

## John Messina

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El Dorado County Board of Supervisors Meeting May 12, 2026  
c/o [kim.dawson@edcgov.us](mailto:kim.dawson@edcgov.us)

RE: Renaming the 56 Acres donated by the Dunlaps

I have received a great deal of feedback about my letter about the 56 Acres and the Dunlap's donation of the property in support of the idea of renaming the property "The Dunlap Community Center" in recognition of their generous donation to our community. I would therefore respectfully request that the City Council pursue making this change to the name of the area.

While watching the ceremonies dedicating the new recreation center no-one even mentioned the name of the one person who made this and so much more possible – Emma Dunlap who was the driving force of the Lake Valley Community Club, it was her community spirit that made this all possible.

It all started with a group of residents in 1935 who wanted to provide activities for the community such as dances, picnics, hayrides and other community activities. They formed the Lake Valley Community Club (LVCC) and became a California Non-profit organization February 2, 1938.

The Lake Valley Community Club originally held meetings near the "Y", in/near the city's first schoolhouse that was located about where TJ Max is today. (The schoolhouse was later moved to 2720 Young St. and is now the Carpenters Local Union Hall #1789.)

The Club eventually decided they needed more space and John E. and Emma May Dunlap who owned the Dunlap Field and Tamarack Dairy (1921-2021) donated the parcel of land now referred to as the "56 Acres" to the Lake Valley Community Club.

They built a new clubhouse on the property and the campgrounds. At some point the Boy Scouts built a meeting hall on the property, however it was demolished in the 1980s. In 1957 the LVCC built the first permanent public library adjacent to their clubhouse that is now the Historical Society building.

In 1959, after the passing of the Dunlaps, the Lake Valley Community Club dissolved and donated the library, El Dorado County Campground (Campground by the Lake) and all the land to the only local government agency at the time, the County of El Dorado "For public use". The City of South Lake Tahoe was incorporated in 1965 and began sharing the property with the county. In 1975 the City built the old Recreation & Swim Center on the property and plans for the current library began in 1978, it was funded by a state grant and dedicated on April 16, 1983.

The county and city made many uses of the building known as 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd. (which was apparently the former Lake Valley Community Clubhouse) including a medical building and even City Hall. When the 1984 State Senior Act funding was made available for Senior Centers, funding was petitioned from the State and a community match of some \$57,000 was raised by the Tahoe Basin Senior Center Committee (TBSCC, INC) now known as Seniors Inc. expanding the building into the current Senior Center.

In 1997 the City attempted to open an outdoor Ice-Skating Rink, however it went bankrupt. The city then decided to build the current enclosed rink at the cost of \$2.5 - \$4 million. And now the new Recreation & Swim Center has been built on that land.

All these wonderful community benefits were made possible by the Dunlaps' generosity. In appreciation of their enormous contribution to our community, I believe we should rename the "56 Acres" to "The Dunlap Community Center" in recognition of the Dunlaps generous gift that made all of these wonderful things possible.

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