

Hot dog king who once lived in Tahoe dies

By Scott Glover, Los Angeles times

John Galardi, a fast food entrepreneur best known for founding the Wienerschnitzel hot dog chain, has died of pancreatic cancer, his company announced. He was 75.

Galardi also had business dealings in South Lake Tahoe. He was a partner in the El Dorado Improvement Corporation and at one time owned the Rodeway Inn.

Galardi died Saturday, according to the company release.



John Galardi had ties to South Lake Tahoe.

Galardi opened the first Wienerschnitzel stand in L.A.'s Wilmington neighborhood in 1961 when he was 23, according to a company biography. It's now the world's largest hot dog chain, with 350 locations selling more than a 120 million hot dogs a year.

As his hot dog business took off, Galardi added the Original Hamburger Stand and Tastee Freez to his portfolio, all operated under the Galardi Group, based in Irvine, the bio said.

“He has touched countless lives through his generosity as a business leader and his legacy will forever live on,” Dennis Tase, who handles day-to-day operations of the company, said in a prepared statement.

“Galardi built a brand representative of a time when life was simpler, a brand that holds a special place in the hearts of so many families in America. He will be deeply missed.”

Galardi is survived by his wife, Judane, and his four children.