raised bankruptcy as leverage when seeking state assistance in paying its liabilities from wildfires in 2017. The company could be engaged in similar brinkmanship now, he said.

Still, a potential bankruptcy may be enough to force the hand of state legislators. They'll have to decide whether to allow the company to pass some of the costs of the fire through to taxpayers, securities analysts say. ~

Source: Mark Chediak, Bloomberg News

HOUSING *(continued)*

decrease as the state average, though most of this decrease has taken place in the second half of the year, indicating a continuing, slowing trend.

One reason why home sales volume has performed better here in Sacramento compared to other parts of the state (for example, Los Angeles, which is 8% below a year earlier as of September 2018) is the consistent addition to the for-sale inventory, in the form of residential construction. In California's expensive and desirable coastal cities, new construction has been held back significantly by outdated zoning laws and not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) advocates. Not so in Sacramento, where construction is welcome and allows sales volume to keep pace with homebuyer demand.

Even so, home sales volume will continue to slow going into 2019, primarily due to homebuyers discouraged by rising interest rates.

The relatively good news for this area is that Sacramento's average homeownership rate is usually well above the state average. However, expect Sacramento's homeownership rate to fall back in 2019, as rising interest rates and shaky economic conditions discourage homebuyers. Owner-occupants won't return in solid numbers until Sacramento's jobs market has a chance to fully recover from the coming recession, likely in the post-recession years of 2021-2023.

Further, Sacramento's population has grown about 1% each year since the 2008 recession. With working-aged individuals making up some 60% of this added population, Sacramento will need an additional 50,000 jobs for adequate employment following 2015's initial recovery for total employment to match population levels. At the current pace of job additions, this will occur in 2019.

For housing, incomes are keeping pace with the annual rise in the historic mean price trendline: the home price anchor and point at which prices invariably return. But annual home price movement during a business cycle is another matter. Property prices often rise or fall dramatically from year to year without regard to the annual rate of consumer inflation and wage increases before returning to the mean price trendline. In any given year, home pricing is controlled by factors such as: mortgage rates; jobs; personal savings; housing starts; and individual confidence in the future.

Expect incomes to rise beyond the rate of inflation once jobs rise to meet Sacramento's growing population, around 2019. Then, employers will begin to pay more to answer competition for new employees. This boost in income will add support to a burgeoning housing market, expected to rise to a cyclical peak around 2021-2023. ~

Source: first tuesday Editorial Staff



BASS LAKE *(continued)*

Most people who live around Cameron Park and El Dorado Hills know that Bass Lake is on Bass Lake Road, a mile or so north of Highway 50. But few, if any of them know from whence Bass Lake came, or why it is there.

Old-time residents recall that at one time you could picnic and go fishing at Bass Lake. Stories abound, but to many, the lake's origins are lost.

No doubt many would be surprised to learn that Bass Lake, or American Reservoir, as it was known then, was a part of the great mining ditch systems of the California Gold Rush. American Reservoir became the eastern terminus of what was first known as the Eureka Ditch, later as the Crawford Ditch, and then as the Park Canal and Mining Company ditch system.

Copies of the book are currently available on Amazon.com. To purchase a copy of *Bass Lake: A Gold Rush Artifact*, click [here](#). ~



ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATES LOOM AT COUNTY

The County of El Dorado Planning Commission will hold a public workshop in the Building C Hearing Room, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667 on January 24, 2019, at 8:30 a.m., for Review and Comment only on the proposed Title 130 Zoning Ordinance Major Amendment project submitted by El Dorado County.

The purpose of this Public Workshop is to discuss the anticipated changes to the Zoning Ordinance and solicit comments and feedback from the community. No action will be taken.

The El Dorado County Planning and Building Department has initiated the Zoning Ordinance Major Amendments project. The project consists of modifications to

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Hello Everyone,

Happy New Year to all! The year promises to bring changes, and challenges, to all of us that live on Bass Lake Road.

You probably saw the article in last month's Bulletin about the establishment of the Traffic Safety Consortium, which is going to try to generate ideas and work with local agencies to decrease the traffic congestion that is sure to result when the new houses and new shopping center along Bass Lake Road are completed.

Of special concern are the new developments' access or entry roads that will intersect with Bass Lake Road between Serrano Parkway and Bridlewood Drive, the entrance to Bridlewood Canyon. Eventually there will be four major neighborhood entrances, in a space of less than a mile, between Serrano Parkway and Silver Springs Parkway. Each will be right and left-turn intersections.

Though the traffic light at Serrano Parkway will meter north bound traffic and allow gaps, the south bound traffic will be metered by a stop sign at Silver Springs Parkway, spacing cars every fifty feet or so. This will prove a nightmare to drivers who wish to turn left onto Bass Lake Road to head south to Highway 50.

The Bulletin recently learned that El Dorado County Department of Transportation (DOT) is asking the Board of Supervisors to give them a part of the county-owned land along the west side of Bass Lake Road on which to build a road maintenance yard. The proposed yard would be across the road from the entrance to Bridlewood Canyon, near the curve in Bass Lake Road. Presumably maintenance trucks will enter and exit the yard on Bass Lake Road. The supervisors will be considering the DOT request at their meeting on January 15, 2018. If you wish to comment on the proposal, you may contact District 1 Supervisor John Hidahl at (530) 621-5390.

We are all looking forward to exciting times in the coming year. Let's just hope that things don't get too exciting!

Sincerely,

John E. Thomson

Editor

ZONING *(continued)*

existing land uses including agricultural related land uses, improvements to planning permit processing including general review procedures, modifications to public noticing, and several parcel specific rezones. It is anticipated that staff will be scheduling formal public hearings in the spring and summer of 2019.

Proposed Amendments

Land Use Amendments include the following: Distillery; Professional & Medical Offices; Winery; Full Service Facilities; Vehicle Sales & Rentals; Self Storage (Mini Storage); Drive Through Facilities; Aviaries (Bird Keeping); Mobile Services; Agricultural Related Land Use Amendments; Ranch Marketing Uses for Agricultural Grazing Lands, Large Animal; and Wineries Allowed Uses.

Planning Permit Processing and Public Noticing Amendments include the following: General Review Procedures; Public Notice Requirements & Procedures; Home Occupation Limitations; Child Care Facilities; and Temporary Use Permit.

Parcel Specific Rezones include parcels in Somerset Area, 1 parcel; Greenwood Area, 4 parcels; Meeks Bay Area, 12 parcels; and Mt. Aukum Area, 1 parcel.

Items recommended to be removed, due to additional analysis needed include: Garden Valley Area Rezone, 1 parcel; North Placererville Area Rezone, 4 parcels; Texas Hill Reservoir Area Rezone, 10 parcels; Pilot Hill Area Rezone, 1 parcel; Allow Residential Uses in the Open Space land use designation; and Temporary Camping.

Public Participation

All persons interested are invited to attend and be heard or to write their comments to the Planning Commission. Any written correspondence should be directed to the County of El Dorado Planning and Building Department, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placererville, CA 95667 or via e-mail: planning@edcgov.us.

To ensure delivery to the Commission prior to the meeting, written information from the public is encouraged to be submitted by Thursday the week prior to the meeting. Planning Services cannot guarantee that any FAX or mail received the day of the Commission meeting will be delivered to the Commission prior to the start of the meeting.

Additional information is available at the county website [here](http://www.edcgov.us).

Source: County of Eldorado



EDH FIRE BOARD SEEKS NEW MEMBER

The El Dorado Hills Fire Board needs one new member to fill the seat vacated by newly-appointed Fire Chief Maurice Johnson.

Johnson was sworn in as a new director last month and resigned soon thereafter so that he could formally accept the EDH fire chief position. He started the fire chief job January 1.

Joking that Johnson's tenure as a fire board director was "the shortest term ... in history," Fire Board President Greg Durante asked his fellow directors to call a special meeting on January 31 to select the fifth board member.

Those who would like to apply must submit their résumés and a letter of qualifications to the fire board no later than 5 p.m. on January 17. Visit edhfire.com for more information.

The board also welcomed new Director Tim White, who took his oath of office at the beginning of the December meeting. Directors unanimously voted to name Director John Giraudo the 2019 board president and Director Jim Hartley the vice president.

Directors also thanked Fire Chief Tom Keating for serving as interim fire chief for the last several months. Keating, the current Rescue Fire Protection District chief, plans to retire next year. ~

Credit: Noel Stack, Village Life





EIA: PROPANE PRICES TO REMAIN STABLE

Nationwide, propane prices are projected to remain in the \$2.50 per gallon range through this winter, according to the U.S. Energy Information Agency (EIA). The average U.S. price (excluding the Far West) was \$2.432 on January 7, 2019.

Since California is not included in the EIA survey, that forecast can be but a broad indicator of relatively stable propane prices rather than actual prices paid in California.

As of January 9, 2019, the price for participants in the JS West propane contract price program was \$1.92 per gallon. ~



Jack Frost

The door was shut, as doors should be,
Before you went to bed last night;
Yet Jack Frost has got in, you see,
And left your window silver white.

He must have waited till you slept;
And not a single word he spoke,
But pencilled o'er the panes and crept
Away again before you woke.

And now you cannot see the hills
Nor fields that stretch beyond the lane;
But there are fairer things than these
His fingers traced on every pane.

— Gabriel Setoun

IN MEMORIAM



Herbert L. Prevost, III

Herb Prevost, a sixteen-year resident of Woodridge and a founding member of the Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC), peacefully passed away on Thursday, December 20th, 2018, after an extended hospitalization.

Herb was born on November 11th, 1944, and as an Air Force "brat" he and his family moved many times, until he went to college at George Washington University in Washington, DC, where he met his wife, Kathy. Having had one overseas assignment with his family in Greece, he was definitely bitten by the love of travel, history and Greek food.

Having been exposed to aviation his entire life since his Father was a fighter pilot, he loved to fly and received his private pilot's license while working for United Airlines in Los Angeles. During his career with United which spanned 37 years, he had increasing levels of responsibility while working in various departments in different cities which included reservations, airport operations, training, employment, inflight services, assistant to the regional vice president in Los Angeles, cargo sales and cargo services. One of his last assignments before retiring from United was responsibility for cargo sales in Asia which included the initiation of cargo only airplanes and required living in Tokyo, Japan for three years.

After returning to Chicago, he also worked on the start-up of an Air Freight Forwarding and Logistics business for United which moved to Sacramento from Chicago and whom he worked

for before ultimately retiring. Having moved about 20 times and rehabilitating several homes, Herb finally was able to enjoy working in the yard, golfing with his walking buddies, helping Kathy with BLAC, reading, walking the dogs, and lunching every month with his good friend Roy. He also went back to school at Sac State to earn a degree in Business which he very much enjoyed and took project management classes.

In 2010, he decided to work on the census which he did for several months and found to be quite an interesting experience.

Herb is survived by his wife of 55 years, Kathy; daughter, Lynne; 3 grandchildren, Scott, Katelyn and Justin; and one great-grandchild, Mila. Also, his father, Herbert Prevost; sister, Cathie Stevens (Dave) and brother, Paul.

A celebration of Herb's life will be held in the spring. ☞



BLAC BOARD SETS FEBRUARY MEETING

The next BLAC Board Meeting will be held on Monday, February 11, 2019, at 6:00 PM at the home of John and Fran Thomson, 501 Kirkwood Court, Woodridge, El Dorado Hills, 530-677-3039. All BLAC members are cordially invited to attend.

For further information about BLAC meetings and membership, please contact Vice-President John Davey at 530-676-2657. ~

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