

Abbreviation alleviation?

Even for those committed to using the most inclusive language possible, the ever-expanding abbreviation “LGBTQIA+” can be a mouthful. A few new terms have been proposed in the name of balancing wide acceptance with syllabic overwhelm. The one that appears to be gaining the most traction is SGM, “sexual and gender minority.” We haven’t seen it in any style guides or heard it in major media yet, but “SGM” has been used by outlets such as Reuters, the Harvard Gazette and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas News Center.

A trans person’s identity isn’t subject to your expectations

Marcel Lucius Elija Herz, a 22-year-old transgender man who transitioned six years ago, said that a lot of people—both inside and outside the LGBTQ community—seem to expect trans identities to be set in stone.

“There’s this stigma,” he said. “You have to stay constant. You have to know who you are, how you dress. There’s a lot of people who think you have to get away from your old name.” A lot of people seem to think trans people should give up their former identities entirely once they decide to transition, he explained.

To Herz, though, stigmatizing these things is antithetical to the whole process of transitioning.

“That’s the beauty of it—there’s so much growth going on,” he said. While he’s a lot more comfortable in his own skin now that he’s a man, there are some things it took him a while to decide on. He’s been through two name changes, for example. And there are some things that will never be set in stone. “I’ve always been more masculine, but I have my days where sometimes I’m feeling more feminine,” he said. “It’s like there’s a hidden set of rules that everyone has to follow when you transition. I think that’s bogus. Everyone’s journey is their own.”

“Lack of acceptance and affirmation from family, friends, work and school lead to depression, suicidal ideation.”

Brooke Maylath
Co-leader, Transgender Allies Group.

Access to health care can be fraught

“Lack of acceptance and affirmation from family, friends, work and school lead to depression, suicidal ideation,” said Brooke Maylath, a transgender woman who is a co-leader of the Transgender Allies Group.

These are conditions that require mental health care, and, in many cases, the lack of acceptance can be addressed—at least in part—by gender reassignment surgeries. But there are some barriers between trans people and quality healthcare.

“The problem is multifold,” said Maylath. “There’s not enough physicians who are trained on how to treat our unique issues. Doctors will say, ‘Sorry, you’re far too complex for me.’”

Because of this, many trans people end up not being treated for common conditions that are unrelated to gender identity.

“Managing cross-gender therapy—which is what they freak out about—is far more complicated than managing diabetes, which doctors do every day,” Maylath said.

Insurance companies have historically denied trans customers such procedures, Maylath said. A non-discrimination provision in the 2010 Affordable Care Act specified that a medically necessary procedure could not be denied to someone based on gender.

“Most companies have adhered to that in Nevada,” Maylath said. But not all of them. “Transgender Allies Group is working on affecting legislation and policy so that more trans people have access to quality health care and insurance companies cover medically necessary transition procedures.”

One trans-friendly health care resource is Northern Nevada HOPES, 580 W. Fifth St. Learn more at nnhopes.org.

Our Center’s first-ever Trans Day of Visibility Celebration was originally scheduled for Tuesday, March 31 at its office at 1745 S. Wells Ave. However, the event has been postponed in light of the coronavirus outbreak. Learn more on Our Center’s Facebook page: facebook.com/OurCenterReno.



HELP KTMB

KEEP TRUCKEE MEADOWS BEAUTIFUL

STOP ILLEGAL DUMPING!

Litter Attracts Litter

Our state is quite spectacular; with an average of 28.1 people per square mile, Nevada has one of the lowest population densities in the United States, so it’s easy to step into our hills and truly “get away.” In fact, more than 80% of Nevada’s land (56.97 million acres) is publicly owned, meaning we have a serious abundance of wide, open spaces. With all of these open spaces, there are numerous opportunities to use it, whether it be for recreation or means of living. As a matter of fact, according to the Journal of Sustainable Real Estate, proximity to clean, open spaces raises property values by 20% or more. When these open spaces are taken advantage of, however, it takes a toll on the environment, property values, and even quality of life.

Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is a huge problem in our community as well as in our state. An illegal dumpsite is, essentially, litter on a larger scale. Once one item is illegally dumped, other items will soon follow. Not only is illegal dumping detrimental to the environment, but it is also expensive: the U.S. spends \$11.5 billion each year on litter cleanups alone, and 80% of that cost is paid by businesses. To put things in perspective, for an individual to properly dispose of a tire, it would cost \$3, but to clean up that tire from an illegal dumpsite, it would cost \$40 - taking into consideration the resources, the transportation, and the manpower to properly dispose of that item.

Illegal Dumping in the Truckee Meadows

Illegal dumping has been on the rise within the last decade: growing from 13 cases sent to the District Attorney’s office in 2014, to 58 cases in 2019. However, the District Attorney’s Office has established a Zero Tolerance

Policy for offenses relating to illegal dumping - resulting in 48 of those 58 cases in 2019 leading to a conviction. Justice is being served, however, the rate of illegal disposal is at an all time high. One of the most popular items illegally disposed of in the Truckee Meadows is vehicles; between 2012 and 2016, 163 vehicles were found abandoned. In 2018 alone, 600 vehicles were found abandoned. When buying a used vehicle, it is not mandatory in Nevada for the new owner to transfer the vehicle’s title to their name; therefore, there is often not a traceable record of who the new owner is. This can make it extremely difficult if a vehicle is illegally dumped to track down the individual who may have dumped that vehicle and hold them accountable.

What can we do about it?

Luckily, there are ways in which community members can help combat illegal dumping. Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful coordinates the Illegal Dumping Task Force which is a collaborative of local agencies with a goal of addressing illegal dumping and finding solutions. The Illegal Dumping Task Force helped establish the Illegal Dumping Hotline Number: 329-DUMP - if you are out enjoying Nevada’s open spaces and you spot an illegal dumpsite, please call 329-DUMP! To report individuals who are actively illegally dumping waste, please call the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office Dispatch number at (775) 785-WCSO. The dumpsites that are reported via the Illegal Dumping Hotline Number will be recorded and may even become potential cleanup sites for KTMB’s Great Community Cleanup (GCC). This particular cleanup focuses on open spaces, illegal dumpsites, as well as trash and invasive weed and green waste removal in parks and public spaces in the Truckee Meadows. In 2019, GCC volunteers removed 94,200 lbs of trash and 214 tires from public spaces and parks. KTMB’s Great Community

Cleanup 2020 is coming up on Saturday, May 2nd — If you are interested in volunteering and making a difference, please visit KTMB.org/volunteer to sign up!

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