

Meyers nonprofit cultivates community synergy

By Kathryn Reed

While everybody might not know your name, you still feel comfortable among strangers.

This is Meyers.

It's a community unto itself. It has that sense of place; where you belong to something bigger, but not something so big that you get lost.

Going to South Lake Tahoe is going to town. When people talk about doing so it's almost like a burden. People who live in Meyers are prideful. They feel a little more connected to the outdoors. They are mountain people.

"We are unincorporated, so we have limited local governance. We are not doing any government stuff, but we are filling a civic pride void," David Reichel told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Reichel is the vice president of the Meyers Community Foundation. Community is what this nonprofit is all about it.

While the concept of the foundation came about in 2011, it was in 2014 that the group of locals secured its nonprofit, 501(c)3 status. A seven-member all-volunteer board runs the foundation. Other members are Rene Brejc, Kim Wyatt, Brian Levy, Tara Offenbacher, Christian Waskiewicz and Tim Cain.

For the group's sake, the boundaries of Meyer's are loosely defined since other parts of unincorporated El Dorado County – like Christmas Valley and Tahoe Paradise – flow into this enclave.

Brejc, Wyatt and Josh Welch started what was the Meyers

Business Group in 2011. It morphed into the community foundation. They along with others that year started what has become an annual tradition – the tree lighting at Divided Sky, with Santa arriving via CalStar helicopter and the Lake Valley fire engine all decorated in holiday lights.

The foundation now puts on this event, which this year will be Dec. 2 at 5pm. There is no cost – not even for the popcorn and hot cocoa.

Donations, though, are accepted.

The foundation's fall event is the gear swap.

"This made sense and fit Meyers. A lot of people have outdoor toys," Reichel said of the swap.

This is a money-maker for the foundation.

Another fund-raising event was launched this year – the OMG Fun Run in May. It was part serious running up Old Meyers Grade and part fun with people in costumes.

And while the events are all in Meyers and the money is staying there, people from everywhere are encouraged to participate.

The foundation wants to have a pot of money so it can help spur improvements throughout Meyers. People are encouraged to submit grant proposals year round. This year money was provided to help stock fish at Baron Lake at Tahoe Paradise Park and support a rock climbing project.

For more information about the Meyers Community Foundation or to donate to the cause, go **online**.