

Skiing becomes a present for many in Tahoe



Mother Nature delivered a package of fresh powder to Sierra-at-Tahoe on Christmas. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

TWIN BRIDGES – New and untraditional traditions – that’s what skiing on Christmas Day is all about.

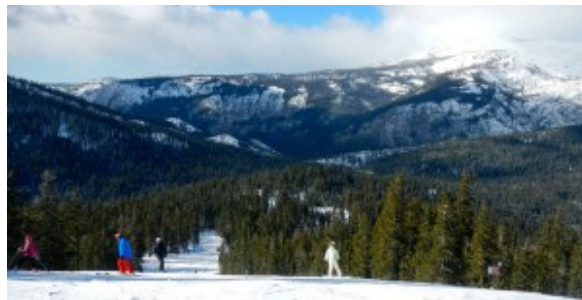
“We don’t see snow every day. That’s what Christmas is all about,” Andrew Benavides said as he sat at the bar at West Bowl at Sierra-at-Tahoe with his dad, Mike Withers.

The two live in Orangevale, so an easy day trip to the resort on Highway 50. They had a big Christmas party the night before, invited others to ski, but they were the only two to make it up the hill.

“Tahoe is just awesome,” Withers said. He learned to ski at Sierra, so he still has a fondness for the resort.

Skiing on the holiday is becoming a tradition for the Dawsons who live in El Dorado Hills. First they unwrapped what Santa brought and then they loaded the vehicle for an afternoon on the slopes.

Six-year-old Christopher had opened a present on Monday so the family of four could ski that day, too. Fluorescent green ski pants were in the box.



Pyramid Peak popped in and out of the clouds as flurries blew and the temps never got above 40 degrees Dec. 25.

More people than usual on Thursday were in the plaza at the base of the ski resort in footwear other than ski or snowboard boots. Anna Venhan of Palo Alto had her hood on to ward off the chilly breeze. She was focused on her book.

"It's kind of relaxing," she told *Lake Tahoe News*, especially knowing her kids were in ski school.

Being six months pregnant is keeping her off the slopes this season.

Bobbie Bennett and a group eight have been here since Sunday from the Houston area. Another nine from Houston were arriving in time for a big Christmas dinner.

"We are here because Heavenly didn't have enough snow. We are happy here. The staff is very friendly," Bennett told *Lake*

Tahoe News.

Her legs were too sore to strap on equipment, but her teenage sons were out shredding. Bennett was perfectly content to keep warm by the fire pit in the plaza.



David Kim relaxes at
Sierra's plaza.

David Kim of Folsom was stretched out in one of the lounge chairs at the plaza. His daughter and wife were skiing while he hung out in the sun. Knowing it had rained at their house the day before they were in search of freshies on Christmas.

Sierra did not disappoint with the 4 inches it received overnight. Stashes of powder could still be found in the afternoon – another present to unwrap.