

Opinion: Explaining the solstices

By Stephen Schneider, The Conversation

The summer solstice marks the official start of summer. It brings the longest day and shortest night of the year for the 88 percent of Earth's people who live in the Northern Hemisphere. People around the world observe the change of seasons with bonfires and festivals and *Fête de la Musique* celebrations.

Astronomers can calculate an exact moment for the solstice, when Earth reaches the point in its orbit where the North Pole is angled closest to the sun. That moment will be at 9:07am Pacific Time on June 21 this year. From Earth, the sun will appear farthest north relative to the stars. People living on the Tropic of Cancer, 23.5 degrees north of the Equator, will see the sun pass straight overhead at noon. Six months from now the sun will reach its southern extreme and pass overhead for people on the Tropic of Capricorn, and northerners will experience their shortest days of the year, at the winter solstice.

The sun's angle relative to Earth's equator changes so gradually close to the solstices that, without instruments, the shift is difficult to perceive for about 10 days. This is the origin of the word solstice, which means "solar standstill."

This slow shift means that June 21 is only about 1 second longer than June 20 at mid-northern latitudes. It will be about a week before there's more than a minute change to the calculated amount of daylight. Even that's an approximation – Earth's atmosphere bends light over the horizon by different amounts depending on weather, which can introduce changes of

more than a minute to sunrise and sunset times.

Monuments at Stonehenge in England, Karnak in Egypt, and Chankillo in Peru reveal that people around the world have taken note of the sun's northern and southern travels for more than 5,000 years. From Stonehenge's circle of standing stones, the sun will rise directly over an ancient avenue leading away to the northeast on the solstice. We know little about the people who built Stonehenge, or why they went to such great effort to construct it – moving multi-ton stones from rock outcrops as far as 140 miles away. All this to mark the spot on the horizon where the sun returns each year to rest for a while before moving south again. Perhaps they, like us, celebrated this signal of the coming change of seasons.

Stephen Schneider is a professor of astronomy, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

I-80 near Truckee to be closed early Tues.

Eastbound Interstate 80 will be closed approximately 13 miles east of Truckee near Farad from 4-8am June 19 in order to remove a truck and trailer from the Truckee River canyon.

Towing efforts on Monday to remove the crashed truck and trailer from the canyon were unsuccessful. A full closure of both freeway lanes is required for the removal.

All eastbound Interstate 80 traffic will be stopped at Highway 267 at 4am. Towing activities may take several hours. Caltrans anticipates to reopen the freeway at 8am.

Significant traffic delays are expected and local highways may be impacted. Motorists are encouraged to plan for delays and adjust their travel time accordingly.

El Nino may be back by winter

By Brian K. Sullivan, Bloomberg

It's time to start watching natural gas, coffee and cocoa markets again – because a weather-changing El Nino could be arriving just in time for winter.

The U.S. Climate Prediction Center issued an El Nino watch across the equatorial Pacific Thursday, with the odds jumping to 64 percent chance that it will come from December to February. That's up from a 49 percent chance in the agency's monthly report in May.

Read the whole story

Official: Washoe Lake Dam could breach

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

The Washoe Lake Dam has an apparent leak that could undermine the structure and cause it to fail.

That's according to the Nevada Division of Water Resources

which is marshaling resources to make an emergency repair, according to State Engineer Jason King.

“When you have seepage going through an earthen embankment... all of a sudden you can have a failure,” King said.

Read the whole story

Road Beat: 2018 Toyota Highlander SE does it all



Hard to find a complaint with the 2018 Toyota Highlander SE. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

Bob Lutz, a car wizard who spent time as a high-level executive such as vice chairman and executive vice president at Ford, Chrysler, GM and BMW, once called Toyota the “default” brand. What he meant by that was that many customers when buying a car simply didn’t think about it, they simply went to their Toyota dealer and bought a car.

That’s high praise coming from a competitor. Buying a Toyota was simply a no-brainer. The brand was that good.

Toyota has not rested on that laurel as evidenced by their new fabulous Camry and this new 2018 Highlander. It is that impressive. Now in its third generation, Highlander is all grown up. The first generation was impressive and this new issue will blow you away.

While it is still loosely based on the Camry platform, Highlander has become a serious mid-size CUV. Just look at the creds. It sits on a 110-inch wheelbase while stretching out 193 inches with massive shoulders giving it a breadth of 76 inches. Ground clearance is significant at 8 inches.

Its design is rugged while maintaining an edge of class. The front end is massive and powerful. You can see some 4Runner. Its sidelines are sleek, especially the sweeping window lines and the rear end is squared off a bit making for serious cargo and three row seating. It’s a great looking vehicle and certainly an improvement over the first and second generation.



Specifications

Price \$44,355 (loaded SE AWD V-6)

Engine

3.5L DOHC, 24 Valve V-6 295 hp @ 6,600 rpm

263 lb.-ft. of torque @ 4,700 rpm

Transmission

Eight-speed torque converter automatic

Configuration

Transverse mounted front engine/AWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 109.8 inches

Length 192.5 inches

Width 75.8 inches

Height 70.1 inches

Ground clearance 8.0 inches

Track (f/r) 64.4/64.2 inches

Fuel capacity 19.2 gallons

Cargo capacity (behind front seats/second row/third row)

82.6/42.0/13.8 cube feet

Weight 4,590 pounds

GVWR 6,000 pounds

Tow capacity 5,000 pounds

Steering lock to lock 2.74 turns

Turning circle 38.7 feet

Wheels 19 x 7.5 alloys

Tires 245/55 x 19

Performance

0-60 mph 6.36 seconds

50-70 mph 3.61 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 4.93 seconds

Top speed – plenty fast
Fuel economy EPA rated
20/26/22 mpg
city/highway/combined.
Expect 23 mpg in country or
suburban driving and 29 mpg
on a level highway at legal
speeds.

Mechanicals are also improved with the 3.5L DOHC, 24 valve V-6 pumping out a prodigious 295 hp at 6,500 rpm along with 263 pounds of twist at 4,700 rpm. You can see its Camry roots in the transverse mounted engine. There is also a 185 hp, 2.7L inline four offered, but take a pass as the four gets a six-speed auto cog-swapper while the V-6 gets an eight-speeder. I would acquire the V-6 just for the eight-speeder. Only front wheel drive is available for the four banger while AWD is optional on the V-6 which my tester had and there isn't any fuel economy benefit with the four banger, it is a negative.

Performance is outstanding with 0-60 mph arriving is just 6.36 seconds, a near world-class number. Passing times match that number with 50-70 mph occurring in 3.61 seconds and the same sun up a 6-7 percent grade only slowing that number to 4.93 seconds. And Highlander is no lightweight, tipping the scales in AWD at 4,590 pounds with a GVWR of 6,000 pounds, making it easily up to the task of transporting 7-8 adults depending on whether you opt for a second-row bench seat. It is also rated to tow 5,000 pounds. It would do it easily.

Don't fret about fuel economy. All this performance plus utility doesn't drink a lot of fuel. EPA rates the Highlander AWD V-6 at 20/26/22 mpg city/highway/combined. Interestingly, the four cylinder, FWD Highlander is EPA rated at 20/24/22 mpg. The AWD V-6 while carrying an extra 400 pounds and a larger, over 50 percent more powerful engine returns better

fuel economy. The four-cylinder model is not the one to buy. It achieves nothing except a slightly smaller price of admission.

In real world driving, the Highlander averaged 23 mpg overall with almost no time on a four-lane freeway, but when I ran my 70-mph highway test, the Highlander returned 29.3 mpg in a two-way run. In a 200-mile round trip from Placerville to Carson City, the Highlander averaged 25.4 mpg. During that trip full throttle was used about a dozen times. Fuel capacity is a large 19.2 gallons meaning 500 mile legs on the highway.

Handling is another strong suit for Highlander. It has all the right equipment, suspension is Macpherson struts up front and double wishbones in the rear (my SE tester was sport tuned, meaning it was stiffened up a bit). Steering is an electric rack which is a very quick 2.74 turns lock to lock (turning circle is a reasonable 38.7 feet). And it has large stab bars at both ends. Cap all that off with 19 x 7.5-inch alloys shod with 245/55 series rubber and you have a handler. Highlander is a pleasure in the twisties, with accurate steering, crisp turn in and tremendous grip. It feels like it weighs a thousand pounds less as it complies with your directional wishes. Nice job Toyota.

Ride quality is very smooth and quiet. It's uncanny as to how quiet the Highlander is which is punctuated by its smoothness. But it is a firm ride. If you are looking for float, this is not your boat. It is compliant and supple and head tossing is kept to a minimum, a ride quality that I look for in a vehicle. In top or eighth gear the engine spins a very low 1,700 rpm at 70 mph. It also comes with auto stop which stops the engine at a stop and restarts when the brake pedal is released. It was a bit disconcerting and it is defeatable by a switch but it will always default to auto stop at the beginning of every trip. It's part of meeting EPA numbers.

Safety is standard on Highlander. Toyota Safety Sense plus

everything else is included down to Lane Keep Assist with steering assist. Brakes over a foot in diameter and strong. Headlights are good.

Inside is a leather interior that provides excellent comfort for at least the first and second row. I wouldn't vouch for the third row, but smaller adults and kids should be fine back there. Instrumentation is complete with a large tach and speedo flanking an info/trip computer center.

The center stack was easy to use, there were no mice to deal with relative to operating the excellent sound system.

Cargo volume is huge with over 82 cubes behind the front chairs with the second and third rows folded flat and they do fold flat. There are 42 and 14 cubes respectively behind the second and third rows, so the Highlander could be dangerous at Home Depot or Lowe's. And the space is well shaped.

Pricing for this loaded Highlander SE AWD, V-6 starts at \$41,550. My tester had one option an entertainment system that will set you back an additional \$1,810 plus \$995 for the train ticket from its Princeton, Indiana assembly plant bringing the total for my tester to \$44,355. But scratching the upgraded entertainment system brings the total to about \$42,500 a veritable bargain considering its extremely high performance and utility. It's just another example of the huge roll that Toyota is on.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

- The next El Dorado County VHR Ad Hoc Committee meeting will be June 25, 6:30pm in Tahoma at the Meeks Bay Fire Protection District.
 - Douglas County Public Library will be hosting a coffee tasting on July 16 at the Minden Library from 2-4pm presented by DST Coffee Company.
 - Benko Gallery in South Lake Tahoe is hosting a solo art exhibit featuring the collected works of Jennifer McEuen on Aug. 18, 5-10pm. The exhibit theme Devotion is expressed through McEuen's paintings, which delve into expanded perceptions with a strong grounding in realism. Live music will be part of the festivities.
 - The science speaks lunch featuring Tahoe Environmental Research Center Director Geoff Schladow will be July 13 from 11:30am-1pm on the campus of Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village. Tickets are \$100 and available **online**.
-

Rent control decision coming to California voters

By Angela Hart, Sacramento Bee

A hotly contested battle over rent control in California just got more explosive.

Tenants rights activists have qualified for the November ballot an initiative that would clear the way for cities and counties across California to pass strong rent control laws,

as local and state lawmakers struggle to address a widening housing crisis that has pushed people into homelessness and out of the state in search of cheaper living elsewhere.

The Secretary of State's office reported Friday evening that proponents behind an initiative to repeal a 1995 state law called the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act have gathered enough valid signatures to qualify for the November 6, 2018 ballot. The existing state law sets tight limits on the type and number of housing units that rent control can apply to.

Read the whole story

STHS class of 1978 working on fall reunion

Andree Brulhart and Leona (Evans) Allen are working on plans for the South Tahoe High School class of 1978's 40th reunion.

It will be Oct. 20.

So far plans include a tour of the renovated STHS campus in the late morning, then a lunch and get-together at the Camp Richardson boathouse.

The cost of the event will be approximately \$50 per person, which will include the facility, set-up, a barbecue-style lunch, sodas and water.

RSVP by July 14 to Andree at msswiss3@aol.com or Leona at lallen@mail.ltcc.edu. Indicate if it's one or two people attending, phone number, and if you are able to volunteer.

Hotel discounts are being worked on.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Vincent

Vincent and Wallace came to the shelter together, and they would like to find a forever home together. They are 10 months old and very sweet.

Vincent and Wallace are neutered, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated. They are at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go **online**.

– Karen Kuentz

Truckee – a Gold Rush town turning 25



Downtown Truckee has the feel that it did decades ago.
Photo/John Corbett (year unknown)

By Susan Wood

TRUCKEE – The Sierra Nevada town known for its deep snow, cold temps, growth potential, pedestrian-friendly downtown and outdoor lifestyle celebrates a milestone this September of its most significant achievement – its history.

The town marks a quarter century of incorporation on Sept. 8, with a grand picnic and new town photo. The first one featured about 6,000 people (more than half the population in 1994) and was taken from a fire engine ladder.

But to get a true sense of Truckee's history in terms of its

people and progress, one needs to perhaps date it in dog years. The establishment of the haven along the Interstate 80 corridor just north of Lake Tahoe covering a 34 square-mile swath of mountain and valley terrain dates back to 1863.

Through the years, the town flourished with lumber mills, a working railyard, a meandering river and later tourism – the latter responsible for the surge in interest of snow sports and on-foot travel. (One could argue there's a reason the Donner Party braved treacherous conditions to get to a better life.)

Many others have followed. For the most part, Truckee has made all the right moves. This is according to historians, business owners, resort workers, city leaders and other stakeholders.

The number of permanent residents has grown to more than 16,000 living in 13,000 housing units. And with a population that can suddenly boom on a winter or summer holiday weekend to 30,000 people counting tourists who may dream about staying forever. Those 13,000 units can quickly fill to the point in which nearby Northstar ski resort has a housing specialist on staff. Some workers commute from Reno.

This may be what happens when one has too much of a good thing.



The Truckee Hotel is barely visible in winter 1890. Photo/H.K. Gage

Seizing on and maintaining a good thing

Stefanie Olivieri knows the town's peaks and valleys first hand.

The lifelong Truckee resident will commemorate a milestone of her own this 4th of July upon her clothing store started by her parents reaching the centenarian mark.

Cabonas, in the center of the historic district, opened as a general store selling worms, tackle, guns, work clothes, appliances and diapers – all the necessities 100 years ago. A gas pump sat outside, fishing flies were made inside.

She worked with her two siblings in the 2,500-square-foot store at 9 years old. So, when her parents retired in 1967, a light bulb came on.

"I was the one who loved it most," she said.

The 75-year-old pioneer expanded the clothing lines to include more sportswear.

"The town sort of grew up around us," Olivieri told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Olivieri vividly remembers when Nevada County approved a Kmart to be built before Truckee's incorporation. It was a watershed moment in which the town's fathers, pioneering families and visionaries decided to be the "determiner of our own destiny."

Big box stores were viewed as almost sacrilege to those trying to hold on to the charm and quaintness of their village.

"We nipped that in the bud," she said.

And so it goes with Truckee's grand achievements intertwined with its one perplexing issue plaguing a lot of resort communities people love to death.

The lack of housing led Olivieri to last year log seven months manning the store without a day off because she couldn't find workers who could afford to live there.

It's an issue Truckee's second town manager and first mayor are quite familiar with.

Who would have thought that the wise decision to incorporate and let smaller government pave the way for its own future would have led to such a wagon-train style insurgence from the Bay Area?

"A big change occurred in this community in the 1970s," said Tony Lashbrook, who recently retired as the town's manager. He recalled the town's history over breakfast at the Squeeze Inn with *Lake Tahoe News*, along with 1994's mayor, Kathleen Eagan. The two hugged and spoke in unison as if they've known each other a lifetime.

Lashbrook listed the building of the Tahoe Donner community,

one of the largest in the United States with 6,000 lots, as one example of Truckee's growth potential seen decades ago. Plus, the addition of Northstar ski resort in less than a five-year period essentially placed Truckee on the map, following nearby Squaw Valley's hosting of the 1960 Winter Olympics.

"Alex (Cushing) was a visionary – eclectic. He may not have had a regional vision, but he had a Squaw vision," Lashbrook said of Squaw's founder.



Truckee has had three town managers in 25 years, with Tony Lashbrook No. 2 and recently retired. Photo/Susan Wood

Taking names and taking charge

To Lashbrook, it was up to government with him working in community development at the time to rein in expenses and allocations. All the while, the first priority was taking the resources away from a county that appeared removed at times at understanding the town's character.

"We thought we could do a better job with the same amount of

resources," Lashbrook said.

If anything, the idea of a big box store as development represented the catalyst for forming its own town government to service the half permanent population, half transient that still exists today.

In the 1990s, the community saw the writing on the wall as the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency placed its grip on development along the lake.

Truckee stakeholders decided to be proactive and deflect the building interest while abiding by its longtime citizens' wishes.

"I think we're darn community oriented," Lashbrook said.

To prove that point, the question on the ballot asking to incorporate was followed by a crucial second: "We asked whether to be a town or a city," Lashbrook said. With 72 percent voting in favor of forming its own government, an even larger percentage declared it wanted to be called "a town" – a psychological precursor to how the community folk saw themselves.

Beyond land-use, snow removal and street maintenance were main considerations, along with public safety. Lashbrook chuckled with Eagan as they recalled more police showing up on the roads.

"All of a sudden there were cops everywhere because now they live here," Lashbrook said.

Certainly, pulling away from the county and taking charge of such a large area posed a risk.

"We had a doomsday scenario, but we knew we were all in this together," Eagan said. "We knew we bit off a big part of the hamburger."

When objections and concerns arose, “they were not dismissed,” Eagan insisted. “There was minimal backlash that ended in remarkable joy.”

The forming town had a financial plan to address costs. And Eagan, being a retired San Francisco banker, worked on the economic study.

Even now, the town conducted much discerning discussion over whether the community of residents and tourists would support five proposed grocery stores within city limits.



Public Works Director Dan Wilkins is proud the town put money into infrastructure at the get-go. Photo/Susan Wood

Progress has a price

As a new town, Truckee hit the ground running in terms of making the infrastructure up to par.

Dan Wilkins, the director of Public Works and town engineer, came on board at just the right time to make a difference 20 years ago. The roads were considered “a disaster,” Wilkins

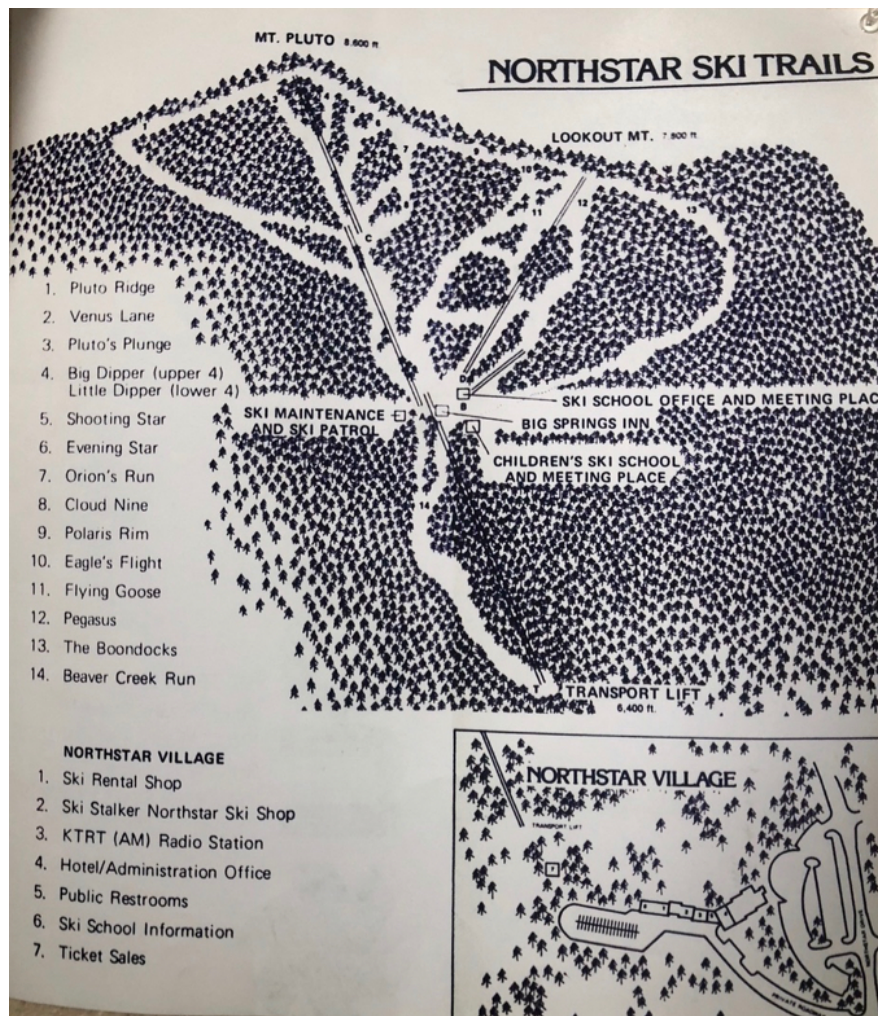
noted.

Under his direction, the town government spent the first nine years resurfacing its 160 miles of roadway with \$23 million. Forty-four of these miles got Class 2 bike lanes alongside the streets. Roundabouts (wider than most to accommodate snow removal) were installed. Eight were built in 1998 alone. This was a huge feat considering Wilkins figured Public Works moved 10 billion pounds of snow in the phenomenal 2016-17 winter season. The town's original maintenance yard was purchased under a five-year lease option from the Truckee Sanitation District. Stemming from safety concerns, the local government teamed up with Caltrans to install a pedestrian tunnel leading into town on Highway 89.

"That was an example of where the town saw a problem and addressed it," Wilkins said, while walking the bike lane. "It was an accident waiting to happen."

Paid parking meters were put in at the town's core as a source of revenue, while beautification projects popped up everywhere. They still do, as the town is taking bids on burying utility lines underground and extending the sidewalk along Donner Pass Road. Public art and monument displays celebrating the town's whimsical nature and undaunted history were set in roundabouts and on the main historic thoroughfare. Sidewalks replaced the dirt downtown where businesses like Bar of America, Truckee Hotel and Wagon Train Cafe which have served the community for decades remain.

It was a town proud of its own achievement, and the local government rewarded it.



Northstar ski resort has grown since this map in 1972 was made.

A pet project

The mantra was: Our people first. Dan Olsen, who works in Truckee Police Department administration, found it was animals as a close second for him.

Olsen was with the town on Day 1 as an animal control officer, moving over to the new town from Nevada County Animal Control. Now as Truckee's support services manager, he took on the often-difficult task of turning Animal Services into Truckee's "crown jewel."

With good management, the unit moved out of an old, rundown building measuring 1,200 square feet to a new 10,000-square-foot facility on Stevens Lane.

"The cool thing when the town incorporated was that we were able to do as a town what we wanted to do," Olsen said, commending Lashbrook and the first town manager, Steve Wright, for their undying support for his efforts.

Animal Services has been able to take in stray runaways through the Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe and care for the animals in a humane way. When Olsen started, they had 600 stray. Today, the figure has more than doubled.

The department tracks and manages more effectively with a computer system that makes the job more flexible. Olsen admitted the biggest change he's seen in 25 years is the use of technology.

"When I first worked here, it was pen and paper. We didn't even have a phone connection between departments. Now we're much more connected," he said, bringing up his program.

A picture of his late, beloved dog Otis popped up on the screen. The 13-year-old yellow Labrador came to work with him every day. Otis had a job in animal control too.

"He helped me catch animals because they'd come running up (to Otis)," Olsen said.

The police staffer shook his head in disbelief that he's been with the local government for 26 years.

"I'm happy here. This place has brought me nothing but joy. I like the culture. It's strange to be the last of the original (employees)," he said.



Truckee blends artwork with the practical revenue stream of paid parking. Photo/Susan Wood

It's all about the history

Imagine if you're Chaun Mortier.

A former police dispatcher, the Truckee historian celebrates the town milestone with zeal, but deep down, the 25 years represents but a sliver of the past behind her beloved community.

"In the last 25 years, the biggest things to change have been the people and the infrastructure. All that happened is a government agency came into effect," Mortier said. "There was a concern through this that the town would lose its character."

She said the pioneering spirit that built the community 155 years ago exemplifies "the heart of Truckee."

Growth makes that prospect still questionable. Still, Mortier and her fellow history buffs – who took the time for a fireside-type chat with *LTN* during the Truckee-Donner

Historical Society open house recently, commended how the town's leaders have managed to ward off damaging forces.

Mortier reflects fondly on the old days.

She remembers when Truckee residents could ride horses through town. When vehicles replaced horses, people would often drive with their windows down to wave at everybody going by.

"Now I don't know anybody," she said.

Despite the new look spotting the landscape, Truckee residents – permanent and part time – opt for the town to be "a historical destination." Mortier holds onto that declaration.

She cautions the town needs "to be careful" in proceeding with growth. Since incorporating, the physical infrastructure is "a good improvement." But some things she believes are "totally ridiculous" like the many roundabouts installed.

Mortier cites the fine line between progress and preservation as reasons for concerns.

"I understand where it's coming from because people want to be a part of it," she said, agreeing that "people can infiltrate" an area.

The town fathers grappled with the issue when lumber milling declined, and they had to keep the economy buzzing.

Even as far back as the 1890s, these visionary pioneers thought about tourism. The notion held on through the last century.

"People liked coming up for the snow. Alex (Cushing) saw it standing on top of the mountain, and he knew what his dream was," Mortier said.

But unlike other development forces, "he lived here," Mortier added of the Squaw chief.



One of Truckee's attributes is that it is walkable.
Photo/Susan Wood

Follow the stars

The stars of the Winter Olympic Games may have come out of Squaw slopes, but the workers of Northstar have ties to the community of Truckee that run deep, despite being part of a Vail, Colo.-based conglomerate.

Maybe Truckee's pioneering family reputation has crossed over into Northstar's family-friendly image.

For Kipp Cooley in lift operations, his family roots come from a name. He was named after the Tahoe Truckee Lumber Company owner's dog, while dad worked there years ago.

"My father loved that dog (Kipp)," he said, while reminiscing in the Northstar Village.

The 39-year-old ski area worker remembered as a teenager how the town reacted when major department stores were knocking on the door of his quaint community.

With the Downtown Merchants Association the driving force of opposition, the town's residents "feared then the rest would come."

While some may argue a ski resort is part of big business, it also brings much-needed dollars into the region. Moreover, those tourists are more inclined to visit a ski town that's charming, Cooley said.

He's an advocate for Truckee to "gently expand."

Tourist families aren't the only ones who feel the richness of the culture. Cooley said the employees at Northstar – which can soar to 1,000 in winter – have become "a very large family." This family of workers frequents the town and loves the outdoors.

"People come here for a reason. They want mountain adventure," he said. Northstar is situated just outside the town boundaries along Highway 267.

Operating under the adage "winter brings them, summer keeps them," Truckee area employees don't necessarily move on beyond Northstar. At least 13 staffers were around during the town's incorporation.

Even when Cooley said his wife longed to return to Los Angeles for a short reprieve, and they did so, the mountain town called them back. Cooley's not budging again.

Amy Kylberg understands this level of commitment.

The 45-year-old commercial leasing agent is responsible for acquisitions in the base area and can't imagine a different life.

This is despite her friends' questioning her judgment moving from Tiburon to Truckee about the time it incorporated. She's worked at Northstar for four years.

"When I moved up here, my friends thought I was insane," she told *Lake Tahoe News*. "There hasn't been one moment I thought the grass is greener."

Now those same friends enjoy visiting.

"I love sharing this place with people," she said.

Kylberg's ties embody more than her own. She has spent many hours in Moody's in downtown Truckee. Her 17-year-old daughter Abigail just "retired" from the hot spot after three years. She started out as a utensil polisher.

"I'm so glad when our kids can appreciate what we have," Kylberg said, while a softness came over her eyes.

And what happens when you stay in a place long enough to develop roots, and your business is about relationships?

"I'm the king of 'I know a guy'," she said of getting resources on cue.

After all, there's no rest for the weary when you manage five homeowner associations and learn early on your destiny rests with your own efforts.

It helps when the people before you have faith. For Kylberg, it's her father. When she told him she's not going to college and wanted to do something outside, he asked: "What are you waiting for?"

This finding a path to one's own destiny may explain how people like Cooley and Kylberg find that Northstar points to a community like Truckee that discovers its own.

Today, Truckee is embarking on a process to update its General

Plan, the blueprint to the town's vision for future growth.

For more information on the 25th anniversary festivities, go **online**.