Tahoe’s talk of Vancouver, Jan. 22

Publisher’s note: *Lake Tahoe News’ Opening Day at Whistler. Staff is at the site of the Winter Olympics to ski the mountains before Lake Tahoe athletes go after gold here in February.*

By Kathryn Reed

WHISTLER, British Columbia – Living in the mountains would make me think seeing other mountains would not make me giddy.

But they did.



Mountains and water surround Vancouver. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Driving the Sea to Sky Highway on Friday afternoon was incredible. This 1.5-hour span from Vancouver to Whistler is breathtaking.

Sitting with a couple guys in the hot tub just minutes ago we learned that itâ€™s even better now that the Olympics are about to arrive. This is because road crews have cleared out a number of trees to provide even more opportunities to see the spectacular views.

At times I was reminded of Patagonia, being along the fjords and seeing the mountains touch the water. At other times I was reminded of Switzerland with the jagged peaks seeming to scrape the partly cloudy sky.

Superlatives donâ€™t do this highway justice.

Leading up to this last leg of our car trip was the 2.5-hour journey from Seattle to Vancouver.

It was one of those fortuitous times when the road meanders through this city of about 3.5 million people (thatâ€™s what the hot tub guys said it is and they live there). The architecture runs the gamut of early English when it was settled to ugly 1970s to some Victorian to modern.

The views â€“ use your favorite superlative. Water is everywhere. Mountains are here and beyond.

Itâ€™s time to finish the glass of Jackson-Triggs Esprit 2006 Merlot â€“ a BC wine that is going down smoothly with the house made chocolates from the pastry chef at the Fairmont â€“ time to go get some real nourishment before we get first chair in the morning.

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Heavenly execs work the line at Bread & Broth

Heavenly Mountain Resort’s senior staff left the mountain and converged in the kitchen at Bread & Broth this week to serve more than 75 locals in need of a hot meal.

In addition to providing volunteers to cook, serve meals and clean dishes at St. Theresa’s Grace Hall, Heavenly also donated $250 to sponsor the evening, with a promise from Blaise Carrig, COO at Heavenly and the evening’s chief bottle washer, for another $500 to go toward new pots and pans.



Michael Allen, from l-r, Casey Blann, Brandy Thomson, Steve Turner, Diane Weidinger, Blaise Carrig, Russ Mortellaro, Paul Pfotenhauer, Les Marsh

Carrig, Michael Allen, Casey Blann, Brandy Thomson, Steve Turner, Russ Mortellaro, Paul Pfotenhauer and Les Marsh brought an all hands on deck attitude and infectious enthusiasm to the job for the year’s first Adopt a Day of Nourishment, according to Bread & Broth officials.

For more information about Bread & Broth and sponsorship availability, contact Evye Szanto at (530) 570.7890 or evyeszanto@gmail.com.

From ragtime to swing

Nan Bostick’s â€œFrom Gaslight Ragtime to Electrified Swing Timeâ€ is Feb. 5 at 7pm at the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, 3050 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

Admission is $5.



Nan Bostick

Bostick will present her history of ragtime program in the local schools Feb. 1-5.

The event is sponsored by Tahoe Arts Project.

South Shore chamber on rebranding mission

By Kathryn Reed

Tonight the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce will

unveil its rebranding campaign for the 3-year-old entity.

â€œWe are going to try to do a better job of communication with our members and the community,â€ chamber President Patrick Atherton told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Going forward the chamber wants to better articulate its message, explain what it does and show-off how it is helping the community. Chamber officials have said they are going to let all media on the South Shore know whatâ€™s going on. This hasnâ€™t always been the case. Press releases in the past have only been sent to the media who belong to the chamber and phone calls have not always been returned promptly.

At tonightâ€™s gathering at Edgewood Tahoe from 5:30-7:30 the new logo will be officially unveiled. It was released to the media this morning.

The chamber is also going to promote its abbreviated name – Tahoe Chamber â€“ which is in line with its web address, www.TahoeChamber.org.

For more information about the chamber, call (775) 588.1728.

Soroptimist recognize STHS seniors for their achievements

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Grades are important, but what makes these four young women standout among their peers is the complete package.

“These extraordinary young women truly deserve this recognition,” South Tahoe High Principal Ivone Larson said. Larson was speaking about Sandra Zepeda, Catherine Kushner, Rachel Kaufer and Alexis Holmes.

On Wednesday, the four seniors were honored by Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe as Young Women of Distinction.



Sandra Zepeda, l-r, Catherine Kushner, Rachel Kaufer, Alexis Holmes

The lunch at Harrah’s Tahoe brought out a throng of representatives from the high school as well as relatives of the honorees. Larson introduced each of the girls, highlighting their academic careers and what the future may hold for them.

Zepeda credits her mother for teaching her important life lessons. She credits her father for teaching her that accomplishing her dreams should be at the top of her list.

“Photography is not just her passion, it’s her calling,” Larson said. “It’s her dream to be the people’s photographer.”

Zepeda also has an interest in becoming a pastry chef.

Larson spoke of Kushner’s 4.29gpa. She rattled off a slew of music related accomplishments that Kushner has achieved.

Kushner is also the senior class president and in the S Club.

â€œI know when I graduate I want to join a group like this and make a difference in the world,â€ Kushner said upon receiving her award.

Going to South Africa was a life-changing trip for Kaufer, Larson told the group. It was from that experience that Kaufer decided to pursue a career in journalism. Her goal is to cover political and environmental issues.

Kaufer thanked her family, saying, “Without their constant encouragement, I wouldn’t be where I am.”

Holmes has followed in her family’s footsteps when it comes to athletic achievements. She has lettered 12 times – the most she could.

She wants to write screenplays for Hollywood, be a professional golfer and live in Lake Tahoe.

“You are a legend in your own time,” Larson said of Holmes.

Wii snags Tahoe athletes for snowboarding game

Just in time for the world to celebrate prime snowboarding season, Destineer announces the imminent release of Triple Crown Championship Snowboarding for Wii starring Hannah Teter of South Lake Tahoe, Gretchen Bleiler, and Lindsey Jacobellis.

The game features three of the national snowboarding team’s biggest female athletes in their natural element, strapped onto snowboards that are rocketing down mountains or pulling

off physics-bending tricks in the halfpipe. Teter, Bleiler, and Jacobellis have captured title after title in events like the X Games, US Open, World Championships, and the Winter Olympic Games along with awards and accolades for their sportsmanship, activism and all-around domination of the snowboarding world.

Gold medalistÂ Teter says in a press release about Triple Crown Championship Snowboarding, “We are all friends yet are super competitive, especially when we are riding against each other at contests around the world. Triple Crown Championship Snowboarding lets gamers everywhere test themselves against us in fun re-creations of our specialty events. The game being on Wii allows you to do maneuvers to challenge riders like me.”

Triple Crown Championship Snowboarding puts these amazing women front and center, sharing the spotlight with the top two male snowboardcross riders Nate Holland of Squaw Valley and Seth Westcott in Snowboard Cross, Halfpipe, and Slopestyle events.

With a nail-biting sensation of speed, players can choose to master the mountain and ride with the best using traditional Wii controls or use the Balance Board for an extra layer of riding simulation. Triple Crown Championship Snowboarding is priced at $29.99 and will be released exclusively for Wii in February.

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".*

Olympic author to speak in South Tahoe

What: "Snowball's Chance" author David Antonucci presents a complete account of the preparations, pageantry, ceremonies, competitions and epilogues of the historic VIII Olympic Winter Games. Books will be available for purchase following the presentation.

This program is free and refreshments will be provided.

Where: Explore Tahoe: An Urban Trailhead, 4114 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in the Heavenly Village next to Cecil's Plaza.

When: Jan. 28, 6pm

For more information, contact Lauren Thomaselli at (530) 542.4637 or lthomaselli@cityofslt.us.

Bijou students bake some scholarships

By Laurie Brazil

Bijou students are not only academically talented, but are selfless in their good works for our community.

On a recent Thursday morning at the Senior Center, fifth-grade teacher Bob Hickman brought along four of his dedicated female students to share and explain their hard work and vision to â€œpay it forwardâ€.



Bijou has many fund-raising efforts in place, but the young ladies were there to introduce themselves and illuminate the members of the Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra about their yummy â€œCookies for Collegeâ€ project. The girls – Rosa the student body president, Jennifer originally from El Salvador who has aspirations to be a doctor, Kimberly only a two-year resident of the United States intending to become a lawyer, and Melissa Lee born in Lake Tahoe and attending local schools since kindergarten – graciously spoke to the group at the organizationâ€™s early morning meeting. The intent of their cookie baking and selling project is to raise funds to present scholarships to graduating seniors heading off to college who are previous students at Bijou Community School.

Last year their bake sale program, in addition to recycling, walk-a-thons, and food drives, enabled the elementary students to present $650 scholarships to three local seniors.

Hickman, their enthusiastic mentor, thanked the assembled club for their encouragement in the past and their continued financial support of their enterprise. His devotion to these wonderful children was evident and to show the Soroptimistâ€™s

appreciation to the Bijou Community Schoolâ€™s student body the ingredients for several batches of chocolate chip cookies was gifted for future batches.

For more information or to purchase cookies, call(530) 543.2337 or visit www.ltusd.org. For Soroptimist information, visit www.sitahoesierra.org.

Laurie Brazil is a member of Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra.

Lone Eagle Grille adds musician

Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe is changing its music lineup. Ben Fuller will split the year with Luke Stevenson, a 15-year veteran of the Incline Village establishment.

Fuller begins Jan. 21 with his original tunes and cover songs. He will be at the bar every Thursday through Saturday evening until May 27. To celebrate Fullerâ€™s arrival, Lone Eagle Grille will host a welcome event on Jan. 28 with drink and menu specials and a chance for locals to meet the new talent.



Ben Fuller

Fuller was selected following an extensive search after

Stevenson announced an annual six-month hiatus in the Galapagos Islands.

A graduate of Incline High School, Fullerâ€™s focus on music sharpened in college at University of Montana. He moved from Missoula to Oregon, finding his footing in Portlandâ€™s burgeoning music scene. Performing with numerous bands ranging stylistically from bluegrass to alternative country to pop to rock has influenced his style, and Fuller credits his experiences traveling the world and his openness to new experiences as major inspirations for his music.

Fuller returned to the Lake Tahoe area two and a half years ago. His solo “EP, Aquarian Son” will be released in March.