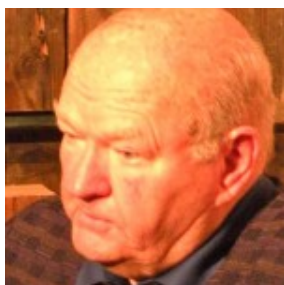


Miller's lifetime achievement award to cap 2-day film festival

By Kathryn Reed

Warren Miller, at 81, was clearly the oldest person at the party. Put him on skis and age would not be a factor.

Miller is on the South Shore this weekend for the X-Dance Action Sports Film Festival, which features the top international films on wakeboarding, surfing, mountain biking, skateboarding, snowboarding and skiing. The man who is credited as the founder of action sports movies will receive a lifetime achievement award Saturday at MontBleu in Stateline.



Filmmaker Warren Miller will receive a lifetime achievement award in Tahoe on Saturday. Photo/Kathryn Reed

On Thursday night Miller was poolside at 968 Park Hotel mingling with professional athletes, media and invited guests.

It's that voice of his that still resonates after all of these years. It's not much different in person than it is on film.

What is different now is that the man who started extreme ski films, and one could easily argue the founder of any type of extreme athletic movie, isn't really in the business. Time Warner bought his company five years ago.

He's in town to inspire the young filmmakers following in his footsteps more than six decades after he started his career.

Brain Wimmer, director and founder of the film festival, was on hand as well. He told stories of meeting locals and talking about what he wanted to do. They all said Todd Offenbacher already does that with the Tahoe Adventure Film Festival. Offenbacher, who has recently moved back to the South Shore from the North Shore, was at Thursday's gig in complete support of this festival.

Though not a founder of the festival, Solomon Aflalo is now part owner of it. He is also the principle owner of 968 Park Hotel.

"I'm interested in action sports and to promote young people," Aflalo said.

His main job in Agoura Hills is insurance. He insures many of the extreme athletes.

Miller and many of the athletes on the big screen this weekend are staying at 968 Park.

X-Dance Film Festival started in 2001 and coincides with the Sundance Film Festival each year. The winners are premiering in Tahoe.

Event Schedule:

July 11:

Doors open at 4pm, with films starting at 5pm. The after party is inside Harrah's Lake Tahoe Vex Nightclub. The following films will be shown at MontBleu Theatre:

- "Signatures" –Winner of Emerging Filmmaker and Best Cinematography artful and mesmerizing film pays homage to the beauty of winter and riding in Hokkaido, Japan. This Zen journey inspires reflection and thought with its stunning images and smart narrative.
- "Fiberglass and Megapixels" – Winner of Best Editing a smart and engaging film follows the North Shore's winter surfing scene and the photographers and cinematographers who compete for the perfect shot.
- "Zen and Zero" – Winner of Best Director and Best Story is a philosophical and comedic film that tracks five landlocked Austrians as they journey on a surf trip from L.A. to Costa Rica while and investigating the myth of the surfer dude.
- "BMX Bandits" – Winner of Best Short Film brings to life an animated music video following a boy and his BMX bike.
- "Skating Through The Ashes" – Winner of Best Story, a gritty documentary tells the tale of a group of hardcore pool skaters in the Berkeley Hills after the infamous 1991 fires.
- "Parks Bonifay Documentary" – Winner of Best Biography, an in-depth compelling documentary spotlights wakeboard master, Parks Bonifay, who set his first world record waterskiing at age six months and stands today was the most decorated progressive wakeboarder.

June 12:

Doors open at 4:30pm, with films starting at 5:30pm. Live music from Shwayze begins at 9pm and keeps the night rocking at Opal Ultra Lounge at MontBleu. The after party continues at Blu Nightclub with Pop Fiction. The following films will be

shown at MontBleu Theatre:

- “The Drifter” – Winner of Best Soundtrack, Best Director and star Rob Machado took Athlete of the Year, this brilliant film by Taylor Steele follows surfer Rob Machado to the far reaches of Indonesia on a soul-searching surf odyssey.
- “Second Nature” – Winner of Best Short Film, this highly entertaining and uber creative film that follows Noah Sakamoto and Patrick Rizzo and J.M Duran as they fly down the mountain roads of the High Sierra on skateboards at crazy speeds in blue suits.
- “Mount St. Elias” – Winner of Best Film and Best Adventure Film, tells the story of ski alpinist Axel Maglich’s attempt to climb and then complete the longest ski descent ever from the peak of Alaska’s Mount St. Elias to sea level. The gripping story, tension-filled journey and gorgeous cinematography, leaves audiences spellbound.

Individual screenings are \$8 per film. Friday all-day pass includes wristbands to the nightclub is \$25. Saturday all-day pass \$35 includes Shwayze concert is \$35. All Access two-night ticket includes all screenings, Vex Nightclub After Party on Friday, and Shwayze Concert and Opal Ultra Lounge After Party on Saturday is \$51.

For more information and tickets [click here](#).