Miller’s lifetime achievement award to cap 2-day film festival

By Kathryn Reed

Warren Miller, at 81, was clearly the oldest person at the party. Put him on skis and age would not be a factor.

Miller is on the South Shore this weekend for the X-Dance Action Sports Film Festival, which features the top international films on wakeboarding, surfing, mountain biking, skateboarding, snowboarding and skiing. The man who is credited as the founder of action sports movies will receive a lifetime achievement award Saturday at MontBleu in Stateline.



Filmmaker Warren Miller will receive a lifetime achievement award in Tahoe on Saturday. Photo/Kathryn Reed

On Thursday night Miller was poolside at 968 Park Hotel mingling with professional athletes, media and invited guests.

It’s that voice of his that still resonates after all of these years. It’s not much different in person than it is on film.

What is different now is that the man who started extreme ski films, and one could easily argue the founder of any type of extreme athletic movie, isn’t really in the business. Time Warner bought his company five years ago.

He’s in town to inspire the young filmmakers following in his footsteps more than six decades after he started his career.

Brain Wimmer, director and founder of the film festival, was on hand as well. He told stories of meeting locals and talking about what he wanted to do. They all said Todd Offenbacher already does that with the Tahoe Adventure Film Festival. Offenbacher, who has recently moved back to the South Shore from the North Shore, was at Thursday’s gig in complete support of this festival.

Though not a founder of the festival, Solomon Aflalo is now part owner of it. He is also the principle owner of 968 Park Hotel.

“I’m interested in action sports and to promote young people,” Aflalo said.

His main job in Agoura Hills is insurance. He insures many of the extreme athletes.

Miller and many of the athletes on the big screen this weekend are staying at 968 Park.

X-Dance Film Festival started in 2001 and coincides with the Sundance Film Festival each year. The winners are premiering in Tahoe.

Event Schedule:

July 11:

Doors open at 4pm, with films starting at 5pm. The after party is inside Harrah's Lake Tahoe Vex Nightclub. The following films will be shown at MontBleu Theatre:

• "Signatures" –Winner of Emerging Filmmaker and Best Cinematography artful and mesmerizing film pays homage to the beauty of winter and riding in Hokkaido, Japan. This Zen journey inspires reflection and thought with its stunning images and smart narrative.

• "Fiberglass and Megapixels" – Winner of Best Editing a smart and engaging film follows the North Shore's winter surfing scene and the photographers and cinematographers who compete for the perfect shot.

• "Zen and Zero" – Winner of Best Director and Best Story is a philosophical and comedic film that tracts five landlocked Austrians as they journey on a surf trip from L.A. to Costa Rica while and investigating the myth of the surfer dude.

• "BMX Bandits" – Winner of Best Short Film brings to life an animated music video following a boy and his BMX bike.

• "Skating Through The Ashes" – Winner of Best Story, a gritty documentary tells the tale of a group of hardcore pool skaters in the Berkeley Hills after the infamous 1991 fires.

• "Parks Bonifay Documentary" – Winner of Best Biography, an in-depth compelling documentary spotlights wakeboard master, Parks Bonifay, who set his first world record waterskiing at age six months and stands today was the most decorated progressive wakeboarder.

June 12:

Doors open at 4:30pm, with films starting at 5:30pm. Live music from Shwayze begins at 9pm and keeps the night rocking at Opal Ultra Lounge at MontBleu. The after party continues at Blu Nightclub with Pop Fiction. The following films will be

shown at MontBleu Theatre:

• “The Drifter” – Winner of Best Soundtrack, Best Director and star Rob Machado took Athlete of the Year, this brilliant film by Taylor Steele follows surfer Rob Machado to the far reaches of Indonesia on a soul-searching surf odyssey.

• “Second Nature” – Winner of Best Short Film, this highly entertaining and uber creative film that follows Noah Sakamoto and Patrick Rizzo and J.M Duran as they fly down the mountain roads of the High Sierra on skateboards at crazy speeds in blue suits.

• “Mount St. Elias” – Winner of Best Film and Best Adventure Film, tells the story of ski alpinist Axel Naglich’s attempt to climb and then complete the longest ski descent ever from the peak of Alaska’s Mount St. Elias to sea level. The gripping story, tension-filled journey and gorgeous cinematography, leaves audiences spellbound.

Individual screenings are $8 per film. Friday all-day pass includes wristbands to the nightclub is $25. Saturday all-day pass $35 includes Shwayze concert is $35. All Access two-night ticket includes all screenings, Vex Nightclub After Party on Friday, and Shwayze Concert and Opal Ultra Lounge After Party on Saturday is $51.

For more information and tickets click here.

Nealon jokes about ‘Haney Project’ and celebrity golf

By Dan Hinxman, Reno Gazette-Journal

No offense to Charles Barkley or Ray Romano, but if Kevin Nealon had been invited to be on “The Hank Haney Project,” he just might be playing golf for big dollars now.

“Why not give (it) to somebody like me, somebody who can really improve, somebody with hand-eye coordination, somebody who has talent,” the former “Saturday Night Live” funnyman and current star of Showtime’s “Weeds” said Tuesday. “I could be a good golfer if I had the time and someone was teaching me. … Give me Haney. They’re wasting it on some people.”



Kevin Nealon

OK, there was plenty of offense intended – in that good-natured, comedian style.

Read the whole story

Fallen Leaf worried about invasive species from Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

FALLEN LEAF LAKE – Property owners at Fallen Leaf Lake are doing everything they can to keep their body of water more pristine than Lake Tahoe.

With aquatic invasive species already in the larger alpine

lake, the smaller one is hoping to not have the same fate befall it.



Fallen Leaf is working hard to keep aquatic invasive species out. Photo/Kathryn Reed

A real threat is a boat from Tahoe transporting an invasive specie to Fallen Leaf. The smaller lake has zero invasive species.

In a relatively short period of time the Fallen Leaf Lake Protection Association (FLLPA) was able to raise $15,000. This allows the Tahoe Resource Conservation District to provide 40 hours of boat inspection service and education to the public beyond what was already taking place.

The purpose of the nonprofit FLLPA is to work behind the scenes to achieve specific and targeted results. Besides talking aquatic species with homeowners at the May meeting, FLLPA leader John Kleppe mentioned keeping a careful eye on the snowmelt from Echo Peak because it can have a dramatic impact on the water level at Fallen Leaf Lake.

Another thing the FLLPA did was raise $15,000 for the log boom in front of the dam that was installed in June 2007. This group was also active when MTBE was polluting Tahoe waterways.

Kleppe has been attending aquatic invasive species working group meetings for the Lake Tahoe Basin. Part of the organization is a subgroup devoted non-motorized watercraft.

He told the Fallen Leaf Lake Community Services District board last month that a sticker program for this lake on the edge of Desolation Wilderness could be created in the future for people removing their boats from there but not going elsewhere.

The latest $15,000 will be spent mostly on targeting non-motorized watercraft and education. Aaron Fox will work Thursday-Monday; to be on-site during the busiest times.

“My job it patrolling, informing, inspecting and educating,” Fox said.

Lily Lake is part of his jurisdiction because it drains into Fallen Leaf via Glen Alpine Creek. He will also be monitoring Camp Concord, Stanford Sierra Camp and the other entry points for kayaks and canoes.

The U.S. Forest Service campground checks all rooftop boats that come into its jurisdiction.

“Clean, drain, dry” is the mantra of officials tasked with keeping aquatic invasives out of Tahoe and Fallen Leaf.

So far no invasive species have been found on a non-motorized watercraft. The same cannot be said of motorized. This is the third season boats entering Tahoe waterways have been inspected.

The reason for it is because species like quagga and zebra mussels can wipe out the usability of a lake, wreak havoc on water in-take infrastructure, do extreme damage to boats and severely impact a region’s economy. Neither of those mussels has been found in Tahoe.

However, Tahoe does have Asian clams that the Tahoe Regional

Planning Agency and others are trying to eradicate this summer. The Eurasian milfoil plant is another bother in the big lake.



New Zealand mudsnails. Photo/Provided

A New Zealand mudsnail was found on a boat at the Meyers checkpoint in May on its way to a launch ramp.

“They cause a lot of destruction in river and creek systems. They take out the bottom food chain like quagga and zebras do,” said Nicole Cartwright, watercraft inspection program coordinator for the TRCD

Fishermen through felt-soled boots can even transport the mudsnails.

Earlier in the season a boat coming from the San Francisco Bay had to be quarantined because a mussel similar to the quagga and zebra, but a salt-water species, was found. That boat had to be quarantined – meaning it’s not going anywhere for seven to 30 days while either the California Department of Fish & Game or Nevada Division of Wildlife give it clearance to move on.

New this year is four inspection stations away from the marinas. They are at the gateways into the basin – Meyers, Spooner Summit, Northstar and Alpine Meadows.



The decontamination rig at Spooner Summit. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“As far as saving people time at the ramp, it’s a huge help in reducing that line,” Cartwright said. “The outlying stations are working great. We had a lot of traffic with the first big summer weekend last weekend. The idea is to capture every vessel before it’s in the basin.”

If a boat gets by, inspections are being done at the marinas. Decontamination is off-site.

For the most part people understand the need for the inspections. In the first year about half of the boaters had heard about the program before reaching their destination. That percentage grew to 75 last year.

Cartwright said her agency was able reach about 14,000 boaters in 2009. Mailers, advertising and working with marinas are ways the TRCD is spreading the word.

If a boat at one of the four stations needs to be decontaminated that can take place there for an engine or bilge flush. A full decon has to be scheduled.

What’s different at Fallen Leaf is all motorized boats are decontaminated at the marina.

A homeowner at Fallen Leaf has donated a skiff for TRCD's Fox to use when he is working. This allows him to get from Point A to Point B faster.

Education material is at the store and other places around the lake. Fox has pamphlets on him that he hands out.

Cartwright anticipates boat inspections and decontamination stations are something boaters at Tahoe and Fallen Leaf will face for the indefinite future.

For more information about boat inspections, click here.

Mudsnail latest nonnative species to invade waterways

By Stephanie Tavares, Las Vegas Sun

Move over quagga and zebra mussels, a new invasive mollusk is making waves in Nevada.

Sport fishermen and state wildlife officials are worried about New Zealand mudsnails after a colony of the tiny critters was found at a boat inspection area at Lake Tahoe last week.

Although they haven't gotten the attention that quagga and zebra mussels have, mudsnails are in Lake Mead and Lake Mohave. They're in Echo Bay and Boulder Basin and at Willow Beach.

The reason there hasn't been much noise about them is they aren't capable of the kind of damage that quaggas are. Unlike the quaggas, mudsnails don't attach themselves to infrastructure such as hydropower generators and water

pipelines.

Read the whole story

Hikers warned of rushing creeks in mountains

Publisher's note: ***Creeks, rivers and streams throughout the Sierra are running high and fast, posing a danger to anyone trying to navigate them by foot or boat because of the current and temperature. Reno officials rescued eight people in one hour on Tuesday from the Truckee River.***

By Csthy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The El Dorado Irrigation District urges people visiting Caples Creek or the Silver Fork of the American River during the next several weeks to use caution due to unusually high stream flows.

District officials report that stream flows and water levels will be noticeably higher than usual, likely making trail crossings hazardous and unusable.

Read the whole story

Students get a lesson in law

enforcement

On June 10, kindergarten students from the Lake Tahoe Environmental Science Magnet School in Meyers took a field trip to the California Highway Patrol office not far from their school.



Learning about law enforcement. Photo/Provided

Democrat lands on board of conservative Placer County

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

Conservative Placer County is doing a fair amount of head-scratching after Tuesday's vote. How did Democrat Jack Duran oust a Republican and claim a seat on the Board of Supervisors?

While Duran's backers point to his track record as trustee of the Roseville Joint Union High School District, Republican analysts say F.C. "Rocky" Rockholm got pulled under by the

anti- incumbent riptide sweeping across the county.

“The only thing worse than being an incumbent is being an incumbent with a whiff of scandal,” said Jeff Flint, a Republican political consultant who lives in Lincoln.

Read the whole story

LTCC secures loan to make sure money doesn’t run out

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Community College is taking measures to ensure it can pay its bills even if Sacramento doesn’t.

The board agreed Tuesday to borrow about $1.7 million from El Dorado County Office of Education – just in case.



Sue Niehoff

Sue Niehoff, vice president of Business Services, told the board at Tuesday’s meeting that if the state does not have a budget adopted by Oct. 1, the college would be in trouble. With it being an election year, there are rumblings from Sacramento that a budget may not be passed by then.

A midyear TRAN (tax revenue anticipation note) might need to be issued as another stopgap measure. A TRAN is a short-term resolution and comes with strings.

By going through the county and not issuing a TRAN now, the college is saving between $70,000 and $90,000.

The 2010-11 budget will be discussed June 22 at 6pm, with adoption expected at the special June 29 6pm meeting. The College Council is reviewing the budget today.

Zephyr Cove library offers crafts, stories

The Douglas County Public Library Lake Tahoe branch celebrates the Summer Reading Program with stories and crafts on June 18 at 1:30pm.

Miss Carol will read stories about sunshine and Father's Day. Children ages 3 and up will make a craft; young children should be accompanied by an adult.

Sign up by June 17.

The Lake Tahoe branch of the Douglas County Public Library is located at 233 Warrior Way in Zephyr Cove. For more information, call (775) 588.6411 or visit www.douglas.lib.nv.us.

Outdoor art show in South Tahoe

June 10-13 and June 17-20 the Tahoe Art League will be having its outdoor shows at the American Legion parking lot on Highway 50 across from Meeks in South Lake Tahoe.