Sierra Foothills wineries to pour at Blackhawk event

California’s vast Sierra Foothills American Viticultural Area, spanning 2.6 million acres along the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada, encompasses an array of elevations, microclimates and soil types ideal for grape growing.

On Sept. 19 from 3-6pm at the Blackhawk Country Club in Danville, wine lovers can experience the richness and diversity of this legendary, high-elevation wine region at a tasting called “Moving Mountains: the Sierra Foothills Wine Experience.”

More than 40 wineries from Calaveras, Amador and El Dorado counties will pour their finest wines – from great-old vine Zinfandels to varietals and blends crafted from classic French, Italian and Spanish varieties – paired with Mediterranean-style finger foods and live flamenco guitar music.

One of many harvest-season events in September as part of California Wine Month, the “Moving Mountains” tasting benefits the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano counties, which will receive 100 percent of the proceeds from an on-site silent auction.

The “Moving Mountains” tasting is the inaugural event of the newly formed Sierra Foothills Wine Alliance, comprised of the winery associations of Amador, Calaveras and El Dorado counties, which represent the vast majority of Sierra Foothills wineries. It provides a rare opportunity for wine lovers, in one place and on one day, to explore the Sierra Foothills AVA, which was formally established in 1987, but dates to the early days of the Gold Rush, when grapevines were first introduced by European immigrant fortune-seekers.

Tickets for the “Moving Mountains” tasting are $35 in advance at or $50 at the door. More information is available here.

South Shore redevelopment – yesterday, today, tomorrow

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – The faces of redevelopment – past, present and yet to come – brought some clarity to an issue that tends to be as appealing as drinking vinegar.

All three speakers on Sept. 8 spoke of the virtues of redevelopment and how this tool has, is and will help the South Shore.

Redevelopment past

Jaye Von Klug, South Lake Tahoe’s former redevelopment manager, came up from Southern California to dispense a bit of history about the subject to Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe at Harveys. Nancy Kerry, who works in the department now, spoke of what is going on today. Patrick Rhamey, director of real estate development for Edgewood Companies, talked about his company’s desires to remake the Stateline area.

Von Klug said it’s normal for a project to take 10 years to go from an idea to the doors opening. At the rate Edgewood’s project is moving (plans first went to TRPA in June 2008), a decade-long ordeal might be playing out.

Von Klug spoke mostly of the Park Avenue project, aka Heavenly Village. She touched on the five developers working under one

contract, how the gondola sufficed as the mitigating transportation component for the whole project.

She talked about how when she was in charge, parent companies of the developers were bonded so if something happened, no one could hide behind a limited liability corporation. Von Klug didn’t mention how just the opposite occurred with the bankrupt convention center. She left in 2002, before the papers for that project were signed.

Although Von Klug praised the City Councils at the time for their vision and willingness to go into debt $100 million for Heavenly Village, she failed to mention how the parking garage has never made a penny and drains more than $50,000 a year from city coffers, and that on her watch the Redevelopment Agency took $7.2 million from the general fund to pay for the Heavenly Village project. The general fund pays for roads, bike trails, infrastructure, those sorts of things the city is lacking.

Redevelopment – present



Nancy Kerry talks about redevelopment on Sept. 8. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“Redevelopment can be controversial. We argue about facts based on feelings,” Kerry said.

She said redevelopment in a city is analogous to individuals remodeling their homes.

Kerry pointed out the public needs to be involved in the process to ensure its voice is heard.

“People forget the government is themselves,” Kerry said.

The Redevelopment Agency has been able to secure grants for programs like the ongoing lead paint removal from private residences and the small business coaching program – proving that it’s not just about building something.

But the state keeps taking money away from redevelopment agencies. South Lake Tahoe was stripped of $1.7 million this fiscal year and could lose another $400,000 if the state has its way.

Though it’s been written many times, Kerry reminded the group that even though the convention center project is stalled, the property is worth more now than when buildings were on it. This means the city is reaping more in property tax with concrete and rebar than when operating businesses were there a few years ago.

Redevelopment – future

Edgewood Companies owns 500 acres on the South Shore, with another 4,500 in the Carson Valley.

“The 500 acres here is 90 percent of what the company is about,” Rhamey said.

With Columbia Sussex securing an extension on the Horizon casino lease until March 2014, the focus of the Park family is on developing the 230-room Edgewood Lodge on the ninth hole of Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course.

Rhamey said what the Horizon is likely to become is a center focusing on recreation first and entertainment second. He said

the outdoor concert series is working in the summer at Harveys, so maybe something indoors could be profitable if the Horizon were overhauled.

“It’s a real brain teaser what economically might work,” he said of the Horizon property. “I would love to tear the whole thing down.”

For now, the future Edgewood Lodge is slated to run as a hotel, though some time-shares may be thrown in the mix. The intentions are to not be able to close off rooms to make it into bigger or smaller units like what can be done with some of the Marriott rooms across the street.

“We will raise the bar for lodging on the South Shore and improve the golf course,” Rhamey said. “If you look at food and beverage, hotel occupancy on the South Shore, those numbers decreased by 40 percent in the past four to five years. Edgewood’s revenues are not down at all.”

What Rhamey calls “the world’s most scenic parking lot” will be moved from the shoreline. The project calls for part of the beach to be public.

A sticking point may be acquiring the necessary tourist accommodation units to make the hotel a reality. Edgewood doesn’t want to tap into the supply at the Horizon even though one wing is closed much of the time. Without a definitive plan for that property, Edgewood isn’t ready to part with those units.

TAUs, as they are called, are limited per the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. This makes them a commodity that can be sold and traded. Edgewood wants South Lake Tahoe to give up TAUs dilapidated hotels are using. When Dave Jinkens was city manager he was opposed to such horse-trading. With Tony O’Rourke at the helm and three new council members coming on board in December, it could be whole new ballgame.

The city is in a position to bargain – maybe ask for a convention center to be built. Talks are going on now about the Edgewood-South Tahoe TAU situation.

Rhamey, too, said it's important for the public to get involved – especially in the TRPA's Regional Plan. He never mentioned the League to Save Lake Tahoe, but alluded to the group as being obstructionists to redevelopment and the Regional Plan.

"I think we need to look at things as a region, then everything will work out in the end," Rhamey said.

Wildlife Commission considering bear hunting in Nevada

Nevada Wildlife commissioners will review public input about reintroducing black bear hunting at the Sept. 24-25 board meeting in Las Vegas and then again during Dec. 3-4 board meeting in Reno.

Check the Wildlife Commission meeting times at the Nevada Department of Wildlife website under the "commissions and boards" tab.

‘Women at Ground Zero’ authors to speak

Susan Hagen and Mary Carouba will speak Sept. 15 in Stateline about their experiences in New York City in the weeks following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

The authors of “Women at Ground Zero: Stories of Courage and Compassion” are guests of Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe.

The lunch is at Harveys on the convention floor from 11:30am-1:30pm. Cost is $15. Reservations must be made by Sept. 10 by calling (530) 573.2433.

Books will be signed before and after the talk.

South Tahoe man arrested on attempted murder charge

Updated Sept. 8 3:40pm: On Sept. 8 the South Lake Tahoe Police Department arrested Alejandro Martinez, 28, of South Lake Tahoe on charges of attempted murder.

A 26-year-old South Lake Tahoe man was shot Friday night by someone he knows. However, the shooter remains at-large.

The bullet grazed the victim’s head. He was treated and released from Barton Memorial Hospital.

The incident occurred in Tahoe Verde mobile home park about 8pm. The altercation was outdoors, though the victim was

inside a Julie Lane home when authorities arrived.

Police are not releasing the names of either the victim or suspect. They said the suspect is from South Lake Tahoe and male. Police said there is nothing to confirm the shooting was gang related.

Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Jeff Roberson at (530) 542.6134.

– Compiled by Kathryn Reed

Public speaking workshop

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Sierra Human Resources Association are offering "The Art of Public Speaking: Crafting and Delivering a Winning Presentation" Sept. 14 from 8am-12:30pm at The Chateau at Incline Village, 955 Fairway Blvd.

The workshop teaches attendees how to prepare a presentation, while preparing themselves, and handle the audience in a low-pressure, encouraging and comfortable group setting. There will also be take away techniques that attendees can implement immediately to improve the structure of their next presentation.

Laura Moriarty of Tahoe Training Partners, a seasoned human resources executive and nationally known corporate trainer and frequent present of SHRA workshops, will present at the Art of Public Speaking workshop.

Registration is $69 for North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and SHRA members and $79 for non-members. Seating is limited.

To register and for more information about the workshop, call Moriarty at (530) 573.0224 or North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce Manger Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764. Attendees can also register online.

Beer tasting dinner at Hyatt Lake Tahoe

Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe presents the inaugural Beer Dinner at the Cutthroat's Saloon on Oct. 1.

There will be a five-course menu created by Chefs Chris Moore and Justin Kaufman paired with select beers from Samuel Adams.

The event begins at 6pm with a reception featuring Sam Adams Light to welcome guests to the Western-inspired bar.

Tickets are $59 per person. Reservations may be made by contacting David Hamer at (775) 886.6730 or david.hamer@hyatt.com.

Toccata 9/11 Memorial concert

Toccata, the Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, presents its annual 9/11 Memorial concert on Sept. 13 at 7:30pm at St. Theresa Catholic Church.

The performance will feature Mozart's Requiem and the Violin Concerto by Samuel Barber.

Once again, the violinist will be world renowned virtuoso, Elizabeth Pitcairn, playing the Red Mendelssohn Stradivarius. This instrument, which has a wonderfully rich and beautiful tone, was featured in the film “The Red Violin”.

The tickets for the concert are $40 preferred/$25 adult/$20 senior/$10 students 25 and under.

Come and treat yourself to a special evening for our community.

St. Theresa Golf Tournament

St. Theresa School is having its 17th annual Golf Tournament on Sept. 23 at 1:30pm at the Lake Tahoe Golf Course.

Cost is $125 a player which includes range balls, cart, 18 holes and dinner.

Dinner only is $35. There will also be a raffle. Tickets are available for purchase at St. Theresa school or on the day of the tournament. All proceeds benefit the school, a nonprofit organization. You may register at St. Theresa school, 1181 Lyons Ave., South Lake Tahoe or visit the website.

Tahoe writers celebrate with

night of words

Tahoe Writers Works is hosting the second annual Celebration of Writers Around the Lake on Sept. 17.



It’s an evening of lit at the lake with 12 writers who call Tahoe home or are inspired by Tahoe. The event is at Valhalla in the Grand Hall at 7pm. The $10 admission includes a wine reception followed by a reading and book signing. Books will be available for purchase.

Featured writers include:

• Jeremy Evans, nonfiction, “In Search of Powder: A Story of America’s Disappearing Ski Bum”

• Scott Lankford, nonfiction, “Tahoe Beneath the Surface”

• Ann Ronald, fiction, “Friendly Fallout 1953”

• Janet Smith, poet, “All of a Sudden Nothing Happened”

• Michael J. Makley, nonfiction, “Cave Rock: Climbers, Courts, and a Washoe Indian Sacred Place”

• Suzanne Roberts, poet, “Shameless, Nothing to You”

• Gailmarie Pahmeier, poet, “New Poets of the American West”

• Karen Terrey, “Tangled Roots Writing”

• Jeanine Stevens, poet, “Caught in the Clouds”

• June Saraceno, poet, “Altars of Ordinary Light”

• Krista Benjamin, poet, “New Poets of the American West”

• Scott Lukas, nonfiction, “Fear, Cultural Anxiety, and Transformation: Horror, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Films Remade”

Tahoe Writers Works, formerly the Lake Tahoe Writing Club, is a nonprofit organization based in South Lake Tahoe. Each year, the group organizes events to create a stronger literary and arts community in Lake Tahoe, including Bare Bones Open Mic, Murder Mystery Theater, and the Captain Thunder Old Time Radio Play at Valhalla. The group also publishes the literary journal “EDGE”. For more information, click here.

For general information about the group, contact founder and director Andrea Wexelblatt at (530) 416-.2666, or avantgardencollegestore@yahoo.com.