

Darren Johnson fundraiser

On Jan. 6, the Slowrollers Bike Club is hosting the annual "After Christmas Christmas Party" to benefit local friend and skier Darren Johnson. Johnson was caught in an avalanche backcountry skiing near Kirkwood on Nov. 28.

The path took him over a rock cliff, and while amazingly he didn't have any injuries from the neck down, he sustained massive head trauma. After being airlifted to Reno, surgery added a metal plate to his head, another under his left eye, which he'd almost lost. After 10 days in ICU, Johnson remained hospitalized for another 20 days and is now in a rehab unit in Las Vegas for two to three months. Despite all that trauma, he has no brain loss, but the left side of his face has extensive nerve damage.

DJ, as he's known to friends, is an experienced backcountry skier and has skied all along the Sierra with childhood pal, Glen Plake, among others. Growing up in South Lake Tahoe with Plake, the two were featured in several Greg Stump ski films in the 1980s.

The benefit is at Mo's Place from 6-9pm, 3600 Lake Tahoe Blvd. in South Lake Tahoe.

There will be a place to make donations at the door, along with raffle and auction items.

For those who can't make the event, an account has been set up for Darren at Bank of the West, under the name of Andy Kaufer.