

Tahoe Tallac Association fires executive director



By Kathryn Reed

When the 2010 season opens for the Tahoe Tallac Association in five weeks, it will be under the direction of new leadership.

Steve Farnsley, who had been executive director for a little more than two years, was let go earlier this month. In his place on an interim basis is Lori Cramer. Cramer gave up her role as a board member, which she has had on and off for about five years, in order to take the helm.

The association runs festivals and theater performances at the Tallac Site near Camp Richardson off Highway 89 on the South Shore from spring through fall.

The entire Tallac Historic Site is 74 acres. The Valhalla Grand Hall, Boathouse Theatre, and twin cabins that house the gift shop and artists in residence are leased by the association from the U.S. Forest Service. The agreement calls for 20 percent of the association's gross going toward restoration of the site.

At times the association and Forest Service have been at odds. Cramer said she met this week with the federal agency.

"It's a brand new day," she said of the relationship. "We all agreed to act as a team."

Cramer has been spending the last few days making sure

everything is in order – which so far it is. She's familiarizing herself with the contracts and festival list. This will be the 31st year of the Valhalla Arts and Music Festival.

"I already know everybody so I don't have to learn the ins and outs of a new community. Hopefully, that will help," Cramer said. "I don't know if you will notice big changes except my goal is to get more community exposure."

One thing she wants to do is have the Valhalla building open when events aren't going on. She would like tours led by volunteers.

The other thing the new director wants to do is secure more members. She wants to create a sense of ownership for locals of this site and the events.

For the past 15 years Cramer has run Sierra Weddings. She will continue to that for now.

"I'm always trolling for new opportunities out there. I don't see this as a complete change. I see it as an expansion of events," Cramer said.

Cramer is the fifth executive director in the association's history. Carol Spain and a handful of others are credited with making the Tahoe Tallac Association a reality. Spain left for the Bay Area in 2002.

"There's definitely been a hole since Carol Spain. She was a tremendous woman. To be sitting in her shoes is a huge honor for me," Cramer said.

Board President Eric Taxer said the board would take a close look this summer at what it wants from an executive director, restructure job duties, look at the salary and seek to hire someone permanently when the season is over in the fall.

Taxer would not elaborate on what led the board to sever

relations with Farnsley.

For the Tahoe Tallac Association's 2010 list of events, click [here](#).