‘Little Shop of Horrors’ at Truckee High

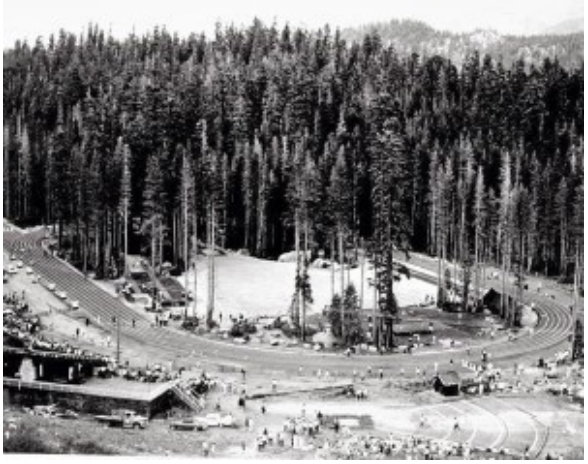
Truckee High School’s Drama Department ends its 2013-14 season with “Little Shop of Horrors,” a grand-scale production that features a flesh eating plant, do-wop and pop music, and a man who gets more than he bargains for.

The musical will have evening performances in the THS theater at 7pm on May 2, 3, 9, 10, 16 and 17. Matinee shows take place at 2pm on May 4 and May 11.

The musical follows the life of Seymour Krelborn, a floral assistant on Skid Row, who purchases an exotic plant with a mysterious need for human flesh. As Seymour seeks the affection of his coworker, Audrey, he also battles for control over his increasingly bloodthirsty plant, Audrey II. The plant quickly grows beyond what Krelborn imagined and turns into a bad mannered, R&B singing, vulgar carnivore.

Advance tickets go on sale at Truckee High School library and the Truckee Community Center on April 8. Tickets for assigned seats are $15 for adults and $10 for students. Cash or check only.

Then and now: Tahoe’s Olympic track



The track at Echo Summit in 1968. Photo/Les Wright



The track at STMS today. Photo/Google Earth

The 1968 Summer Olympics (the XIX Olympiad) were in October in Mexico City, 7,350 feet above sea level.

To prepare our athletes for that high altitude, a training track was built at Echo Summit because that elevation is similar to Mexico City.

According to Wikipedia, "… this was the first Olympics to use a synthetic all-weather surface for track and field events; the 'Tartan' surface was originally developed by 3M for horse racing, but didn't catch on. The tracks at previous Olympics were conventional cinder."

The Tartan track was moved from Echo Summit to South Tahoe

Middle School a year later. The original surface eventually wore out and has been replaced.

– Bill Kingman

Olympic-size party for Sierra's 3 super stars

By Susan Wood

TWIN BRIDGES – It truly takes a village.

The Olympic dream continued into March at Sierra-at-Tahoe on Saturday when thousands of family, friends and dignitaries hit the street and the ski resort to celebrate the roots and return home from Sochi of three local Olympic gold medalists.

Jamie Anderson, Maddie Bowman and Hannah Teter, who all hail from Meyers, started their day at South Tahoe High School and made their way in a grand-scale procession through the South Shore on a 1947 fire truck. Anderson's brother, Luke, from Lake Valley Fire was at the helm.

Ribbons, flags and signs were spotted along Highway 50 – with a huge crowd awaiting the parade at the entrance of Sierra-at-Tahoe. The fire truck cranked its horn, people screamed and the three women on top glowed as bright as a blaze. Even a small rock slide that delayed the procession couldn't curb the enthusiasm or the drive to celebrate the special occasion.

"The guys in the front moved the rocks," Teter told *Lake Tahoe News* when asked about the little challenge – proof again of the community support. She proceeded to scamper down the

stairs to the newly created plaza where hundreds of cheering fans awaited the athletes.

“This is the most amazing moment of my life,” Anderson told the attentive crowd. “This was the day care I had growing up,” she said fondly of Sierra. “I grew up outside appreciating nature and the beautiful place we live in.”

She thanked Sierra and her family for the opportunities she’s had over the years.

Anderson won gold last month in slopestyle with her board on a massive course with one jump named after Russia’s highest mountain, Mount Elbrus. Bowman did the same on skis in the halfpipe. Teter placed fourth this time in snowboard halfpipe, but she took home silver in 2010 at Vancouver and gold at the 2006 Games in Turin, Italy.

Anderson and Bowman carry the distinction of being the first gold medalist in the slopestyle snowboard and freestyle halfpipe ski events, respectively. Bowman turned her first-place run into an emotionally-charged glaring tribute to Canadian skier and friend Sarah Burke, who tragically died in a fall on a training run a few years ago.

Sierra-at-Tahoe General Manager John Rice got some giggles when he mentioned the joy of watching the guys at Sierra try to keep up with Bowman.

Rice winced a little when he considered how high Anderson could fly and “land like a butterfly” on her snowboard. He also mentioned being proud of Teter’s year-after-year accomplishments, including the World Vision charity she uses to help a Kenyan village through proceeds of her line of maple syrup from Vermont, where she grew up.

“The best moment of my life was moving to South Lake Tahoe and riding Sierra,” Teter said of her big move from the East nine years ago. The crowd, which more than adopted her, was hushed

by the sentiment.

“I want to live here forever,” she said.

All three women came across humble and grateful, and the fans held on to each word and each moment.

Through heartfelt speeches, high-fives and hugs all around, much of this day was about the power of place. And proven once again was that the people make the place. South Lake Tahoe and beyond showered them with gifts from the business community, resolutions and special passes from the state of California, city acknowledgements and proclamations from El Dorado County.

“Is this on top of the *cha cha* scale or what?” El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago asked the screaming crowd gathered around the stage. “Sierra-at-Tahoe – it’s unbelievable. There’s got to be something in the water.”

Santiago pointed out how fitting that El Dorado translates to “the golden one” and called the county “the most gold-winning community per capita in the world.” The crowd roared.

South Lake Tahoe Mayor Hal Cole joined the sentiment with admitting he felt he was “watching family members on television” when the women performed their medal-deserving runs.



Jamie Anderson, Maddie Bowman and Hannah Teter celebrate their achievements

March 15 with the South Shore. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“I swelled up with pride,” Cole said, choking back tears.

Also on hand with state resolutions, state Sen. Ted Gaines saying he was “so impressed with what the athletes had done and what John (Rice) had done.”

Lake Tahoe Unified School District board member Sue Novasel attributes part of the Sierra athletes’ success to Rice’s “straight A season pass program” in which 300 students have benefited. Bowman, in particular, held a grade point average of 4.3 when she graduated. Anderson has returned the philanthropy by sponsoring economically-challenged students in full gear and time on the slopes.

Bob Roberts, California Ski Industry Association executive director, told the attentive audience he was blown away by the support in Tahoe and compared it to the time he attended Squaw Valley’s 1960 Olympics.

“It had nowhere near the ability to turn out the community love like this one. This is truly amazing,” Roberts said before passing out California gold passes with no black-out dates and transferable rights. Bowman’s buddies standing feet away yelled for Bowman to pass it to them.

Also reflecting on the past, Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce Executive Director B Gorman noted the last time she was on stage with an Olympian was in 1968 with skier Nancy Greene and felt nostalgic about how the experience inspired her.

“Keep it up kids. It’s a great way to spend your life,” she said, delivering a special message to the many children in the audience who may be the next set of budding Tahoe Olympians.

Former Sierra-at-Tahoe staffer Megan Waskiewicz felt nostalgic

too. She left the ski resort in 2001, but made sure she brought her three children with husband Christian to witness the spectacle.

“It’s really making Sierra-at-Tahoe stand up and stand out,” she said, adding the importance of Anderson’s profile that aired on NBC around the globe during the Olympics. The television clip showed the beauty of the lake and Anderson on a rail with the Sierra logo prominent.

Chloe Waskiewicz made it clear she would like to be an Olympian, too.

The same goes for 11-year-old Annie McCully. Her brother, Levi, 5, welcomed the Olympians with a sign of support almost larger than he is tall.

With its longtime reputation of community activism and cultivating spirit, Sierra-at-Tahoe showed how it successfully nurtured these athletes who at a young age identified it as their home resort.

“I think I teared up when I saw her first (Olympic) run,” Anderson’s longtime coach Brady Gunsch said after the ceremony. He coached her for 12 years from age 5 and witnessed her work ethic.

“She’s worked for everything she’s got,” he said.

Longtime Sierra ski instructor Donna Vano teared up as well when she thought about the years she taught Teter and drove Anderson to her events.

Rice, who received numerous accolades, admitted to having goose bumps, chills and tears watching the athletes he’s known over the years take to the world stage last month. When he went out to dinner the other night, many locals shared how they either changed diapers, taught or helped the girls stay out of trouble.

That must have been good news to Anderson’s dad, Joe.

“I pretty much knew all along,” he said of his daughter’s spiritual grounding and fighting spirit.

It takes a lot of focus and maturity to work hard and win in that one moment of time, Rice pointed out.

“A true champion has to be the best when the best is called for,” Rice quoted his mentor. “This was not an accident. These women have the secret sauce.”

He shared specific messages to all three as Olympians, philanthropists, friends and people.

What comes around, goes around.

Rice brought the first celebrated Sierra Olympian Travis Cabral to the stage early on. Cabral proceeded to mention how proud he is of the three women, who exude modesty and love of community. The hometown boy is now a city police officer serving the community. The cycle of goodness continues.

ngg_shortcode_0_placeholder (Click on photos to enlarge.)

Column: GOP ready to retake California

By Bob Huff

We’ve seen the election results. We have read the polls, too. It’s no secret that Republicans are not doing well in California. Statewide, our party registration is down. There’s not one statewide Republican elected official in California.

There’s no argument that we Republicans have our work cut out for us. It is our job to reach out to all Californians. We start this work by renewing our faith that Californians want a government that works for all.

While the other party is coasting along on its cushion of public support, it’s crystal clear that we Republicans don’t have that luxury. If our party is going to survive in California, it is our responsibility to reach out and build trust with the people. And building that trust depends on connecting with voters who have come to distrust who Republicans are, though not necessarily what we stand for.

Talk is one thing, but actions speak louder than words. This year, Republican lawmakers are working to re-build trust with Californians. We’re doing this through a series of legislative efforts and policy initiatives that demonstrate we’re on the side of everyday Californians. We’re out to make it clear that Republicans believe in government. And just as important, while we’re at work in Sacramento,we’re going to do everything we can to ensure that our state government actually does what it’s supposed to do, and that is serve the people of California.

We see some opportunities to do that because frankly, with the other party in charge, the people are not doing so well. Jobs remain scarce while the cost of living keeps going up. We pay more for gas, but our streets are full of potholes. The other party, the party that controls how government works in California, is taking its cushion of public support for granted. That explains why the other party has made it clear they are focused on what works best for government. In case after case, the other party is taking care of government and its workers, and is placing the needs of the people on the back burner.

It’s no secret why this is the case. The other party enjoys the solid support of the groups and associations that

represent government workers. That’s nice if you work for government, and it pays off for the other party on Election Day, but it leaves the rest of us out in the cold. However, that cozy connection also ties the hand of the other party. They are more than loyal to the government worker groups because they have become dependent on the government worker funding stream. It’s that misplaced loyalty that has forced the other party to choose between serving the public, or serving the public workers. Their choice is crystal clear.

Look at the evidence piling up. Whether it’s protecting bad teachers who are hurting our kids or public transit workers who throw up strike lines in order to line their pockets at the public’s expense,the other party must be held accountable for siding with the public workers over the public. This is what Republicans are doing in 2014. And by doing so,Republican lawmakers are getting the chance to show that we are worthy of your trust and support. We get to show why we count, too. Look at these cases where the other party has turned its back on the people, and what Republicans are doing about it.

Schools and colleges – Instead of passing the next round of tuition increases at our public colleges, Republicans are working to take the waste and fraud out of college administration. For instance, was it really necessary to hire the former U.S. Director of Homeland Security to run the University of California, and then pay her three times what she was getting at her last job?

The other party also fights Republican efforts to put students first. Our kids deserve safe schools and the best possible teacher in every classroom, but when our kids are being sexually molested in public classrooms and still we can’t pass a solid bill to protect them, it’s clear the other party is no longer on the side of kids and parents.

Small efforts like opening up teacher classroom assignments based on skills and need instead of time on the job, or making

sure kids can attend any school they can get to, is what Republicans stand for and we're fighting to make those changes the reality.

Public transit – The other party has made it clear that, more and more, everyday Californians will have to rely on public transit as a way of life. What they've failed to do is make sure that public transit is reliable. That's not the case today, as was evident during last year's two BART strikes. California Republicans have offered legislation to ban public transit strikes throughout the state. The other party killed my bill to do that at its first committee hearing, but my Republican colleagues in the Assembly are giving it another try this year. We must make sure that trains and buses show up as reliably as the six-figure salaries BART station agents get to take home.

Health care – We have to make sure that as California's version of Obamacare, Covered California, rolls out in the coming months that the new health care system works as well as it can. People's lives and families have been put at risk. As the legislature and governor roll out their new system, Republicans will stand for making sure that money spent by Covered California goes to patient care first and bureaucrats last. Health care reform is not an excuse for a government hiring spree. If we don't take care now, in a few years we'll find ourselves saddled with a health care system that passes out better benefits to the people shuffling papers behind the counter than the people walking in the door for treatment.

Water – While the other party is busy these days running around declaring droughts, Republicans have been working for years to increase California's water supply. Meanwhile, the other party has been at work deciding how much water should go to fish and how much human beings should get. This year,Republicans will keep trying to get the other party to finally let the people vote on a water bond they agreed to in 2009 but have kept off the ballot ever since. Even now, in a

drought, the leaders of the other party won't commit to a water plan that increases the supply of fresh, clean water for all. So what's the point of spending billions of dollars for a water bond that doesn't guarantee any new water?

Jobs – Except for a handful of government positions, the other party continues to fail miserably at creating new jobs. California's unemployment rate remains stubbornly high, yet the fastest growing industry in California is government. In fact, 25 years ago California had some two million manufacturing jobs, and just 800,000 people working for government. Today, those numbers are just the opposite. Instead of seeing cargo ships at the Port of Oakland heading out to sea full of goods made here, we're seeing ships coming in to port loaded with goods from overseas. Good, solid paying jobs are what lead families to pride and prosperity. California families deserves better.

As we press these cases to the public, Republicans hope to gain more influence in Sacramento, and to be trusted by more Californians to represent their interests in 2014 and beyond. And it's just as clear that the other party has no interest in offering up the real reforms that Californians want and deserve.

California deserves a government that works for everyone. And that's why there's room, and relevance, for Republicans in California in 2014 and beyond.

Bob Huff is a member of the California Senate. The Republican is from Diamond Bar.

Lake Tahoe job fairs

Nearly three dozen employers will be at Harrah’s Convention Center in Stateline on March 18 looking for workers.

They represent more than 2,000 positions available for full- or part-time work in the area, according to organizers.

The event is from 4-7pm.

There will another job fair March 25 from 4-7pm at Squaw Valley Olympic Inn Conference Center.

Sierra-at-Tahoe’s golden girls

2014 Olympians Maddie Bowman, Jamie Anderson and Hannah Teter – all from Meyers, all ride for Sierra-at-Tahoe – are welcomed home March 15 with a parade and celebration at the ski resort.

Learn how to quit smoking

Freedom From Smoking is a smoking cessation program from American Lung Association. It helps people develop a plan of

action that leads to quitting day.

There will be eight sessions starting April 3 from 7:30-930pm at Barton University, 1111 Emerald Bay Road, Classroom 101, South Lake Tahoe. Cost is $75.

To register, call Gina Morros at 530.543.5882.

Law enforcement ready for St. Paddy's day

As Californians plan to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Traffic Safety, and California Highway Patrol encourage motorists to plan ahead and designate a sober driver, or arrange for a safe and sober ride home.

The St. Patrick's Day California Avoid DUI Task Force Enforcement Campaign is March 16-17. As part of the campaign, law enforcement throughout the state will be cracking down on anyone caught impaired behind the wheel.

Last year on St. Patrick's Day, the CHP made more than 430 arrests statewide for DUI, which is a 28 percent increase from 2012. NHTSA reports that more than 269 people have been killed nationwide in collisions involving drunk drivers during the St. Patrick's Day holiday from 2007 to 2011.

BPA-free plastic doesn’t mean it’s safe

By Mariah Blake, Mother Jones

Each night at dinnertime, a familiar ritual played out in Michael Green’s home: He’d slide a stainless steel sippy cup across the table to his 2-year-old daughter, Juliette, and she’d howl for the pink plastic one. Often, Green gave in. But he had a nagging feeling. As an environmental-health advocate, he had fought to rid sippy cups and baby bottles of the common plastic additive bisphenol A (BPA), which mimics the hormone estrogen and has been linked to a long list of serious health problems. Juliette’s sippy cup was made from a new generation of BPA-free plastics, but Green, who runs the Oakland-based Center for Environmental Health, had come across research suggesting some of these contained synthetic estrogens, too.

He pondered these findings as the center prepared for its anniversary celebration in October 2011. That evening, Green, a slight man with scruffy blond hair and pale-blue eyes, took the stage and set Juliette’s sippy cups on the podium. He recounted their nightly standoffs.

“When she wins … every time I worry about what are the health impacts of the chemicals leaching out of that sippy cup,” he said, before listing some of the problems linked to those chemicals—cancer, diabetes, obesity. To help solve the riddle, he said, his organization planned to test BPA-free sippy cups for estrogenlike chemicals.

The center shipped Juliette’s plastic cup, along with 17 others purchased from Target, Walmart, and Babies R Us, to CertiChem, a lab in Austin, Texas. More than a quarter — including Juliette’s — came back positive for estrogenic activity. These results mirrored the lab’s findings in its

broader National Institutes of Health-funded research on BPA-free plastics.

Read the whole story

AAA in Carson hosting spring fling

AAA’s Carson City branch, which serves the South Shore of Lake Tahoe, is hosting a spring fling at its office on March 20 – the first day of spring.

Refreshments will be served, while games and prizes will be offered throughout the day.

Office hours are 8:30am-5:30pm. The office is at 2901 South Carson St., Carson City.

Members and non-members are invited.

Carson City’s new branch manager, Haldon Johnson, will be available for questions, as will the staff

Call 775.888.6400 for more information.