

Tahoe residents protest in mini occupy movement

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe residents may not protest by the hundreds or thousands like larger areas, but they were part of Friday's nationwide solidarity movement that is part of the larger Occupy Wall Street movement which started two months ago.

Horns honked and fists pumped from the vehicles that passed the approximately 20 people who were in front of Heavenly Village carrying signs that read: "Remove \$\$\$ from politics", "Bail me out", "We are the 99%", and "End corporate personhood".



Michele Sterling at Occupy Lake Tahoe on Nov. 17.

Michele Sterling spent her lunch break showing her support.

"I feel it's time we stood up for ourselves. The disparity of income is growing more and more each year," Sterling, a bus driver with Lake Tahoe Unified School District, said.

This was the second demonstration of what organizer Tracy Africa hopes will be regular gatherings in South Lake Tahoe.

Last week's demonstration at Bank of America had about 16 supporters. The goal is to have a weekly event.

Occupy Tahoe is on Facebook. Notices of future meetings as well as demonstrations will be posted there as well as through Meet Up and Move On.

Heavenly Village was picked more for its location and being a high trafficked area, Africa said, than the fact it is anchored by two Marriott properties that are separated by Vail Resorts-owned Heavenly Gondola.

"If you come here, you should go to the local businesses," Africa said.

While corporate America is well represented at the village, as well as the casinos down the street that were in view of the demonstrators, corporate employees were lining up to enjoy the perk their employer was giving them. Heavenly employees could ski for three hours Nov. 17.



Demonstrators in South Lake Tahoe show their allegiance.

The irony seemed to go unnoticed by the protestors – that many of the 99 percent they are marching for would rather ski than walk along Highway 50 carrying a sign.

Africa said the Tahoe group supports the goals of Occupy Wall

Street:

- More jobs.
- More health care.
- Fix the political process.
- Remove corporations from the government.
- Reduce the political influence of the wealthy.
- Economic justice.
- Punish the criminals who caused the Wall Street crash.
- Greater regulation of the banks.
- Greater regulation of the market.
- Tax the wealthy and use the money for education.
- Free speech without fear of penalty.
- Stop making wars and focus on peace.

But some of those out on this biting cold and windy day believe so strongly about what is going that they drove from the North Shore to participate because they said the people on the other end of the lake have yet to organize.

Trudy Lesem and Gwen Rosser came down from Tahoe Vista for the Nov. 17 peaceful demonstration.



Gwen Fox-Tyson

came from
Kings Beach to
show her
support.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

“I feel the country is going in the wrong direction. Politicians are being bought by big corporations and money corrupts,” Lesem said. “Things must change if we are going to continue to be a thriving democracy.”

Rosser said, “People who are fed up with conditions need to make changes. I (wondered) for a long time – Where is all the anger?”

Frustration, more than anger, was the emotion expressed by those in South Tahoe during the noon-4pm event.

Gwyn Fox-Tyson of Kings Beach wants to get rid what she calls freeloaders as well as not having politicians in bed with big business.

“The American people can’t fulfill their dreams anymore,” Fox-Tyson said.