

Stakeholders refuse to give up on Tahoe Olympics

By Susan Wood

PARK CITY, Utah – If the U.S. Olympic Committee would be inclined to open the gate for another Winter Games in the Lake Tahoe area, like it hinted at during its annual summit in Utah last month, the coalition tasked with preparing for it would jump.

Officials will meet this week to discuss the matter.

Albeit those close to the possibility of bringing the Winter Games back to Squaw Valley and beyond after more than a half century admit it's a perceived long shot in the world of sports.



**“The flame has never
gone out over the years
as we review possibilities.”
– Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition
Chairman Brian Krolicki**

If anything, representatives should already get a medal in patience and due diligence. After all, this is the Olympics – a global event that practically invented the word tenacity among athletes.

“It’s a great chance. There are tons of locations for incredible alpine skiing. And to have them back in Reno-Tahoe – just the history of that is pretty awesome,” Tahoe Olympian Julia Mancuso told *Lake Tahoe News* during a roundtable discussion in Utah set up for the 2018 Winter Games at PyeongChang, South Korea.

Mancuso, a never-say-die, four-time medalist in downhill skiing, skis at Squaw, the host mountain in 1960 – a time of another long shot. So the idea of a return sounds intriguing to say the least.

Squaw Valley just hosted the Audi FIS Women’s World Cup Tour, an event Mancuso helped plan with Chief Executive Officer Andy Wirth, but unfortunately had to sit out. At the time, Wirth – who sits on the local Olympic board –told *LTN* having the World Cup offered a chance to showcase the resort on a global level. He was looking down slope at the grand prize.

He’s not alone.

“The flame has never gone out over the years as we review possibilities,” Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition Chairman Brian Krolicki told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Nevada’s former lieutenant governor admits the difficulty may have increased with Los Angeles receiving the nod for hosting the Summer Games in 2028 – 44 years from its last honor. By the time the U.S. would host another Winter Games, more than a quarter century will have passed since the Olympics graced Salt Lake City, which received a \$200 million profit from the endeavor and developed venues visitors and residents still use

today.

Getting the International Olympic Committee to buy off on back-to-back or recent returns to one nation is more in tune to a chess match.



Squaw Valley would be an integral part of any future Winter Olympics in the greater Lake Tahoe region.
Photo/LTN

The Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition started this effort in 2001 with Reno sports commissioner Jim Vanden Heuvel, who died in 2009. In the last five years, the coalition has bumped its interest from 2022 to 2026, with the latter considered too close to L.A.'s latest windfall.

"I know we were prepared while thinking about 2022," Krolicki said. "We'd be ready to dust off the plan. We were ready to do this yesterday. We'd be ecstatic."

If given the chance, UNR would play an important role alongside the ski resorts.

Nonetheless, reality brings a heavy weight to the table.

“People shouldn’t get their hopes up. In theory, the possibility could be problematic,” Krolicki admitted.

Even though the challenges would not remove the option from the table, finances and infrastructure run a steep price when considering the reality. Since 1960, the Games have been all about sustainability – a catch phrase missing in the vernacular back then. Also, the venues – where to put them, how to build them, how much of them to keep – could represent “the white elephant” in the room, according to Krolicki. There is no quick fix here.

He looks forward to more discussions with the USOC, which will meet Oct. 13 on the matter.

USOC Chairman Larry Probst joined Chief Executive Officer Scott Blackmun in mentioning the Reno-Tahoe region as “definitely interested in hosting the Games” along with other cities in front of large media crowd last month. One interested region is the staging ground of the summit – Park City-Salt Lake City. Denver was also mentioned.



These are the medals that will be given out at the South Korea Games in February; Reno-Tahoe would like to start designing theirs. Photo/LTN

Everyone has an opinion.

World Cup champion Mikaela Shiffrin would like the Olympics in Vail-Beaver Creek in her home state of Colorado. But she believes the practical choice would be Park City-Salt Lake City.

"It would be amazing to compete in the Olympics in front of my hometown (Colorado) crowd. It's a dream I'm almost afraid to say but think about," she said during a press conference, but later qualified a more reasonable option during the roundtable discussions.

"(Park City-Salt Lake City) would be incredible for American athletes. It's fairly accessible (for spectators)," she said.

Halfpipe snowboarder Kelly Clark agrees accessibility matters in making a good host for the Winter Games. But despite its remote nature, she'd like the Olympics to return to California.

"I've lived and trained in Mammoth forever. My favorite

mountain is Mammoth. (But) I'm not sure it's conducive (to hosting)," Clark said.

Still, Tahoe athlete Travis Ganong is partial to his home resort of Squaw Valley. He was excited hearing of a bid proposal years ago because he felt he'd be in line to compete, but now 2030 appears too far off for him to go. Either way, Ganong prefers the snow conditions in the United States versus Europe.

If anything, his snowboard cross counterpart, Nate Holland, would at least like to see Squaw host a men's World Cup – which hasn't happened in decades.

Meyers freestyle skier Maddie Bowman said "it would be great" if the Winter Games were to return to the United States because "they do such a good job."

Many choices of where to have the Olympics seem personal for a number of athletes.

Aja Evans, who runs a bobsled, joined Shiffrin in looking close to home – no matter how far-reaching the idea is.

"I'd love them in Chicago," Evans said of her home city. "It certainly gets cold enough there."

Fellow bobsled Olympian Jamie Greubel Poser opts for South Korea because "my sister was adopted from there."

She'll have her chance in a matter of months.

Vegas shooter draws attention to video poker

By Associated Press

Authorities trying to piece together the final days before Stephen Paddock unleashed his arsenal of powerful firearms on country music fans on the Las Vegas Strip have at least one potential trove of information: his gambling habits.

Nevada gambling regulators say they're sorting through documents for clues about him and his girlfriend, Marilou Danley. Those can include suspicious transaction or currency reports, as well as information from a player's rewards card, which the casinos use to track their gambling and offer perks.

Paddock's brother has described the gunman as a high-stakes video poker player who was routinely comped rooms, meals and drinks at casinos.

[Read the whole story](#)

Story behind wilderness taco stop in the Sierra

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

Alison Blair stopped in her tracks.

The 54-year-old backpacker needed a moment to process the scene.

A group of people with backpacking stoves, dishes and condiments carefully arranged on a tree stump asked Blair if she would like a made-to-order taco and cold beer.

The strange part was that it was happening at Purple Lake on the John Muir Trail, more than 10 miles over rugged terrain from the nearest trailhead.

It's a temporary taco and beer oasis that's materialized on the John Muir Trail six times since 2014 only

to disappear within a few hours of each appearance.

Read the whole story

Sage Room – old school dining with modern flare



The Sage Room at Harveys is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

By Jessie Marchesseau

STATELINE – Frog legs sautéed with tomatoes, onion, garlic, basil, Kalamata olives and white wine; mushroom raviolis with a portabella-black truffle Marsala sauce; Steak Dianne, flambéed tableside with filet mignon, mushrooms, demi glaze and flaming brandy. These are just a few of the everyday delicacies served at the Sage Room inside Harvey's Lake Tahoe.

Celebrating its 70th anniversary this year, the Sage Room has been adorning tables with fine Tahoe cuisine since 1947.

Just walking into the Sage Room feels like a step back in time. The lighting is low, wood graces the walls and ceiling, and deep burgundy covers the tables and chairs creating a warm

and intimate atmosphere. The hand-hewn wood beams crisscrossing the ceiling came from the original Harvey's Wagon Wheel Saloon and Gambling Hall opened in 1944 by Harvey and Llewellyn Gross. Just a few years after the Sage Room opened the local Washoe tribe gave the Grosses a gift of beautiful hand-made Native American lampshades which still hang from the ceiling today.



Sage Room maitre d' Ozzie Sanchez makes a show whipping up some Cafe Diablo. He has been with the Sage Room for two decades. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

Diners are offered a selection of traditional steakhouse fare and unique gourmet dishes. Several of the signature dishes are prepared tableside including the Steak Dianne, the Caesar

salad with house-made croutons, a flaming cherries jubilee, and the crowd-pleasing café diablo, where blue flames of Grand Marnier travel up curling rinds of lemons and oranges. The servers preparing these dishes are both skilled and entertaining, often joking as they pour and sauté, eliciting applause from throughout the dining room with their showy preparations. But it's not just the food, the ambiance and tableside shows which keep diners coming back year after year.

"We strive big time to make everyone feel like family," said Ozzie Sanchez, matre d' for the restaurant, who said on any given night he gives out a plethora of hugs to regular customers and sometimes even new ones.

The Sage Room's staff is attentive, knowledgeable and experienced, many of them having been part of the team for decades. "We look for solutions, no matter what," Sanchez said.



The Washoe tribe donated these chandeliers to the Sage Room

nearly 70 years ago. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

Teddy Herrera who prepared a tableside Caesar salad and Steak Dianne for a room of hungry media representatives last Thursday has been working at the Sage Room for 30 years.

“This is my second home here,” Herrera said. “I have so many customers and so many experiences here. They take care of me.”

And it’s not just lip service. Herrera named his youngest son Sage, in honor of his “second home.”

“That’s how much I love this place,” he said.

As he squeezed fresh lemons, fired up steaks and served up tapa-sized dishes for his afternoon guests, Herrera’s skill and enjoyment in his task was apparent.

The same could be said watching Evan Derdowski cooking up the sweet-tart cherries jubilee: setting the pan of juicy fruit aflame, then sprinkling in some cinnamon to make sparks fly. And the show was, of course, topped off with a luscious dessert of cherry caramel drizzled over vanilla ice cream alongside warm, juicy cherries.

The Sage Room, after 70 years, is offering up more than just food, it’s a true dining experience.

In celebration of this 70th anniversary, the Sage Room is has put together a special fixed-price dining option in addition to its regular menu which will be available through the end of the year.

Incline honoring part-time resident who died in Vegas

Stacee Etcheber, who was a part-time resident of Incline Village, died in the gun rampage in Las Vegas. She was 50.

In honor of her memory, the annual United Blood Services and Incline Village Recreation Center blood drive on Oct. 13 is being dedicated in her memory.



Stacee Etcheber

The community remembers Stacee as a loving wife, dedicated mother and loyal, caring friend.

SFPD Police Chief William Scott on the department's Facebook page said, "Stacee was taken in a senseless act of violence as her husband, SFPD Officer Vinnie Etcheber, heroically rushed to aid shooting victims in Las Vegas on Sunday. Stacee was a beloved mother of two young children and a well-loved hair stylist in Marin County. As we grieve, we ask the public to keep the Etcheber family in their thoughts, along with all the victims of this tragic incident."

Stacee was a master hair stylist, having worked in Novato for more than 20 years.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "She was tough, her family

said, someone who knew how to pull horse trailers with a truck, a real cowgirl as well as a devoted soccer mom. She was a hairstylist who took care of her husband's aging parents and someone the grocery store clerk remembered as funny and kind, even after seeing her just a few times."

Stacee was one of 59 people who died in the country's worst mass shooting, where more than 500 others were injured.

A **GoFundMe** account has been set up for the family. She is survived by her husband, a 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son.

The blood drive in Stacee's name will be from 8am-4pm in the gymnasium of the Incline Village Recreation Center, 980 Incline Way in Incline Village.

United Blood Services reports that Las Vegas is currently doing well with their blood supply; however, they are concerned that in the wake of this event, they will see a tremendous response at first, then a dip in donations in the weeks to come. In emergencies, it is the blood on the shelves that save lives.

To schedule an appointment, call 800.696.4484 or go **online**. Use sponsor code INCLINEREC.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Calif. regulator admits to anxiety as legal pot nears

By Michael R. Blood, AP

California's emerging marijuana industry is being rattled by an array of unknowns, as the state races to issue its first licenses to grow and sell legal recreational pot on Jan. 1.

"We all have anxiety," top state pot regulator Lori Ajax told an industry group Thursday. "It's not going to be perfect."

California voters in 2016 approved Proposition 64, which legalized recreational pot use for adults in the nation's most populous state. It takes effect in 2018, when the new economy will unite recreational sales with the state's two-decade old medicinal pot market.

Read the whole story

Kokanee putting on a show at Taylor Creek



Kokanee salmon are filling the channel of Taylor Creek.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

CAMP RICHARDSON – They're baaaacccckkkk – the Kokanee salmon that is.

With more water in Taylor Creek than in recent falls, the fish are spawning in good numbers this year. While it's likely the run has not peaked, the die-off is already evident.



A platform separates people from wildlife.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

On Friday a crawdad was gnawing away on a submerged carcass, with his friend crawling slowly to join in the feast.

For people, it's really a feast for the eyes. These non-native fish to Lake Tahoe are a colorful spectacle as they make their way from the lake up Taylor Creek. The whole point is for the females to lay eggs – from 200 to 1,800 per fish – and the males to fertilize them. Both then die. Their offspring are born in the spring and then make their way to the lake.

It is smell that brings them back to Taylor Creek – their birthplace.



A duck on Oct. 6 successfully goes fishing for Kokanee at Taylor Creek.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

The female and male's scales turn red as they spawn. The males' jaws become hooked.

New this year along the Rainbow Trail at Taylor Creek Visitors Center is a viewing platform that in large part was paid for by the Tahoe Fund. It had to be built after too many people thought it was a good idea to take selfies with bears in the background.

For some reason people treated this wild, natural event like it was some controlled scene at Disneyland. Their behavior was putting their lives at risk and potentially the bear's.



Under water a crawdad digs at the
flesh of a decaying Kokanee.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

The wood deck doesn't take away from seeing this annual ritual. It just means the creek is no longer accessible. In a wet year like this, it actually makes it less muddy and gives a wider area to see things.

What some people were treated to on Oct. 6 were ducks racing up and down a small stretch of the creek, then diving, swimming a ways underwater all in the quest to dine on Kokanee. It was working. A blue heron was also spotted.

This weekend is the annual Fall Fish Festival at the visitors center off Highway 89 on the South Shore. It is from 10am-4pm Saturday and Sunday. The free event gives people a chance to learn about all the fish species in Lake Tahoe.

SLT pot shop owner faces felony tax fraud charges

By Kathryn Reed

Cody Bass, the owner of Tahoe Wellness Cooperative, is accused of felony tax fraud.

A criminal complaint filed in El Dorado County Superior Court alleges Bass filed false income tax returns with the California Franchise Tax Board for calendar years 2012 and 2013, and that he failed to file a personal state tax return in 2014. Those are felony offenses. A misdemeanor allegation is for failing to pay state income tax in 2011.



Cody Bass has been a controversial figure in South Lake Tahoe since opening his medicinal marijuana shop. Photo/LTN file

Bass did not respond to an inquiry from *Lake Tahoe News*.

His medicinal marijuana shop in the Bijou Center of South Lake Tahoe was **raided in June 2015**.

At the time El Dorado County Assistant District Attorney Jim Clinchard told *Lake Tahoe News*, "The investigation relates to tax evasion and possession of marijuana for sale."

On Oct. 6 Clinchard said, "As this is a pending case, we have no further comment."

Even though marijuana of any kind is not recognized by the federal government to be legal, the IRS still mandates taxes be paid. It has strict regulations as to what can be taken as a deduction, which can result in businesses needing to pay a higher percentage of taxes than other industries.

What happened to the "marijuana for sale" part of the investigation is unknown.

For years the city has alleged Bass was doing more than providing medical marijuana, saying that millions of dollars

in weed are filtered through the Tahoe shop that have nothing to do with medicine.

While South Lake Tahoe police detectives were integral to the case, the police chief did not respond to an inquiry from *LTN*. Nor did the city manager or city attorney.

Assisting with what was described as a long and ongoing investigation were the now defunct South Lake El Dorado Narcotics Task Force, El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, state Board of Equalization and the Employment Development Department.

For now, the shop remains open and Bass is not behind bars.

Persistent dryness to elevate fire danger across Calif.

By Renee Duff, AccuWeather

A continued dry spell and strengthening winds will set the stage for an enhanced risk of wildfire ignition across California into the middle of October.

Little to no rain is expected across the state through at least the second week of October. Low humidity combined with the lack of rainfall into next week will continue to dry out vegetation and add fuel for ongoing or future blazes.

"As temperatures climb and an offshore wind picks up, especially (today) and Saturday, the fire danger will remain high," AccuWeather meteorologist Ryan Adamson said.

[Read the whole story](#)

Loop road design elements being sought

By Kathryn Reed

Better flow and access to the Stateline area for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists are major components of the proposed loop road. But with any endeavor there are consequences.

“We walk and bike a lot. The (new) highway would separate where we go,” Caroline Fallu told *Lake Tahoe News*.

She and her husband, Matt Asher, bought their home on Cellador Drive in South Lake Tahoe nearly three years ago. The real estate agent mentioned the loop road, but not to the extent it could impact their lives.

To get to the commercial area near the state line – be it California or Nevada – they will have to cross Highway 50 if the loop road is built. Today they have two easy routes to get to points past the casinos. In the future it will be one by vehicle.

There is no crosswalk planned to easily get them across the highway. Instead, they said, it will be a long walk or ride to do so to be legal. They suspect they’ll opt to risk crossing the busy highway in what could be an illegal manner.



TTD officials say the intersection of today's Highway 50 and Heavenly Village Way needs help. Photos/Kahtryn Reed

Theirs is just one story of what could happen to residents if the highway were to be reconfigured.

Tahoe Transportation District is the lead agency behind wanting to take the current Highway 50 and reroute it behind Harrah's Lake Tahoe and MontBleu, then turning the current highway in both states into a city/county street.

The hope is that it would make the casino corridor more pedestrian friendly. Plus, it would be more visually appealing. An added bonus is the affordable housing component that was added during the planning process.

The proposal is still in the environmental process, with comments on the draft environmental impact statement being addressed. The final EIS is expected to be released by the end of the year. That document would still need to be approved by the TDD and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency boards.

"I'm eager to get past the decision and get to design," Carl

Hasty, TTD leader, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

On Oct. 5, several dozen people attended an open house hosted by the TTD at Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel. The purpose was to begin discussing design components of the plan. While a definitive route has not been selected because it's under environmental review, the assumption is the preferred alternative will be selected. It is that route that people on Thursday night were asked to comment on.

The various stations delved into specific components of the realignment. People were asked to comment about how they walk/bike in the area now and what they'd like to see in the future; where they park and where they'd like to see future parking as well as signage for it; where they access transit and where they'd like to see future routes/stops; and where they live in the area and where they'd like future housing.

For those who could not attend Thursday's gathering, comments will be taken **online** starting Monday about the design components.

While the sites for future housing are not definitive, but instead place holders on a map, the district has pledged that the road work will not begin until affordable housing is built for the displaced residents. This will come when funding is secured.

Hasty said his agency is going after grants now to assist with acquisition of properties, which is expected to be the most expensive part of the project. Replacement housing would be the next step.

One attendee who was a bit verbally combative was certain those who would lose their homes or businesses would not be fairly compensated as was the case in some instances across the street at the Chateau site. A TTD rep was quick to point that was a private developer and the highway project is a public endeavor. This means fair market value will have to be

paid to people. Renters will also be compensated. There are federal laws that protect people and govern agencies in these types of interactions.