

High-caliber performing arts center in the works

By Kathryn Reed

TAHOE CITY – A multi-theater indoor-outdoor performing arts center in the mountains has a growing audience of supporters. Now organizers need the funds to make the facility a reality.

The Tahoe Regional Arts Foundation is planning to build a center at Castle Peak. A 75-year lease has been signed with Vail Resorts-Northstar.

The 208 acres are near the entrance of the ski resort. The area is accessed by going to the right at the initial roundabout where the parking lots are. These lots would be used for the center.

“At this point the idea is conceptual, and Northstar is very supportive of the Tahoe Regional Arts Foundation’s current efforts to research feasibility, funding possibilities, and community interest levels for bringing a performing arts venue to the Truckee-Tahoe region,” Beth Howard, general manager of Northstar, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Keith Vogt, president of the foundation, gave a presentation Jan. 6 to the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association’s Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club at Granlibakken Resort.

“Almost every other mountain community has a theater and we don’t,” Vogt told the group.



The Stages at Northstar is a multimillion performing arts center proposed for Truckee. Photos/Williams+Paddon Architects

In doing research, the theaters in Jackson Hole, Wyo., Telluride, Colo., and Beaver Creek were looked at. All are successful, well designed and bring in diverse entertainment.

The Truckee center will be called The Stages at Northstar.

However, it's likely the theaters and other aspects of the facility will have other names. Vogt told *Lake Tahoe News* there are opportunities for at least 20 areas to be named. This is where some of the larger checks are expected to come from.

It's estimated that \$50 million is needed to build the center and establish an endowment fund.

The goal is for it to be a year-round facility. There will be an outdoor amphitheater that will seat 3,500, with the potential for more on the mountainside. There will be two

indoor theaters, with the main theater being 33,000-square-feet, with a capacity of 500 people.

It will be a visual and performing arts center. Vogt said the community theater groups need it, the youth deserve it and the public wants it.

The foundation, which received its nonprofit status last year, is run by a board of directors. They foresee offering summer drama programs where students will be part of a residence program.

Multiple studies have been done seeking the public's input and such a facility keeps rising to the top.

Vogt assured people that while the goal is to be a state-of-the-art center that one day could garner international acclaim, area schools and nonprofits would be able to afford to use the space. He anticipates significant revenue being generated from renting out space for corporations for retreats. That classroom has multiple windows looking out onto the ski slopes of Northstar.

The annual fiscal impact to the area is estimated to be \$4 million, Vogt said.

—

Notes:

- For more info, email tahoestages@tahoearts.net.
- More info is also available online.