

North Shore 10-day SnowFest expands list of events

North Lake Tahoe celebrates its long winter season with SnowFest, a 10-day carnival March 2-11 at a variety of venues throughout North Lake Tahoe.

In its 31st year, SnowFest, presented by the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, is expected to draw thousands of attendees, with the majority of events free to spectators. New events include the Snow Fiesta in Kings Beach with its mariachi bands, authentic Mexican food served a la carte and piñatas; the Snow "What" Building Contest, where contestants build their most creative snow display; the Truckee River Winery Ice Carving Extravaganza with ice sculptures and games; as well as the adults-only Paws & Claws Pub Crawl starting in Incline Village and ending in the Crystal Bay casino corridor.

The annual favorites are back, along with expanded special events, including the Opening Night Ceremonies, Laser Show, Torchlight Parade and Fireworks at Squaw Valley (March 2), which has partnered with World Champion medalist and former alpine ski racer Daron Rahlves. Rahlves and his Olympic buddies will officially kick off SnowFest and the Rahlves' Banzai Tour at the Opening Night Ceremonies. The tour, scheduled for March 3-4, is a race that combines mountain freeride action with ski and boarder cross strategy in a mad-dash race with stops at regional ski resorts with the winner taking home a significant cash prize.

Also scheduled is the Mamasake Extreme Food Challenge for those with a strong stomach; 22nd Annual Gar Woods Polar Bear Swim in Tahoe's frigid waters; SnowFest Parades in Tahoe City and Kings Beach; Sunnyside Luau on the West Shore; the Great Ski Race, a 30-kilometer cross country race from Tahoe City to Truckee; Tahoe City's Wacky Winter Human Bowling with snow

saucers and inflatable pins and “Dog Pull”; the Dummy Downhill at Diamond Peak in Incline Village; the highly creative and 24th Annual Snow Sculpture Contest at Tahoe City’s River Ranch Lodge; Special Olympics Polar Plunge at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe; and the 4th annual Ta-Hoe Nalu Arctic Standup Paddleboard Race in Kings Beach.

For more information about SnowFest and a complete list of events, go online.