Opinion: Looking to Park City for inspiration



Park City is now the largest ski resort in the United States. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Planning a trip to Lake Tahoe is not as easy as going to Park City, Utah, or Vail, Colo.

There are more than a dozen downhill ski resorts in the greater Lake Tahoe area that are geographically spread out, so the visitor better do her homework. In Park City there are now two resorts; there were three until Park City and Canyons became one. Vail has Vail, though Beaver Creek is just down the road.

There are plenty of similarities and differences to distinguish these three areas.

A big difference is that for Lake Tahoe summer is the busiest season. The other two barely register with non-skiers.

A major similarity is the presence of Vail Resorts. The Broomfield, Colo.-based company owns Heavenly, Northstar and

Kirkwood in the Tahoe area, Vail and Beaver Creek in Colorado (among others), and Park City in Utah.

Lake Tahoe News spent a week in January exploring Park City. We met with city officials, toured 2002 Olympic venues, stayed at three hotels to get a feel for lodging options, wandered through downtown, ate and drank at a variety of establishments, and skied those famous Wasatch mountains. Every Sunday in February we will be bringing you stories about our experience in Park City.

From there we hope it might spark some debate about where we go as a region and as smaller locales around the lake. By no means are we saying we want Tahoe to be Park City or Vail, but it is pretty clear Lake Tahoe has an identity issue outside of being able to point to that big body of water. Change is inevitable. Are we going to be active participants or let others make the change for us?

Enjoy the series.

– Kathryn Reed, Lake Tahoe News publisher