Squaw Village to turn into a kids’ world

It will be a kids’ world at the Village at Squaw Valley when the resorts host Kid-O-Rama, a week filled with family friendly activities from Feb. 13-21.

The celebration includes everything from costumed skating parties to family ski racing to street parties and scavenger hunts.

The Kids’ Street Party at the Village at Squaw Valleyâ€™s Fountain Court on Feb. 17 is one of the highlights of the event. At the party there will be live entertainment by Todd Wees, face painting, candle making, hot cocoa, fairy blessings, the antics of a clown, and a bounce house from 2-4pm.

A complete listing of the events includes:

Feb. 13â€“21: Family ski racing will allow families to engage in a little friendly rivalry with either members of opposite clans or within their own family.

Feb. 13â€“20: Kidâ€™s can hunt down cool treasures and prizes during a scavenger hunt.

Feb. 13: Dress the little ones in their cutest costumes and bring them to the Squaw Valley USA ice rink at the top of the tram for a costume skating party. Kids also can pose for photos with the Squaw Dogs, Squaw Valley’s adorable rescue dogs that are a crucial element to avalanche rescue.

Feb. 14: Kids and their families get creative by taking part in a poem contest at Wildflour Bakery. The bakery staff will write the poems on Valentineâ€™s cookies.

Feb. 15: Kids and their families can participate in Beacon

Basin Night, where they can use beacons to find each other and learn how the life-saving technology works in a fun, hide-and-seek-like fashion.

Feb. 16: A fire truck, snow plow and Snowcat will roll into The Village for kids to observe up close. Machine operators will be on hand to answer questions.

Feb. 17: Kids Street Party at The Village at Squaw Valley Fountain Court will feature live entertainment by Todd Wees, face painting, candle making, hot cocoa, fairy blessings, the antics of a clown and a bounce house from 2 to 4pm.

Feb. 18: Take the kids to the slopes for an evening of night tubing and enjoy a warm beverage at the hot chocolate party.

Feb. 19: Another opportunity to take the kids for a spin on the Squaw Valley USA ice rink during a costume skating party or enjoy another evening of tubing under the stars.

Fe. 20: Olympic Village Lodge hosts a special Kids Night. Families can also enjoy more night tubing.

Many of the events during the week are free. Holiday rates apply to events such as skating, tubing and racing. Tubing is $16 for an hour, skating is $11 for two hours, and Coin-Op Family Racing is $1 per run.

For additional information,call (530) 584.6266 or visit www.thevillageatsquaw.com.

Nevada tourism officials

promote private site in ad campaign

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

Like most tourism marketers, the Nevada Tourism Commission is doing what it can to get a maximum bang for its advertising bucks.

When Tourism Director Dann Lewis told the commissionâ€™s marketing committee last week that room tax revenue is coming in well below projections, he also offered a strategy to draw attention to the media channels that traditionally have driven increased visitation to the state.

That basic strategy is to dazzle a viewer or reader with something visually amazing to reel them in and get one of the stateâ€™s visitor guides in their hands.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe Music Festival sets 2010 dates

The dates are set for another summer under the stars at the Lake Tahoe Music Festival – July 22â€“Aug. 7.

The North Shore festival annually draws more than 12,000 concert-goers for an unmatched outdoor concert experience with tickets from $25 and a lineup of nationally recognized artists.

Concerts include a variety of musical genres from classic rock to classical and Broadway with past artists including Boz Scaggs, Huey Lewis and The News, Dave Koz and Chris Botti.

The summer concert series supports the nonprofit festivalâ€™s educational outreach programs which include an Orchestra Academy for aspiring college-level musicians and a free after-school instruction program for elementary school music students in the Truckee area.

For more information about the 2010 Lake Tahoe Music Festival, visit www.TahoeMusic.org or call (530) 583-3101.

Granlibakken embraces fun and relaxation

By Susan Wood

TAHOE CITY – Granlibakken means “hillside sheltered by fir trees: in Norwegian, but it should stand for recreation meets relaxation in English.

One of the Lake Tahoe Basin’s best kept secrets, the 74-acre resort nestled in a mountain valley a half mile south of Tahoe City is a kids’ paradise where the outdoors meets the outgoing. Children of all ages and seniors who are young at heart can appreciate the healthy blend of Tahoe-type activities and the history behind the resort.



Granlibakken's ski and sledding hills. Photos/Kathryn Reed

On one recent Saturday morning steps from the resort’s main lodge, families seeking snow play covered the sledding and ski hill. A Poma lift and rope tow assist skiers and boarders; sledders must walk. The chatter and squeals made it clear how much fun can be had on a saucer, toboggan or skis.

Granlibakken Conference Center & Lodge employee Jason Works said this was a typical Saturday.

“Lots of families come out here,” he said, adding it’s also fun to work at the resort.

It seems to be an ideal spot for little ones learning how to ski. Its wide-open space and easy slope give beginners the security to learn the sport. According to Works, most spend hours going up and down the hill much like a Labrador retriever never tires of chasing a tennis ball.

An adult lift ticket runs $21, children $14.



Susan Wood

If skiing the bunny hill or sliding isn’t your thing, snowshoers and cross country skiers can spend the day above the lift. The resort’s hill provides one free ride up to a vast web of groomed and ungroomed trails. A 3-mile round-trip jaunt can weave you through some of the most gorgeous U.S. Forest Service territory on the North Shore to Page Meadows. For the more ambitious, the Granite Chief Wilderness beckons with Scott Peak in the background. Due west, Ward Peak towers in the distance at 8,637 feet.

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association offers snowshoe tours to the meadow.

Kae and I elected to go up the Poma lift to tour a few miles of the snowcat-groomed trails on the ridge. The lift provided the most humbling experience because I had never been on a Pomo on cross country skis. I learned to ski via a Poma in Vermont at age 6 at the oldest ski area in the United States so I knew I could negotiate the spring-bound pole lift. But on Nordic skis the unloading was awkward. I survived unscathed, but had to pick myself up.



Pristine snow is inches from

the groomed
trail.

Wide trails make it ideal for skate skiers and those who need to snowplow coming down.

Word to the wise: the topographical map is a little funky when it comes to directions to Page Meadows from the water tank. Don’t head due west. Head slowly south, climbing the ridge before making a sharp northern turn before heading west.

After a day of fun, the resort provides lodging options ranging from studios and townhomes to an eight-bedroom forest lodge chalet and executive lodge suite. The latter is spacious and comfortable with a fireplace and a full kitchen that’s suitable for gatherings. The complex has 45 guest rooms that start at $310/night.

Ski and Stay packages run $109 Sunday-Thursday and $132 on Friday and Saturday.

Summertime comes alive for tennis buffs, as courts are steps away from most units.



Lodging options.

A night’s stay offers access to a heated pool, hot tub and sauna with a full, hot breakfast buffet the next morning. Executive Chef Ron Eber, who’s logged more than a quarter century with the resort, brings out his signature homemade bread pudding to accompany eggs, pastries, pancakes, sausage,

coffee, juice and an assortment of fruit. It’s difficult to imagine anyone going away hungry.

In addition to a 16,000-square-foot conference center, the resort features the Cedar House Pub in the main lodge. We didn’t have a chance to eat there, but it looked like a perfect spot to unwind in front of the fire for appetizers or dinner.

Among the historic photos lining the hallways, the most telling for the resort is a large portrait of Kjell “Rusty” Rustad, who in 1947 leased the toboggan runs and undeveloped land from the Forest Service. He improved the ski jumping facilities and cleared timber for the downhill area.

I thought it was fitting that my brush with history as a child brought me decades later to check out the site of this country’s first ski lift – a 600-foot tow rope. The 1932 Olympic ski-jumping trials were staged here, adding to the mystique of the secluded resort.

To this day, the resort still delves into the history of the Tahoe region. It hosted an Olympic Legends‘ dinner earlier this month, which featured the likes of 1960 Winter Games racer Joe Pete Wilson and cross country ski course groomer extraordinaire Chummy Broomhall.

Staff scurried to make its honorary guests comfortable. Resort Manager Kay Williams appeared quite tickled to hear the Olympic stories from the senior skiers and volunteers and sat with them over breakfast. And, General Manager Ron Parson described the evening in one word: “Incredible.”

For more information, go to www.granlibakken.com.

TOCCATA to perform throughout Lake Tahoe

TOCCATA (The Orchestra and Community Choral Artists of the Tahoe Area) presents its BACH & BRUCH concert series featuring the Tahoe Symphony Orchestra, Chorus, and soloists.

The featured soloist will be â€œRed Stradivariusâ€ violinist Elizabeth Pitcairn, performing the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor and Dvorakâ€™s Romanze for violin. The chorus will present J.S. Bachâ€™s masterpiece, Magnificat, with vocal soloists Katharine DeBoer, Anna Helwing and Joy Strotz, soprano; Susan Benefield, mezzo soprano; Andy Sonnemaker and John Hutto, tenors; and Stuart Duke, baritone.

Performances are Feb. 5 at 7:30pm in the Cal Neva Resort in Crystal Bay: Feb: 6 at 7:30pm at Resort at Squaw Creek; Feb. 7 at 3pm at St. Theresaâ€™s Catholic Church in South Lake Tahoe; and Feb. 9 at 7:30pm atTrinity Episcopal Church in Reno.

General admission at the door is $25 adults, $15 seniors, $5 students, and children under 12 are free with a paying adult. Preferred seating is $35 ($40 at the resorts).

Reserved and unreserved tickets may be purchased in advance with a credit card at www.sierranevadaartsalliance.org.

For more information or preferred seating, call (775)313-9697.

Visit www.ToccataTahoe.com.

Duet fundraiser at LTCC

Mark Williams, Lake Tahoe Community College music instructor, will be singing duets with some of the areaâ€™s best divas to raise money for a concert grand piano for the collegeâ€™s music department. â€œIt Takes Two: A Broadway Valentineâ€ will be Feb. 6 at 8pm in the Duke Theatre.

Tickets will be a $20 donation.

â€œIn trying to think of an idea for a fundraiser, I thought it might be fun to do an evening of duets with lots of my female friends with whom I have performed over the years,â€ Williams said. â€œI contacted 16 ladies from South Lake Tahoe, Gardnerville, Minden, Carson City, Reno, and Incline Village, the majority of whom have been my leading ladies in a show, or have performed leading roles in shows for which I have done the musical direction.â€

Susan Boulanger â€œIt Takes Twoâ€ (Into the Woods)

Sharon Kerrigan â€œAs Long as Youâ€™re Mineâ€ (Wicked)

Michelle Sennings â€œCome What Mayâ€ (Moulin Rouge)

Joanie San Agustin â€œThe Last Night of the Worldâ€ (Miss Saigon) Dan Lancaster, alto saxophone

Cindy Sabatini â€œAll I Ask of Youâ€ (Phantom of the Opera)

Moe Leonard Accompanist

Diana Evans â€œBaby, Itâ€™s Cold Outsideâ€ (For the Boys)

Stephanie Grigsby â€œIt Couldnâ€™t Please Me Moreâ€ (Cabaret)

Catherine Cook â€œSue Meâ€ (Guys and Dolls)

Liz Niven â€œHow Could I Ever Knowâ€ (The Secret Garden)

Ania Helwing â€œTonightâ€ (West Side Story)

Salli Parker Accompanist

Olivia Hakel â€œMake Believeâ€ (Show Boat)

Carolyn Lancaster â€œIf I Loved Youâ€ (Carousel)

Suzie Tagayev â€œWe Kiss in a Shadowâ€ (The King and I)

Saundra Whitt â€œYou and Iâ€ (Chess)

Sarah Pennebaker â€œYou are my Homeâ€ (The Scarlet Pimpernel)

Stephanie Williams â€œTake Me as I Amâ€ (Jekyll and Hyde)

Cindy Sabatini Accompanist

Finale (Company): There’s No Business Like Show Business (Annie Get Your Gun)

Google guru keynote speaker at Nevada tourism conference

Google strategist Ryan Denny will reveal 10 quick ways to succeed in online advertising when he addresses the Nevada Commission on Tourismâ€™s 20th annual Rural Roundup conference in Winnemucca March 24-26.

Denny, a travel industry advertising expert for the online search engine giant Google, is keynote speaker March 25 at the three-day conference in the Winnemucca Convention Center. He will provide quick and easy ideas for creating and measuring successful, big-impact online advertising.

â€œOnline advertising strategies are a hot topic for the tourism industry, and rural Nevada communities that don’t have the luxury of an online marketing department will benefit from sessions on how best to utilize 21st century technology to achieve their goals,â€ said Brian Krolicki, Nevada lieutenant governor and NCOT chair, in a press release.

Delegates will learn how to: evaluate their websites, fill out a winning application for an NCOT rural grant, build itineraries that promote local attractions, appeal to international visitors, make the most of social media, search engines and Web surfing, maximize a return on marketing dollars, develop a visitor profile and follow up leads for new business.

Concluding a daylong series of workshops, Roger Brooks, an internationally recognized expert on how communities can attract more visitors, will describe what works best for â€œThe New Age of Rural Tourism.â€ Brooks, of Destination Development International, has analyzed and guided more than 800 communities, including many in rural Nevada.

NCOT will present the annual VolunTourism Awards for outstanding achievement in each of the six tourism â€œterritoriesâ€ at the annual Rural Roundup awards dinner March 25.

U.S. Olympic ski team in TV movie



On Saturday, the U.S. Alpine Ski Team will appear from a vantage never shown on television, let alone prime time television, as NBC premiers “Truth in Motion: The U.S. Ski Team’s Road to Vancouver” at 8pm.

With just two weeks remaining until the Vancouver Olympics, the Audi-funded documentary covers the gritty lives of these skiers in their quest for Olympic gold.

“Truth in Motion” stars 2010 U.S. Olympic Alpine Ski Team athletes Ted Ligety (Park City, UT), Sarah Schleper (Vail, CO), Jake Zamansky (Aspen, CO) and Tommy Ford (Bend, OR). There are also cameo appearances by Bode Miller (Franconia, NH), Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO) and Scott Macartney (Crystal Mountain, WA) along with numerous coaches and ski technicians who support this Team.

Directed by Academy Award nominee Brett Morgen, the film takes you inside the locker room in every aspect of the being an elite ski racer, only their locker room is Portillo, Chile; Saas Fee, Switzerland; Soelden, Austria, on airplanes, long car rides and hotel rooms across the globe.

There is a noted lack of glamour as the film takes you through pre-dawn wakeup calls to check lactate levels and stretch before riding a frozen chairlift to work. The athletes are candid, raw and provide an insight to their sport that cannot be seen in a two-minute race.

Habitat for Humanity lessons

go beyond building houses

By Michelle Filippini

Assistant Business Professor Emily Rhodenbaugh, Senior Lecturer Laura Brunel-Canale and 10 Sierra Nevada College students recently returned from a trip to El Salvador where they helped build a house with Habitat for Humanity.

According to Habitat for Humanity Country Director Patty Cordero, â€œThe leadership of the (SNC) group was exemplary, and the group members did an excellent job working toward their objectives.â€

SNC student Todd McAtavey reflected on his experiences in El Salvador. “I’m hoping that we see some real change in the social safety nets with the new FMLN administration.”

McAtavey traveled to Africa last semester and was able to make clear comparisons with what is happening in Africa and in Latin America regarding the inequalities that exist in the developing world.

SNC student Bob Hansen, under the guidance of SNC science Professor Steve Ellsworth, is pursuing research related to deforestation in El Salvador and spent his free time searching for old-growth trees while in the country.

Said Rhodenbaugh, â€œBob’s research proved to be valuable to the entire group as we all learned about current environmental concerns in El Salvador, as well as programs that were helping to mitigate these issues.â€ She went on to say that she foresees a Spanish, international studies, and even a science component as being useful disciplines for future trips.

SNC students will be completing creative critical thinking pieces based on their El Salvador experiences that will manifest in a variety of public forms across campus next semester.

Anza Jarschke from the Fine Arts Department is looking to point out the absurdity of painting concrete cinder blocks with water-based paint in a interpretive art piece, and Renee Vock and Arielle Shipe are planning to construct photo essays to be hung around campus that will document with photos and words their experience in El Salvador.

The students look forward to sharing their creative pieces with the Sierra Nevada College community.

There will be future opportunities for faculty, students, and community members to participate with SNC's broad-based International Service Learning trips. The college hopes to have another Habitat for Humanity trip opportunity available in December.

For more information, contact Emily Rhodenbaugh at erhodenbaugh@sierranevada.edu or (775) 831.1547, or Laura Brunel-Canale at lbrunelcanale@sierranevada.edu or (775) 831-1547.

Michelle Filippini is a senior development writer at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village.

Help for El Dorado, Placer, Alpine county workers

By Kathy Robertson, Sacramento Business Journal

The Golden Sierra Workforce Investment Board has teamed up with the California Employers Association to use $220,000 in federal stimulus funds to provide free employment advice and support to area businesses and job seekers.

The partners have launched a human relations hotline and a series of business assistance workshops for employers in Placer, El Dorado and Alpine counties.

Read the whole story