

Benefits of Tahoe holiday bazaar stretch to Africa

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – While the cha-ching of cash registers could not be heard, the swiping of credit cards across the Square was evident as people turned out en masse to buy local and think global.

Halfway into the Dec. 1 event more than 100 people had filtered through the doors of Bona Fide HQ in Meyers to peruse the 11 booths filled with items from local artisans. Books, jewelry, pottery, glassware, hand knit hats, photography and more were filling bags as people shopped for themselves and others.

Organizers of the second annual Zawadisha Holiday Bazaar were all smiles with the turn out.

“Zawadisha has sought to develop an effective microfinance program to improve the lives of Kenyan women and their families,” Jen Gurecki, founder of Zawadisha, wrote in a column for *Lake Tahoe News* describing her global enterprise.



The second annual Zawadisha Holiday Bazaar brings out hundreds to Meyers. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Once a year she sells items she has brought back from Kenya. All the money goes to her nonprofit. (Vendors paid a fee to be at the event, which goes to Zawadisha.) Gurecki works with a wholesaler in Nairobi and also picks up things while doing work in Africa that she brings back to share with those in the United States. All are handmade and one-of-a-kind items.

Most of the items for sale on this blustery Saturday were unique.

Allie Broadhurst has been working with copper for the last seven years, but it's been just the last year that she has ventured into glasswork. All the glasses are hand etched and have a Tahoe theme.

Mostly it's middle of the night inspirations that drive her creativity. But flowers in her garden provided motivation for etchings on one pair of glasses.

While she doesn't have a storefront for Revive Tahoe, her work is sold at Gaia-Licious in South Lake Tahoe.



Allie Broadhurst creates original etchings on glasses.

Kim Wyatt, owner of Bona Fide Books in Meyers, and author Suzanne Roberts of South Lake Tahoe are doing a brisk business selling their books. People are telling them they thought

about buying their works on Amazon, but decided to keep all the cash local. (Amazon takes more than 50 percent from authors/publishers.)

Wyatt would like to see pop-up stores like this in Meyers every few months.

While this was a one-day event, it is an annual one.

“I want to build a community here to build a community there,” Gurecki said in regards to bringing awareness to Tahoe about the struggles of women and girls in Kenya and in turn helping them to have a better life.