

# Meyers creates sense of place without fancy ad agency

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – Embracing and celebrating what they have. That’s what Meyers is doing.

“Our little niche out here is we are a recreation Mecca,” Rene Brejc said.

“We are celebrating Meyers tonight,” Kim Wyatt said.

“Our 10-year plan is to be one of the top 10 outdoor places in *Outside* magazine,” Josh Welch said.



Santa is escorted by sheriff's Deputy Damian Frisby Dec. 9 to all the waiting children in Meyers.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

These three people live and work in Meyers. For them, and many others who call this hamlet at the base of Echo Summit home,

Meyers is already on the map. They don't struggle with who they are, what they want to be, or why they live and work where they do.

For others, though, Meyers is merely where the bus station is, the first or last gas stop in or out of the basin, or just another place to slow down before going 55 on Highway 50 again.

That is about to change.

Friday night was the first event put on by what is loosely being called the Meyers Business Group. Brejc of Got it Real Estate & Development Corp., Wyatt of Bona Fide Books, and Welch of Safe Haven Chiropractic are the backbone of a grass roots movement to unite the business community, while at the same time sharing with others just what it is Meyers has to offer.

On Dec. 9 they attracted about 300 people to the parking lot of Divided Sky for the inaugural tree lighting. (About 75 more were warm inside.) It may have been the first time locals caused a traffic jam in Meyers.

Three-year-old Kylee Caudillo had one of the best seats of the night – atop her grandpa Jon Kolb's shoulders. He has been on the South Shore for 42 years, most of that time in Meyers, and can't remember a time when there was a tree lighting.

Savannah Caudillo, 9, of Meyers was giddy in anticipation of seeing the "special surprise" – aka Santa's sleigh.

The crowd went wild as the hum of a helicopter could be heard coming from the north. Ah ... that would be CalStar with Santa onboard. After all, when Santa was asked where his reindeer were, he told all the boys and girls that the animals were home resting for the big event later this month.

As the helicopter circled the area a few times looking for a

spot not filled with a vehicle, the pilot decided to land in the lot neighboring where everyone had gathered. Kids and adults ran through the field to greet the helicopter. His special elves, aka law enforcement, made sure the little ones didn't rush the chopper.

Under escort by an El Dorado County sheriff's deputy, Santa was led to the decorated Lake Valley fire truck to talk to every child who wanted to whisper in his ear.

Clutching free cups of hot cocoa to ward off the bitter cold 28-degree Tahoe night, (or is that Meyers night?), adults could be overheard saying what a wonderful event, why didn't it happen sooner, and they hoped more events are planned.

More are in the works.

When the snow begins to fly and enough is on the ground, a snowman, woman, family, village – (depends how much white stuff there is) – will be created in a communal effort.

The Meyers Business Group intends to focus on art, culture, recreation, and health and wellness.

Events are one thing, but creating a more cohesive sense of community is another goal. Sprucing up some of the dilapidated buildings is on the to-do list.

Brejc wants to continue the "wow factor" of being at the top of Echo Summit all the way through Meyers.

While Brejc, Wyatt and Welch know plenty of reasons to stop in Meyers – each of their businesses, the restaurants, the yoga-Pilates studio that just opened, among other reasons – they want more people to see Meyers as a place to go to, not drive through.

For the Dec. 9 event all but one business that was asked to donate money did so. Collaboration and cooperation seem to come naturally to folks in Meyers.

As a gateway to Desolation Wilderness, an area with road and mountain biking, rock climbing, bouldering, backcountry skiing, cross country skiing, fly fishing and other sports – Meyers is the outdoors – not a gateway to it.

A logo and tagline are in the works for the group. The idea is there will be more ways to unify Meyers.

Brejc is the person to contact for anyone wanting to know more about the Meyers Business Group – (530) 577.7111. The group also has a Facebook page – search Meyers Community.

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