Olympians playing celeb golf talk about Games in Tahoe-Reno

By Dan Hinxman, Reno Gazette-Journal

STATELINE – The three Winter Olympians playing in this week's American Century Championship celebrity golf tournament at Edgewood Tahoe all say Reno-Tahoe is ready to host the Winter Games again.

"There's no better place," said Dan Jansen, who won his lone Olympic medal, a gold, in the 1,000-meter speedskating at the 1994 Games in Lillehammer, Norway. "I think it would be fantastic to bring it back to the U.S., and this would be a great place."

The U.S. last hosted the Winter Games at Salt Lake City in 2002. The Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition is pursuing a possible bid for the 2022 Winter Games. The International Olympic Committee awarded the 2018 Games to Pyeongchang, South Korea two weeks ago. The 2022 decision will be made in the summer of 2015.

"I think it would be outstanding," said Mike Eruzione, the captain of the 1980 gold medal-winning U.S. hockey team. "This place is absolutely spectacular. It's a great place for people to come and enjoy the Olympic Games and the scenery, so I think it would be awesome. I would really look forward to seeing that."

One of the Olympians believes Reno-Tahoe would be better suited to host the Games than what appears to be its chief U.S. rival, Denver – at least from a venue-proximity basis.

"I'd say (Reno and Denver are) comparable," five-time Olympic

skiing medalist Bode Miller said. “(In Denver) you’d have to have the (ski) racing in Beaver Creek or Vail, and that’s a drag when it’s two, two and a half hours from the main Olympic Village up to where you would have some of the premiere events like skiing. I’d say it’s a little more convenient here. Reno’s only an hour away (from the skiing venues).”

Read the whole story

TY&FS celebrates 40 years

Tahoe Youth & Family Services is saying thank you to the community for 40 years of support with an event in the parking lot at the Red Hut on Ski Run Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.

Free ice cream cones, popcorn, cotton candy and a bounce house will be part of the party on July 21 from 2:30-6:30pm.

Renowned poets gathering in Squaw Valley

The Squaw Valley Community of Writers brings an Extraordinary Evening of Poetry to Squaw Valley on July 21. The night will consist of a poetry reading by the five award-winning staff poets: Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Hass, Brenda Hillman, Cathy Park Hong, Major Jackson and Sharon Olds.

The Squaw Valley Community of Writers has been considered among the country’s most renowned literary conferences, along

with the Sewanee and the Bread Loaf writers conferences. The literary troupe has three genres of workshops every year: one for screenwriters, one for fiction, nonfiction and memoirs, and one for poetry.

This year's poetry workshop in Squaw Valley are July 16-23. The 60 participating poets will write one poem every day in a boot-camp-style regimen while working with staff poets. The Community of Writers' renowned fiction and screenwriting workshops will convene in August.

The July 21 poetry night begins at 8pm at Bar One in Olympic House at Squaw.

The cost is $15 general, $10 students.

For more information about the Squaw Valley Community of Writers and the annual writing conferences, go online.

Book signing in South Tahoe

Scott Lankford, author of "Tahoe Beneath the Surface: The Hidden Stories of America's Largest Mountain Lake" will sign books July 19 from 3-5pm at Explore Tahoe, 4114 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Call (530) 542.4637 for more details.

California pension proposal seeks to hike employee contributions

By Jon Ortiz, Sacramento Bee

From California to Florida, many public employees are paying more for their pensions now than a year ago as strapped state and local governments cast about for savings.

Now a sweeping Republican proposal in the California Senate, among other changes, would hike how much all current and future state and local government workers pay toward their pensions.

A union coalition has blasted the long-shot proposal as a one-size-doesn't-fit-all encroachment on bargaining rights. Many labor groups, including a dozen representing California state workers, already have agreed to higher pension contributions from their members.

Plus, the unions say, pension payments are part of their members' total compensation package. Deals struck that allow low or no employee contributions were in lieu of higher pay, they say.

"Taking this away doesn't take the previous trade-offs into consideration," said Dave Low, head of Californians for Retirement Security, the coalition battling efforts to change public pensions.

Read the whole story

Washoe County allowed to use firefighting chopper on BLM land

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office's RAVEN program has received authorization to fly fire suppression missions on Department of Interior lands.



This letter allows the RAVEN 3 Huey helicopter to drop water on wildland fires on BLM land. The authorization was sought in order to fully take part in the initial attack of wildland fires in the region.

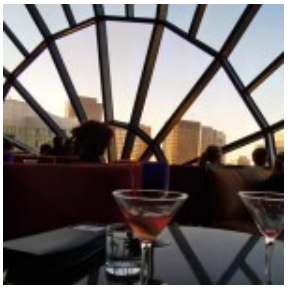
The success of this program is a collaborative effort with local fire partners which include Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District,Sierra Fire Protection District, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, Reno Fire Department and Washoe County Fire Suppression Coordinator.

Lake Tahoe hotel room occupancy below state average

Lake Tahoe, Monterey/Carmel, Napa and other Northern California locations were among the weakest markets for hotel occupancy, average nightly rates and revenue per room in May, according to PKF Consulting.

San Francisco, on the other hand, is outpacing most of

Northern California with an 84.5 occupancy rate in May and 77.8 percent for the first five months.



San Francisco hotels are busy filling rooms and drink glasses. Photo/LTN

Northern California occupancy was 74.1 percent in May this year, while in 2010 it was 71.2 percent. Average room rates in Northern California jumped 10.1 percent in May, to $138.55 from $125.80 a year ago.

May can always be a tricky month for Lake Tahoe because it is in between seasons – too much snow to hike, but the ski resorts aren't open. And this particular year the snow just kept coming, which led to the Tour de California never happening in the basin. Echo Summit construction also didn't help put heads in beds.

While exact numbers are not out for July yet, reports are the Fourth did not appear to be as busy as prior years in Lake Tahoe.

This compares to San Francisco, which was hopping that long weekend. An employee at the Marriott hotel on Fourth Street said their property is always busy, but on a weekend like that it's "crazy."

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Extraordinary Evening of Poetry

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S. Tahoe woman disappears in Washington

By KATU-TV

SKAMANIA COUNTY, Wash. – A woman who traveled to Washington state from South Lake Tahoe to attend the Rainbow Family gathering in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest is now missing.

Marie C. Hanson, 54, was last seen on July 10.

She was here visiting from South Lake Tahoe and joined

thousands of others for the 40th annual gathering of the Rainbow Family of Living Light, a group of peace activists borne out of the ’60s counterculture movement.

As many as 20,000 people have turned out for annual gatherings of the Rainbow Family, which has no formal structure or leaders. An informal council decides each year where the gathering will be held and this year a remote area of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest was selected.

According to the Skamania County Sheriff’s Office, people who were traveling with Hanson lost track of her at the gathering and ended up leaving without her. Since then, her family has been unable to reach her.

Read the whole story

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3 arrests in graffiti incident at S. Tahoe school

Three teenagers were reportedly caught tagging Bijou Community School in South Lake Tahoe on July 13.

Six South Lake Tahoe teens were at the scene that night, with only three being arrested. A fourth arrest is pending, according to officers.

Four of the six were actively engaged in marking the campus with graffiti, officers said.

“The others were interviewed and determined not to be involved in the graffiti, none of which appeared to be gang related,” police Sgt. Brad Williams said in a statement.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report