A conservative case for gay marriage

By Theodore B. Olson, Newsweek

Together with my good friend and occasional courtroom adversary David Boies, I am attempting to persuade a federal court to invalidate California's Proposition 8â€"the voter-approved measure that overturned California's constitutional right to marry a person of the same sex.

My involvement in this case has generated a certain degree of consternation among conservatives. How could a politically active, lifelong Republican, a veteran of the Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush administrations, challenge the "traditional" definition of marriage and press for an "activist" interpretation of the Constitution to create another "new" constitutional right?

Read the whole story

Anderson keeps it real riding to slopestyle fame



By Melissa Larsen, ESPN Action Sports

It's Dec. 10, 2009. Some of the world's best snowboarders

gather atop a 22-foot-tall halfpipe at Copper Mountain, Colo. Each has prepared a diligently practiced contest run to debut in the first of five competitions that will determine the final rosters of the U.S. and Canadian Olympic snowboarding teams. The air is quiet, the vibe tense. Two-time Winter X Games Slopestyle gold medalist Jamie Anderson – a 19-year-old phenom who is one of the best female snowboarders on the planet – gets ready to ride.

She is, understandably, a little nervous. On a slopestyle course she is almost impossible to beat, but her record in the halfpipe is spotty. She's placed in the top three a handful of times, but she's ended up 18th more than once. And unlike her halfpipe-focused peers who log countless hours perfecting their routines, Anderson's love for park riding is so strong that she has a hard time talking herself into leaving the park for the pipe. That makes her halfpipe training routine so sporadic, it could hardly be called "training" at all.

Read the whole story

Telemark clinic

Geoff Clark, director of Nordic skiing for Alpine Skills International, is hosting a telemarking clinic on Feb. 7.

The course will combine a variety of techniques for dynamic skiing, including dynamic parallel, dynamic telemark, ad ungroomed and variable conditions.

Skiers need to be comfortable on black-diamond terrain.

For information, go to www.alpineskills.com.

Workshop for environmental educators

Project WET Workshop is an action-packed, hands-on workshop is for anyone interested in teaching about natural resources, conservation and environmental education. Great hands-on curriculum training for anyone working with K-12 youth.

All activities are geared toward teaching about Water Quality issues facing the Lake Tahoe Region.

It is Feb. 3 from 10amâ€“4pm at the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences, 291 Country Club Drive, Incline Village.

Click Project WET to find out more about it.

2002 Olympic torch run unites South Shore community

By Susan Wood

As a new year and decade begin, I reflect on a time when South Lake Tahoe had reason to celebrate.

If only for a moment, no unfinished projects, crumbling sidewalks, lost tourism promotion opportunities or staggering unemployment figures cloud my mind. One year ago today, the South Shore was placed on the world map and forever in my

heart when we hosted the 2002 Winter Olympics torch relay on its way to Park City.



Susan Wood on the torch route in 2002. Photo/Trish McGraw

I was honored to be selected as a U.S. media representative by sponsors Coca-Cola and Chevrolet to run a stretch of the torch relay. And I was humbled for being in such good company of South Shore residents who were nominated to take part in it by their fellow citizens.

David Kurtzman served in the Peace Corps before becoming active in the South Lake Tahoe community. Mary Ebright lost her lower right leg to bone cancer but has a million-dollar smile that can light up a room. Pat Welze made a career out of her community involvement and gave new meaning to the term ‘family values’ having cared for her injured daughter.

I learned how Ron Nageotte never quits, how Lauren Thomaselli will always be young at heart and how her father Larry Foster beamed when he talked about the honor of passing the torch to his daughter. Polite and mature beyond his teenage years, Adam Matzinger taught me the true meaning of being an Eagle Scout.

There’s a reason why Matt Williams was so respected when he worked at South Tahoe High School and why Jan Ashcraft chose Tahoe as her home to teach before retiring – the great outdoors. I was so proud to have known Bart Owens on the

police force because he embraced the pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps attitude.

And it’s only fitting that Dominique Westlake’s love of running placed the torch in his hands.

My hat is off to Mike Shreve, who as a skiing coach could have been an Olympic hopeful, but shared the mere pleasure of his loved ones cheering him on during his torch run. Irene Kaelin’s talk of loving Tahoe was commendable. I have the utmost respect for Karen Wilson, a cancer survivor who has dedicated her time for the cause in our community.

And speaking of dedication – it was only appropriate the community threw a big birthday party for longtime dance instructor Marcia Sarosik on her special day, the day the torch came through. Danny Masellones has proved to be another inspirational personality in this town; every year helping a new class of college students negotiate their path to a better future.

And Sam Borges gave me an extraordinary glimpse of how interesting Tahoe’s past is. The man embraced it like few people I know.

There was nothing like meeting Martin Hollay, a veteran skier who escaped war-torn Hungary to ski the slopes of Heavenly practically every day. I caught up with him weeks ago. At age 89 he shows no signs of slowing down. He’s celebrating 50 years of working at the 1960 Winter Games at Squaw Valley.

When the night of Jan. 20, 2002, rolled around, my family came down from Oregon to cheer me on – but I had a huge dilemma. I wanted to see Hollay carry the torch before I did, so we drove up the traffic-clogged streets to Heavenly to see him ski the flame across the slopes. The crowd was so huge and noisy it was difficult to hear Hungary’s national anthem playing for the native.

With not much time to spare, we inched into town so I could catch my torchbearer bus. I could barely contain my emotion as I saw hundreds of people wrapped in blankets lining the streets on a cold Tahoe night with their children, dogs and flashlights. They roared with glee as we drove by to get into position, and I remember bus driver Diego calling us “rock stars.” Another Olympic official on our bus asked how many people on board are cancer survivors. Kaelin threw her arm up fast and proud. I thought about my father’s fight against the disease and became grateful he would witness this event with me.

From tears to cheers

This was certainly a celebration of the human spirit like no other I have experienced. I looked at officer



Susan Wood signs autographs along the 2002 torch route in South Tahoe. Photo/Trish McGraw

Owens and saw tears streaming down his face. Then, it hit me. Given the tragedy of Sept. 11 that occurred only months before, I soon learned the ties that bring people together extend well beyond our immediate families.

This was quite a departure from the Munich Games 30 years

before.

As we approached my designated stretch on Sierra Boulevard, I saw the flame dance in the night on a horse-drawn carriage and felt the comfort of knowing Borges was behind me. When I got off the bus in my uniform, the crowd on the street erupted and a no-nonsense black leather-clad motorcycle rider with an entourage next to him handed me the torch. As the entourage guided me down the street, I remember thinking how I wanted to make the two-tenths of a mile down Sierra Boulevard last a long time. However, one of the officials told me the torch was a little behind schedule. It wasn't the time to sprint, though. I was careful not to slip on the icy streets and dropping this world symbol of goodwill.

My heart swelled and my eyes grew wide as Sierra Boulevard emptied out on Highway 50 to a crowd as big as a rock concert's. After I passed the torch on, I was swarmed by youngsters wanting my autograph.

The night was only beginning. South Shore threw the best party I've seen here in what was Caesars Tahoe parking lot. I give a lot of credit to then-Mayor Brooke Laine for organizing such an event that she recently told me was the high point of her term. The low point was the Gondola Fire six months prior.

Between the hugs and displays of national pride, we came together that night.

That was a time when we could truly say we lived in a world-class destination. Few aspects of Tahoe impress me today beyond the stunning beauty of the lake, vast array of recreational options and Sierra-at-Tahoe's level of customer service. Maybe one day we'll return to that time when we came together as a community and our differences were set aside for something that was much larger than any one person.

Publisher's note: *Find out on Jan. 24 what longtime Tahoe journalist Nancy Oliver Hayden thinks of the book "Snowball's*

Chance”.

South Tahoe library meeting

The South Lake Tahoe Friends of the Library invites current and potential members to its next meeting at noon Jan. 21 at the South Tahoe Branch Library conference room at 1000 Rufus Allen Blvd.

Proceeds from book sales and projects support the library year-round with children’s programs, guest speaker programs, book and technology purchases and more.

For more information, call Gail Kolb at (530) 545-9195.

Self-defense class

The South Lake Tahoe Women’s Center is offering a free self-defense class on Jan. 28 from 6-7pm at Inn by the Lake, 3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Learn several techniques to defend yourself and escape an attacker.

No experience needed.

Tahoe braces for week of snow



By Kathryn Reed

The thermometer may say 30 something, but don’t be surprised if it feels like it’s in the teens in Lake Tahoe. Such are the hazards of a wind chill.

Winds were picking up in the basin late this morning as the next storm is slated to roll in this afternoon.

A winter weather advisory is in effect until 10 tonight. The National Weather Service has issued a storm watch for all of Wednesday.

Up to 10 inches of white stuff could accumulate at the lake with the next storm, while 16 inches may drop above 7,000 feet. The snow level is expected to drop to 5,000 feet.

More than 9 inches fell at the lake in the last 24 hours.

Skiing at Sierra-at-Tahoe was superb on Martin Luther King Jr. day because of the fresh powder and lack of people on the slopes.

The recent snow should mean Heavenly Mountain Resort will be able to turn off its snowmaking equipment, which was still on at the Stagecoach area last week.

Resorts that are prone to wind holds could see many chairs sitting idle this week as storm after storm rolls in.

Chains or 4-wheel drive will likely be mandatory on mountain passes much of the week.

The sun may return Saturday.

Racial overtones in EDC sheriff's race

Letter to the Publisher,

On Jan. 8, I met my friend John Wheeler at Santoro Caffe Shop in Cameron Park for a visit. While we were talking over coffee, Bob Luca, a candidate for sheriff of El Dorado County, came in and we invited him over to where we were sitting. He sat and conversed with us for half an hour.

Candidate Bob Luca gave us and several people sitting at other tables his card. And I noticed that he lived in El Dorado Hills. I asked him if he knew candidate Stan Perez, who I knew resided in El Dorado Hills, too. That stimulated a response from Luca that surprised and disturbed me greatly.

He castigated candidate Perez loudly, made several racially biased and opprobrious remarks about him and his ethnicity. He claimed that Chief Perez rose in the CHP because of his Hispanic [he called it Mexican] heritage, that he was a traffic controller and not a good cop, and that were it not for his heritage, which he alleged was used to rise within the CHP, that he would never have been a chief.

We found the remarks vicious, unprofessional and unworthy of a man running to be the sheriff in our county. And, we think Stan Perez is owed a public apology from Bob Luca. That is the reason for this letter.

Candidate Luca's remarks were unwarranted, untrue and ought to

stimulate a public apology from Luca. This manner of campaigning, bad-mouthing an adversary, should not be tolerated. It demeans the whole election process and competition. What citizens want to know is why a given candidate thinks he deserves to be elected, his own qualifications, not mud-slinging at the other men in the race. This tactic has been observed from advocates of other sheriff candidates, too. It is small-minded and adds nothing to the decision-making process.

There are seven excellent men competing to become our county's next sheriff. Do we really want one that has a race problem?

John Deryck, Placerville

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 19



"Winds definitely affecting the operation of upper mountain lifts at Heavenly, Kirkwood, Alpine, Squaw, Mt. Rose and Sugar Bowl. Call ahead," says Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe. Here is his ski report for the day.