

Olympics – part athleticism, part political intrigue

By Susan Wood

The modern Olympic Games have come a long way over the last 100-plus years, with moments that stand out vividly and lessons that remind us how fragile, yet courageous, humanity from across the planet to the streets of Tahoe can be.

The Games – which were dedicated to Olympian Gods – can be traced back to 776 BC, with the first Olympiad isolated to ancient Greece featuring a stadium race. They continued for nearly 12 centuries until Emperor Theodosius decreed in 393 A.D. that all such “pagan cults” be banned.

The modern international Olympics opened in 1896 in Athens, the origin of the Olympic torch. The symbolic gesture burned at the altar of Zeus, signaling the beginning and end of the event. Many myths aside, the Greeks were fiercely competitive and enjoyed a good contest.



Walkway
leading to the
track at the
original
Olympics in
Olympia,
Greece.

Photo/Kathryn

Reed/1990

The addition of various sports through the years demonstrates that quest for athletic entertainment. Even the Greek calendar was based on the concept of the four-year Olympiad.

One of the most dramatic feats of the modern Olympics includes the triumph of the U.S. track and field team in 1896. The 10-man squad barely reached Athens in time to participate. They won nine out of a dozen events.

In 1912, Jim Thorpe – a Native American – became the only man to win the decathlon and pentathlon in one year. His medals were ripped away when officials learned he had played professional baseball. This was not the era of “the dream team.” They were later restored in 1982.

In 1936 in Berlin, Jesse Owens made his mark in history by taking home four gold medals, including a team medal. Being black, especially competing in Germany, was a feat in itself.

Four decades later, Nadia Comaneci of Romania received three gold medals and seven perfect scores – a first for Olympic gymnastics.

In 1972, the Summer Games were rocked by tragedy in Munich, West Germany, when Palestinian terrorists murdered 11 Olympic team members from Israel. Protests and boycotts over political skirmishes ensued through 1984 when the Games were staged in Los Angeles. The U.S. and some allies boycotted the 1980 Moscow Games, and Russia and other Eastern Bloc countries returned the gesture four years later.

But in the spirit of the Games, 1972 also marked a major year for milestones. U.S. swimmer Mark Spitz won a record seven gold medals at a single Olympics – only to witness Michael Phelps beat the record in Beijing in 2008.

Being an Olympian means overcoming adversity with the world

watching. After having set six world records in 1982, U.S. sprinter Mary Decker took a heartbreaking fall when she collided with Zola Budd two years later during the 3,000-meter final. The photo of the young sprinter became one of Time-Life's most recognized shots of the century.

Speed skater Dan Jansen confronted heartache head-on when the favored athlete lost his chance of bringing home gold in 1988 – the same day his sister died of leukemia. A stumble four years later kept him from earning any hardware. When he finally won gold and set a world record in 1994 on the Lillehammer, Norway, track, a tearful Jansen looked up as though his sister was watching. (He has retold that story as a competitor in the annual celebrity golf tournament on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe.)

Tahoe's slice of history

It was the Olympic Games of 1960 that placed Lake Tahoe on the map in both a gesture of bravery on the North Shore, and as some would put it, bravado on the South Shore.

South Lake Tahoe historian Betty Mitchell recalls how inspiring it was for the Tahoe region to host the games and for her to see them – sitting on a rooftop to watch ski jumping at Squaw and listening to the music of Walt Disney that still accompanies the Olympics of today.

“Having the Olympics in your country is always exciting, but (Alex) Cushing getting them here is a story in itself. It was a brave thing to do. I think he had a unique idea,” she said of the late founder of Squaw Valley. At the time it was a modest ski area with one rope tow and one chairlift.

Mitchell contends the South Shore should have embraced the Olympics around the lake instead of jacking up prices and “charging an arm and a leg” for lodging.

“The funny thing was, we were not very crowded during the

Olympics,” she said. “It’s sad. We don’t have the best reputation around the world you know.”

Still, the longtime resident admits to being enthusiastic about the prospect of a bid in 2022, and more timely, Squaw’s 50-year anniversary falling on the Olympics’ return to the West Coast in Vancouver beginning Feb. 12.

“I hope our kids do well,” she said, adding praise to Sierra-at-Tahoe’s contribution of sponsored athletes to the Olympics. The Tahoe region features a slew of athletes vying for a spot on the ski and snowboard teams – with Squaw’s Jonny Moseley headed to the NBC broadcast booth to give color on his Tahoe buddy Daron Rahlves in skiercross, among other sports.

“We should take pride. This is what this community does in winter. We used to wrap ourselves around skiing,” Mitchell said.

Timing is everything

Tahoe City historian David Antonucci is keeping the spirit and motivation alive by recently releasing a chronicle of the VIII Olympic Winter Games. The book, “Snowball’s Chance,” highlights the quest for gold and green at Squaw Valley.

Antonucci remembers the 1960 Winter Games as the first “techno” Olympics with updated electronic timers to clock the events.

Skating rinks also came into the picture at Squaw.

“Before, we used to have these events on frozen lakes,” he said. “We would have had to have them on Echo or Caples (lakes).”

Fifty years ago, the Games also featured the first biathlon – a sport Northstar-at-Tahoe this season put its weight behind by opening the only official course on the West Coast.

“This is fantastic and will do so much for this sport,” Antonucci said.

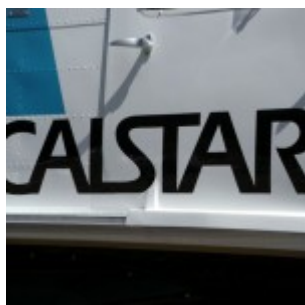
South Lake Tahoe resident, Martin Hollay, 89, who volunteered his efforts to build the 1960 cross country ski course in Tahoe City said the addition is inspiring to him.

“You know, I’ve gone out there and found shells from that time,” Hollay said.

Some parts of history never go away.

Publisher’s note: *Find out on Feb. 2 what a non-Olympian thinks about skiing the women’s and men’s downhill courses in Whistler.*

Rescue helicopter brings on two RNs



By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe’s Calstar base is now fully staffed at eight with the arrival of Stephen Poehls and Nathan Schwab.

Poehls and Schwab joined the Tahoe outfit late last year. Poehls had been doing the same type of work in Montana, while Schwab had worked between the Calstar bases in Salinas and Gilroy since September 2008.

“I went to Northstar-at-Tahoe (in December) and transported a patient that hit a tree. It was the first time I came into a very snowy landing zone,” Schwab said.

Winter is the busiest time of year for Calstar’s Tahoe base because of all the ski related injuries. Landing at a resort “ on snow or in a parking lot ” is not uncommon.

Assault victims are who Schwab was used to treating when working at the bases south of San Jose.

One of the reasons Poehls wanted to work in Lake Tahoe is because he would be in a similar mountain environment compared to where he came from. He and his fiancée, who is a nurse practitioner at Carson Tahoe Hospital, were also ready for a change. They are living in Minden.

Poehls said the crew in Tahoe works well together and is tight knit.

“We communicate with one another so we can overcome a lot of things having to work in a helicopter,” Poehls said. “We decide things before we put the patient in the aircraft to be efficient.”

The registered nurses work two 24-hour shifts each week. When they aren’t on a call, they are training. They have sleeping facilities at Lake Tahoe Airport so they never leave when on duty. It’s similar to a firehouse.

The Tahoe crew has traveled as far south as Mammoth, into eastern Nevada, west to about Georgetown and north to Susanville.

The next closest Calstar helicopter is in Jackson. It can be moved to Placerville to act as backup for Tahoe and Vacaville. It takes that bird 18 minutes to get from Placerville to South Tahoe.

The Tahoe crew regularly transports people to Barton Memorial

Hospital, but also to Reno hospitals that have more advanced medical facilities.

Calstar, which stands for California Shock/Trauma Air Rescue, started in 1984 in San Mateo. The operation at Lake Tahoe Airport began in 2001. The fixed wing and helicopter air ambulances have eight bases in Northern California.

South Shore Business Expo

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce's annual Business Expo at Harveys Convention Center is March 5 from 4-8pm.

The Expo will feature more than 75 local businesses, a silent auction and food and beverages from popular South Shore establishments.

For more information, visit www.tahoechamber.org or call (775) 588.1728.

Reno-Tahoe 2022 Winter Olympic Games?

By Susan Wood



The Winter Olympics is a hot ticket for those who are enthusiastic about cold weather sports. That's why the Reno-Tahoe Winter Games Coalition has not given up hope on hosting the world-renowned event again.

The group led by Chief Executive Officer Jon Killoran is so motivated to bring the Games back decades after Squaw Valley hosted them in 1960 that the board has agreed to engage in a game of chess in determining what year to bid for.

As it stands, the 2014 prospect once dreamed about by the late Reno Sports Commission Chairman Jim Vanden Heuvel moved to 2018. It was more recently bumped to 2022 once Chicago lost its bid for the Summer Games in 2016.

Killoran is still hopeful – especially since patience is the name of the game.

“I don't think there's a better North American region to host them than us. Mother Nature brings us this great skiing in close proximity to the Reno and Sacramento airports,” Killoran told *Lake Tahoe News* shortly after Chicago lost its bid.

He further explained how the International and U.S. Olympic committees evaluate the strength of the bid based on the prospect of mass ticket sales. The population bases of the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento and Reno provides that potential.

“We feel we stack very well against any other region with this,” he said.

And now, the USOC has a new chief executive officer, Scott Blackmun, who has expressed more interest in getting the Winter Games back in the United States in 2022.

The local coalition has been using the Winter Games in Salt Lake City in 2002 as a model for calculating the bottom line. Its budget came in at \$3 billion with a \$76 million profit.

This was also just five months after 9/11, so people were not traveling.

Venues built for the Games are recognized for bringing in revenue long after the athletes and organizers have packed up. The budget for the Games scheduled in Vancouver in February is set at \$1.6 billion.

Killoran said enthusiasts shouldn't lose hope since the region has had them before.

"In the modern Olympics, 50 years is a long time," he said. "They don't tend to return to a region too quickly."

He could have a point. The United States hosted them twice at Lake Placid, N.Y., in 1932 and 1980. Innsbruck, Austria, is another two-time location.

Whatever the case, the bid would represent a far-reaching effort – with organizers acknowledging widespread support would be necessary from the ski resorts and local government groups.

Transportation and environmental issues represent the top concerns for hosting the Games here. Most agree a mass transit system would need to be put into place and environmental watchdog groups would need to be behind it. As former South Lake Tahoe Mayor Tom Davis put it when the idea circulated in 2001: "That's going to be our biggest hurdle."

In the meantime, the coalition will focus on more short-term goals such as the West Coast AAU Junior Olympic Games. This event received joint support from the Nevada Youth Sports Commission and Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority.

For now, the latter has developed no economic impact report for hosting the 2022 Winter Games but pledges marketing support, according to RSCVA officials.

"We're more involved on the periphery for now," spokeswoman

Jill Stockton said.

Truckee Mayor Carolyn Dee, also Squaw's director of business administration, summed up the quest with a familiar Olympic theme: "Time will tell."

Other attempts have been made to bring the Games back to the Tahoe area. A group from Squaw tried for the 1976 games and a South Shore chamber of commerce had talked of going after the 1996 Games.

SLT goes forward with Upper Truckee River restoration

By Kathryn Reed

Assuming new vegetation along the Upper Truckee River near Lake Tahoe Airport is stable, work will continue next summer on this portion of the river.

The South Lake Tahoe City Council gave the go-ahead for the work to be completed even if the California Tahoe Conservancy doesn't have the money in hand to reimburse the city.



A water filled berm keeps the Upper Truckee

River out of
the new
channel near
Lake Tahoe
Airport.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

Even though the state sold bonds in October, the money has not been distributed.

“We are still waiting to see if any (bond money) will be for our projects,” Bruce Eisner, CTC program manager said. “We don’t have a time frame when the bonds appropriated to us will be funded.”

City Manager Dave Jinkens had suggested the council take the money from the capital improvement fund until CTC can reimburse the city. Councilmembers Bill Crawford and Hal Cole were the most vocal about that being a bad idea. They were not about to take more money from roads and the like. Already in the last fiscal year \$1 million was cut from that budget, which instead of leaving a monetary hole allowed potholes in South Tahoe to proliferate and grow in size.

The council unanimously agreed to borrow the \$536,709 from reserves if the CTC is not flush with cash when construction resumes.

Work on this reach of the Upper Truckee River started in summer 2008 and is expected to be complete in 2010.

The idea behind the various projects on the river, which is the largest tributary into Lake Tahoe, is to restore the river to its natural flow. Years ago it was straightened in various places, which has caused erosion problems, meadows to deteriorate, overgrowth of conifers in some locations and detrimental affects to wildlife.

As the walls of the river became steeper, it meant the natural flooding of meadows has ceased to occur.

“Before the airport was built, the floodplain encompassed the airport so it had a wider area to meander through,” explained Robert Erlich, South Tahoe engineering supervisor.

A new channel was built in 2008 that has a more natural curve. Vegetation was planted. A large water filled berm is keeping the river from flowing into the new channel. Footprints can be seen in the snow covered berm. A bear has punctured it in places, necessitating some patch work.

The plan is to gradually release the water into the new channel, which is closer to the airport, and then fill in the old channel with dirt.

This is just one of many sections of the river where work will be done. Above the airport section the river runs through Washoe Meadow State Park and the golf course that sits on state property. The environmental document for that section should be out in 2010.

Near Elks Club Road is the old Sunset Stables property that CTC now owns. Environmental review on that section is also expected next year.

Downstream from the airport the river runs through U.S. Forest Service land, private property and more CTC land. Environmental documents on all of those sections could come out this year.

“If we find the money, there should be an awful lot of work going on on the river,” Eisner said.

Tahoe orthopedist leads Whistler medical team

By Susan Wood

CARSON CITY – Taking a lead from one of his top skiers, Terry Orr is returning to the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia, in February – for what he says will be the last time in this particular role.

A legend of sorts to Lake Tahoe competitive and amateur athletes, the orthopedist who specializes in arthroscopic surgery and ligament reconstruction for Barton Health Care's Tahoe Fracture and Orthopedic Medical Clinic will serve the more than 200 athletes of the U.S. Ski Team as one of 47 medical professionals for the third time.



Terry Orr

The first was in Torino, Italy, and the second in Park City, Utah. He'll head the medical care at Whistler Blackcomb Ski Resort for the men's Alpine downhill racing team.

He is hoping to only see Daron Rahlves on the slopes, not a surgical table.

Rahlves called Orr a "calming" force on the mountain when he's competing.

"He's treated me for a long time. And if I did go through a traumatic injury, it's good to know I have him there by my

side," he told *Lake Tahoe News*. "With my security – I usually don't think about my that, but it's comforting to know I'm in the best hands."

Lake Tahoe's Rahlves is the most decorated U.S. downhill and super giant slalom skier. After retiring from that discipline in 2006, Rahlves returns to the Winter Games to negotiate the intense skiercross track set on Cypress Mountain outside Whistler.

Orr said he's looking forward to the upcoming Olympic Games. He'll not only run the men's Alpine downhill care, he'll assist 119 other doctors selected by the U.S. Olympic Committee to provide coverage for other events. This commitment includes training runs.

Orr believes the downhill courses on Whistler may prove stimulating.

"It's a windy course, and fast – not one you can see from top to bottom," he told *Lake Tahoe News* during an interview at his Carson City office one week before the U.S. Olympic Committee announced his joining the team.

Like the athletes, Orr takes the competition and responsibility seriously. Medical care for ski racing has come a long way since the early days of doctors showing up with their own supplies.

In recent years, a medical clinic has been established at the Winter Olympics.

New to the Games are trauma packs that provide a centralized place for medical tools and equipment. Contents range from bandages to chest tubes. A physician education program requires instruction in medical care and involves lectures and field runs for on-the-hill triage. A complete Advanced Trauma Life Support system is put in place to help the doctors recognize certain injuries.

But aversion to injury is the name of the game for the U.S. Ski Team – with structure serving as the common denominator in keeping the athletes competitive and healthy.

“The big emphasis starts with conditioning. It’s a year-round commitment (to race),” Orr said, citing cycling, soccer and jogging as ideal cross-training sports.

But even with the best training and fitness, no one close to the action when a racer goes hurtling down a slippery slope at 50mph can possibly account for everything that may happen. Some incidents are stranger than others.

Orr recalled going to surgery in Torino for a skeleton competitor who had dislocated his spine. Still, his nervous system remained intact. He didn’t perform the surgery because spines are not his specialty, so he consulted with Lake Tahoe spinal specialist Mike Fry while an Italian team handled the operation.

Orr said athletes can be benched with a significant knee problem or head injury, requiring neurological tests. There are times athletes who train their whole lives may find it difficult to sit out a particular competition. But others want to do the right thing.

He pointed to an athlete who experienced a tear of a tendon that may have sidelined the average person for six weeks. The athlete was back out on the hill in three days.

“Sometimes they just need reassurance that they’re structurally fine and (the injury) is more of a bruise. The real decision is can they compete. We try to give as much leeway as possible,” he said.

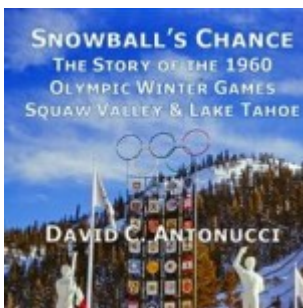
It appears the U.S. Olympic Committee would agree.

“We feel that our medical professionals for the U.S. Team are the best in the world in what they do,” USOC Chief of Sport

Performance Mike English said in a statement.

Publisher's note: *On Jan. 27, read about how Lake Tahoe wants to host the Olympics in 2022.*

Author captures authentic history of 1960 Games



By Nancy Oliver Hayden

The idea of having the 1960 Olympic Winter Games at Squaw Valley and Lake Tahoe began as a marketing ploy with no chance to succeed. It culminated with record performances and many firsts and put the Lake Tahoe region on the international map of world-class skiing.

In 1954 Alexander Cushing read a report in his morning paper about the Reno bid to secure the 1960 Winter Olympic Games. Cushing thought that a superior Squaw Valley could submit a credible bid and in the process gain wider public attention, even if the gambit ultimately failed.

However, rather than fail, the VIII Winter Games were an unqualified success and far exceeded the expectations of even the most jaded critics. For the winter sports industry, this was their catapult to stardom and the kick-start that alpine skiing received was immense.

In the Lake Tahoe region, a handful of struggling mom and pop ski parks exploded into a dozen major ski areas that gave the region the largest concentration of ski areas in North America.

The release of "Snowball's Chance" by David Antonucci coincides with the 50th anniversary of the VIII Winter Olympic Games, which took place Feb. 18-28, 1960. Thoroughly researched and carefully organized, the book covers the history of the effort to win the Olympic bid, building the Olympic Village, designing and construction of the competition venues, and you-are-there accounts of all competition events.

The author's interest in the 1960 Winter Olympic Games started with his research on the source of what appeared to be abandoned trails near his home on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe. He determined that the trails were the remnants of the cross country ski courses of the 1960 Winter Olympics. Although most of the competitions were at Squaw Valley, the venue for the cross country events was 16 miles from Squaw at McKinney Creek on the West Shore, thus the trails near his home.

The 188-page paperback is full of interesting and little known facts. For example: when it became apparent that the Winter Games would require intense, but short-term demand for personnel and equipment, the Organizing Committee requested military assistance. With a mobilized force of 750, military personnel constructed drainage works for the temporary parking lot, laid communication wiring, constructed cross country courses and conducted snow removal operations. The most unusual use of the military workforce was the alpine course preparation crew. Officers marched 10 Marine platoons of 30 troops each in a V-formation down the alpine ski courses to boot-pack the snow. Skiing troops followed them to smooth the surface. This process occurred over 30 days in advance of the events to ensure the best possible conditions for high-level competition.

“Snowball’s Chance” provides anyone who was fortunate enough to attend or be involved in the VIII Winter Olympic Games an opportunity to relive the spirit and excitement of the event. The rest of us have a ringside seat as we vicariously participate in the pageantry created by Walt Disney and thrill to the heat of competition.

Of the 85 photos and illustrations that appear throughout the book, most are by official Olympic photographer Bill Briner and many appear here for the first time. At the end of each chapter, under the heading Epilogue, Antonucci includes interesting facts about what has happened to many of the planners, officials and athletes mentioned in that chapter.

Among the athletic highlights at the VIII Olympic Winter Games are: the American ice hockey team won its first gold medal, Americans Carol Heiss and David Jenkins swept the individual figure skating gold medals, and Norwegian speed skater Knut Johannesen set a world record for the 10,000-meter with a time of 15/46.6. Four other skaters broke the world record the same day.

The Olympic firsts included mechanized equipment used to compact and groom the snow surface, artificial ice created by mechanical refrigeration and Zamboni machines used to resurface ice rinks, athletes housed in a centralized facility, fully automated electric timing, a mainframe computer used to analyze and report results, extensive live TV coverage, and instant replay by videotape.

Antonucci has been a resident of the Lake Tahoe area for more than 35 years. He holds bachelor and master degrees in civil and environmental engineering and is a licensed professional civil engineer in California.

He founded the Olympic Trails Restoration Committee and worked closely with California State Parks and others to reopen the surviving trail system for public use. He also serves on the

board of the Squaw Valley Olympic Museum Foundation and is a member of the 50th Anniversary Olympic Heritage Celebration Committee. An outdoor enthusiast, he enjoys skiing, snowshoeing, biking, skin diving, kayaking, golf, hiking and camping. He resides in Tahoma with wife Jenny and son Dominic.

"Snowball's Chance" is available for purchase at several local bookstores and retailers. For a complete list, visit www.tahoefacts.com.

Nancy Oliver Hayden has been a journalist covering the South Shore of Lake Tahoe for more 20 years.

Publisher's note: *Terry Orr, Olympic team doctor from Lake Tahoe, will be featured Jan. 25.*

Court ruling may alter Taser use by law enforcement



By Kathryn Reed

How and when an officer uses a Taser is about to change because of a federal appeals court ruling in San Francisco.

"The objective facts must indicate that the suspect poses an immediate threat to the officer or a member of the public," Judge Kim Wardlaw of the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals wrote in the 3-0 ruling.

The case originated in San Diego from a traffic stop involving

a Taser. Now that case will go to trial.

Officers in El Dorado County aren't sure how the decision will affect them. South Lake Tahoe police officers and El Dorado sheriff's deputies have been using Tasers for about five years.

Both departments said Tasers are just one tool they use – with batons, control holds and OC (pepper) spray being the non-lethal items on their belt.

Sheriff's Sgt. Bruce Rosa knew all about the decision when questioned. He said the department will assess the decision like it does with all case law that is handed down.

"We make decisions in seconds. Judges and juries get to make decisions in days," Rosa said. "It's not that we don't make mistakes. We are on the defensive usually all the time. They are on the offense. We want to go home at the end of the evening."

Amnesty International reports that between 2001-08 334 people died in the United States after being Tasered.

"You hear a lot of people expire after a Taser. A lot of times their heart exploded from cocaine use," Rosa said.

Rosa said he was hit by a Taser in training and never wants to go through it again. It not only is painful, but also contracts the muscles.

Lt. David Stevenson at the SLTPD was not aware of the appeals court decision when *Lake Tahoe News* called. But he said Tasers have been an effective tool for his department and that work related injuries have gone down since

"Personally, I think this is one of the best tools to come around in a long time," Rosa said. "It is just a tool. We try to use it only when necessary, like any of our tools. Where cops get hurt is with batons."

Grant to pay for lead paint removal in SLT homes



By Kathryn Reed

With more than 85 percent of the houses in South Lake Tahoe having been built before 1980, it's likely a substantial amount of lead is still on the walls of houses in the area.

The federal government banned lead paint in 1978, but it didn't mean having to eradicate it from places where it had been used.

Now, decades later, the feds are helping to do just that.

South Lake Tahoe is one of 12 cities in the country to share \$12 million to buy the equipment to test homes for lead, train contractors to rid a home of the dangerous element and pay for a house to be repainted. South Tahoe is receiving \$1.5 million. The money comes from the Office of Healthy Homes.

The goal is to rehab at least 100 houses of lead paint and test another 100 within the city limits.

All of the money except for the \$25,000 that will be used to buy the equipment to test the paint is expected to stay in the community. Buying the equipment is less expensive than having to pay a certified inspector about \$500 per test. The machine also allows for instantaneous results instead of waiting days

or weeks.

“The money allows us to train contractors how to get rid of lead based paint. (Lake Tahoe Community College) is putting together the program for training,” explained Nancy Kerry, manager of the city’s Redevelopment and Housing Department.

A meeting will be conducted Jan. 28 at 5pm at Lake Tahoe Airport for all contractors who are interested in being part of the program.

“We want them to help design the program,” Kerry said of the contractors.

She would like the training to begin in March, with work on some homes starting in May. The grant lasts three years, with the money arriving this month.

For a homeowner to be part of the project, they must meet low-income requirements, which more than half of the households in South Lake Tahoe can do. And it’s the occupant who has to meet the guidelines, not the owner.

Households with children will also go to the front of the list. The grant provides money for Barton Memorial Hospital to administer blood tests to children living in houses with lead paint.

If lead is found, grant money can be spent on relocating the home occupants while the lead is removed and the house is repainted. Relocation is necessary because lead can’t just be sanded off the walls. Everything will have to be covered up so it doesn’t get into other areas.

“We will use tax roles to look for older homes, owner occupied. We’ll send them letters telling them we’d like to test their home if they meet income requirements,” Kerry said.

For more information, call Nancy Kerry at (530) 542.6043 or click on meeting.

Soroptimist recognize STHS seniors for their achievements

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Grades are important, but what makes these four young women stand out among their peers is the complete package.

“These extraordinary young women truly deserve this recognition,” South Tahoe High Principal Ivone Larson said. Larson was speaking about Sandra Zepeda, Catherine Kushner, Rachel Kaufer and Alexis Holmes.

On Wednesday, the four seniors were honored by Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe as Young Women of Distinction.



Sandra Zepeda,
l-r, Catherine
Kushner,
Rachel Kaufer,
Alexis Holmes

The lunch at Harrah's Tahoe brought out a throng of

representatives from the high school as well as relatives of the honorees. Larson introduced each of the girls, highlighting their academic careers and what the future may hold for them.

Zepeda credits her mother for teaching her important life lessons. She credits her father for teaching her that accomplishing her dreams should be at the top of her list.

“Photography is not just her passion, it’s her calling,” Larson said. “It’s her dream to be the people’s photographer.”

Zepeda also has an interest in becoming a pastry chef.

Larson spoke of Kushner’s 4.29gpa. She rattled off a slew of music related accomplishments that Kushner has achieved. Kushner is also the senior class president and in the S Club.

“I know when I graduate I want to join a group like this and make a difference in the world,” Kushner said upon receiving her award.

Going to South Africa was a life-changing trip for Kaufer, Larson told the group. It was from that experience that Kaufer decided to pursue a career in journalism. Her goal is to cover political and environmental issues.

Kaufer thanked her family, saying, “Without their constant encouragement, I wouldn’t be where I am.”

Holmes has followed in her family’s footsteps when it comes to athletic achievements. She has lettered 12 times – the most she could.

She wants to write screenplays for Hollywood, be a professional golfer and live in Lake Tahoe.

“You are a legend in your own time,” Larson said of Holmes.