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Mid-Winter 2026

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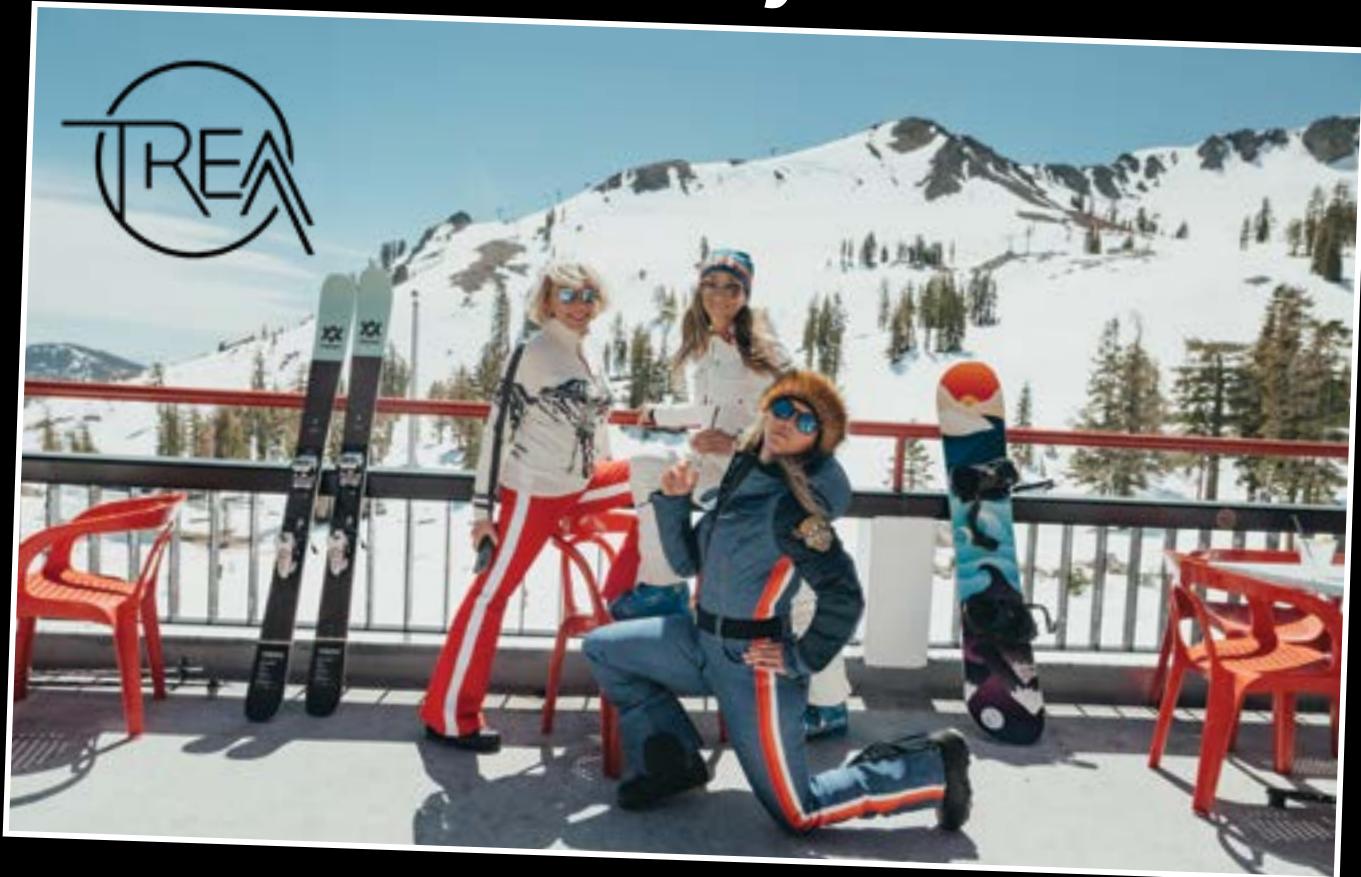
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Amie Engerbretson Powers the Palisades  
by Jeff Engerbretson

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Turn to page 9 to see some of our new listings, price reductions and great opportunities.



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# AROUND THE RESORT

## Palisades Tahoe Athletes to Compete in Milano Cortina Olympic Winter Games



Three-time Olympian Bryce Bennett leads contingent of Palisades competitors.

**F**ive athletes from Team Palisades Tahoe and Olympic Valley Freestyle are scheduled to compete at the 2026 Milano Cortina Olympic Winter Games. Representing alpine skiing and freeskiing, these athletes continue the illustrious Olympic legacy of the resort's competitive programs. The 2026 Winter Games mark another milestone for the region's enduring influence on the global winter sports stage.

Four alpine ski racers and a freeskiing competitor will be competing in the XXV Olympic Winter Games in Italy. The Olympians include:

### Men's Alpine Skiing

#### Bryce Bennett, Tahoe City

The veteran speed specialist enters his third Winter Games as one of the most experienced members of the alpine field. At age 33, he has spent nearly half his life on the U.S. Ski Team, building a career defined by power, confidence, and longevity in downhill and super-G.

While Bennett holds multiple titles – Olympian, World Cup Winner and longtime U.S. Ski Team member – the role he takes the most pride in is one he added recently: father. In the spring of 2025, he and his wife, Kelley, welcomed their first child, a daughter.

Fatherhood has not slowed Bennett down. Instead, it has added new perspective as he continues competing at the highest level. As he prepares for the 2026 Winter Games, Bennett hopes the memories created on the world stage will one day be shared with his daughter, continuing a Tahoe-rooted legacy that now spans generations.

### Women's Alpine Skiing

#### Keely Cashman, Strawberry

A 2022 Olympian and eight-year member of the U.S. Ski Team, Cashman returns to the Winter Games driven by a desire to continue challenging expectations in alpine skiing. A technically focused racer specializing in Giant Slalom and Super Giant Slalom, she has built her career on determination, consistency, and a belief that elite performance is possible without following a traditional development path.

Growing up in Strawberry, California, Cashman has been open about the financial barriers that often accompany ski racing. With her father working as a coach to offset some of the costs, her family relied on creativity and perseverance to support her ambitions. Much of that support came from the Serene Bean, a local coffee shop her family has operated for 28 years and a cornerstone of the community where Cashman is well known as a hometown barista.

Through her journey, Cashman has become a visible example for aspiring athletes, particularly those from smaller communities, showing that reaching the Olympic stage does not require coming from a large academy or traditional pipeline.

Photos courtesy PT

#### AJ Hurt, Carnelian Bay

Hurt's Olympic journey began with what she describes as the ultimate "take your kid to work" experience. Growing up at Palisades Tahoe, she spent countless hours alongside her father, Steve, a longtime member of the Palisades Ski Patrol, whose career on the mountain spans longer than Hurt has been alive.

Some of her fondest childhood memories include accompanying her dad on end-of-day mountain sweeps, helping take down signage and ensuring the slopes were clear. Those early days on the mountain led to rapid progression, with Hurt racing her first World Cup at just 16 years old.

Now an eight-year member of the U.S. Ski Team, Hurt is has two World Cup podiums and made her Olympic debut in 2022. She recently spent the offseason training at home in Palisades Tahoe and is coming off a breakthrough season, with a strong focus on mental preparation – an area she describes as non-linear but essential to high-level performance.



#### Nina O'Brien, Denver

O'Brien began skiing at Palisades Tahoe through the Mighty Mite program before starting her racing career with Team Palisades Tahoe. She later attended Burke Mountain Academy, where her performance led to selection for the National Training Group and, in 2016, a spot on the U.S. Ski Team.

Since joining the team, O'Brien has built an accomplished career, including winning the NorAm overall title in 2019, earning eight national championship titles, and competing at the 2022 Winter Games. She was also a member of the U.S. Team Event that won gold at the 2023 World Championships. Growing up in a family of ski racers helped shape her lifelong connection to the sport.



### Women's Freeski

#### Abby Winterberger, Truckee

Winterberger represents Olympic Valley Freestyle Freeride Team (OVFree) and has qualified to compete in freeski halfpipe at the 2026 Winter Games. Her nomination is notable as she qualified directly through international competition results while competing at the club level, bypassing traditional U.S. Ski & Snowboard Rookie and Pro Team pathways.

At just 15 years old, Winterberger enters her first Olympic Games following a standout 2025-26 season that included being named U.S. National Champion in freeski halfpipe and recording multiple top-10 finishes internationally. She was also the top-placing U.S. woman at the final Olympic halfpipe qualification event of the season in Aspen.





## BILL MURPHY

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# Live your best life at Eagle's Nest Lodge



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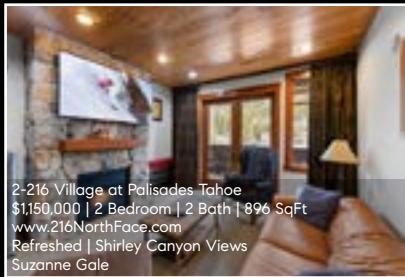
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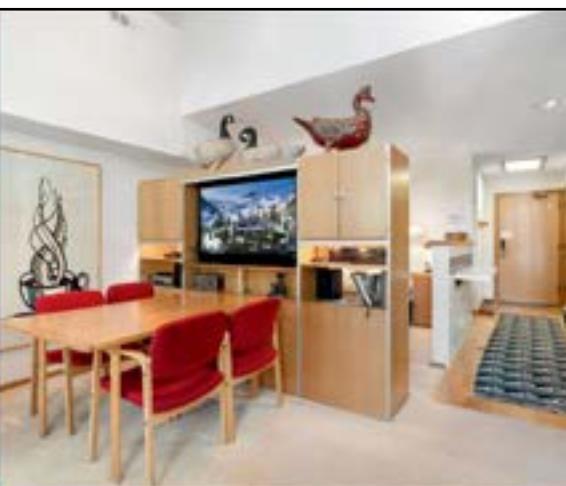
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### OPERATING SCHEDULE

December 6, 2025 – April 19, 2026

#### WITHIN OLYMPIC VALLEY

Daily 7am–11pm

#### WITHIN ALPINE MEADOWS

Thursday–Monday 7am–11pm

plus Tuesday and Wednesday 7am–11pm

- December 24–25
- December 30–31
- February 17–18

#### BETWEEN THE VALLEYS

Daily 5pm–11pm



**DOWNLOAD THE APP  
AND RIDE WITH US**

[MountaineerTransit.org](http://MountaineerTransit.org)



## Palisades Launches Mid-Week Community Days

Mid-week skiing has always been coveted for reduced lift lines and ease of parking, and now it has another benefit—reduced cost.

The resort is giving skiers and riders more reasons to hit the slopes mid-week with the launch of Community

laxed mountain atmosphere, all without the weekend rush.

In addition to significant savings, Community Days support the Tahoe region beyond the slopes. A portion of each Community Day ticket sold will be donated to a local charity, reinforcing



Photos courtesy PT

Mid-week offers more elbow room and easier access to terrain.

Days which encompass select Wednesdays this February and March featuring \$89 day lift tickets. The promotion also includes a built-in giveback to the local community.

Scheduled for Feb. 11 and 25, and March 4, Community Days celebrate the perks of midweek skiing—fewer crowds, more room to roam, and incredible value. Guests with flexible schedules can experience Palisades Tahoe's 6,000 acres of legendary terrain with easier access to lifts, more laps, and a more re-

Palisades Tahoe's ongoing commitment to community and local nonprofits.

"Midweek skiing is one of the best ways to experience Palisades Tahoe," said Patrick Lacey, PR Manager of Palisades Tahoe. "Community Days make it even better by pairing discounted access with a chance to give back to the community that makes this place so special."

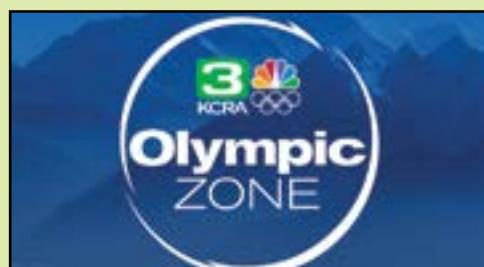
Community Day lift tickets can be purchased online in advance or in person on select dates while supplies last. For more information visit [palisadestahoe.com](http://palisadestahoe.com).

### Resort to Host KCRA-3 Olympic Zone Show

Palisades Tahoe will be the site of Sacramento's KCRA 3-TV Olympic Zone program which leads into NBC's daily primetime coverage. The Olympic Zone introduces viewers to Northern California athletes competing in the XXV Winter Games, with insights as to how they train along with live interviews with past Olympians. Deirdre Fitzpatrick, KCRA 3 Morning Anchor and 11-time Hearst Olympic reporter will host the Ozone on weekdays along with Morning Meteorologist Tamara Berg, Morning Anchor Ty Steele and KCRA 3 Evening Anchor Andrea Flores. KCRA 3 Weekend Sports Anchor Michelle Dapper will host the weekend editions.

"As we all cheer on Team USA, there's no better place to celebrate California's Olympic past and present than at Palisades Tahoe," said KCRA 3 News Director Derek Schnell. "We can't wait to showcase our local athletes as they perform their very best at the Winter Games."

The KCRA 3 Olympic Zone airs Monday through Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and on Sundays at 3:30 p.m. for the duration of the Games which run Feb. 6–22.



# OLYMPIC VALLEY LISTINGS



## 381 Sierra Crest Trail

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Private Subdivision, Stunning Mountain Vistas

Listed for \$3,995,000

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HOA with Pool, Spa, Sauna, Tennis and Pickleball  
Listed for \$725,000



## 440 Shirley Canyon Rd. #50

Great Location, Upper Floor, End Unit

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Close to Ski Area and Hiking Trails

Listed for \$788,000



## Everline Resort Condos

Studios starting at \$325,000; 1Br's starting at \$475,000;

2Br's starting at \$699,000; 3Br's starting at \$1,595,000;

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# Mountaineer Expands Fleet & Improves Transit Wait Times

Mountaineer, the free, on-demand winter micro-transit in Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows has increased its vehicle fleet size by 15% for this winter season in order to improve wait times.

"Even though Mountaineer's cumulative average wait time is just eight minutes, we're adding to our fleet one vehicle in Olympic Valley and one vehicle in Alpine Meadows on Saturdays and Sundays to improve wait times and address passenger survey feedback," said Joy M. Doyle, Mountaineer executive director.

In addition to more vehicles, Mountaineer Transit Company is working with its service provider on enhancements to the Mountaineer app technology and with Palisades Tahoe's teams to improve wait time and wait time accuracy. Also, expanded education and communication around when passengers should request a ride to set typical ride wait time expectations is a priority for the upcoming season.

Because Mountaineer's wait time varies greatly based on demand, it is recom-

ride in the queue cancels, passengers are advised to stay tuned to the app regularly and be ready to go any time after requesting their ride.

Another wait time improvement strategy this season is that Mountaineer drivers will follow a strict protocol of canceling rides if passengers are not curbside within three minutes of their scheduled pick time.

"Our goal with Mountaineer has always been to offer a convenient service that reduces in-valley traffic congestion by getting people out of their personal vehicles," said Mike Martin, vice president of base area operations at Palisades Tahoe and Mountaineer Transit Company board chair. "Having provided

rides to more than half a million passen-



## MOUNTAINEER WINTER 25-26 OPERATIONS SCHEDULE

Fifteen nine-passenger, dog-friendly vans equipped with ski/snowboard racks and one ADA van is scheduled to operate between Dec. 6, 2025 and April 19, 2026 as follows:

- Daily in Olympic Valley from 7 a.m.-11 p.m.
- Thursday through Monday in Alpine Meadows from 7 a.m.-11 p.m., plus Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7 a.m.-11 p.m. on Dec. 24-25, Dec. 30-31 and Feb. 17-18
- Daily between Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows from 5 p.m.-11 p.m.
- Tahoe Live service December 12, 13, 14 until 2 a.m. within Olympic Valley
- New Year's Eve service until 2 a.m. within Olympic Valley, within Alpine Meadows, and between the two valleys

mended that passengers request a ride 15-minutes or less during low-demand periods such as midweek, non-holiday, non-powder days. During high-demand periods such as weekends 8-10am and 3-6pm, holidays, and especially on powder days, passengers are asked to request a ride 30-minutes or more in advance of when they want to be picked up. Because drivers may arrive earlier than the app's expected arrival time if a

gers to date, with some of the busiest days exceeding 2,000 passengers per day, it's fair to say Mountaineer is well used. We're committed to continuing to enhance service and by adding capacity and other improvements this winter, we aim to reduce wait times."

Passengers can request rides through the Mountaineer app, which is a free download available in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

**Since 2018, the service has provided nearly 250,000 rides, transported over 500,000 passengers, and removed nearly 90,000 cars from resort community roads.**

Mountaineer was created to reduce winter season traffic congestion and improve the guest experience. Since 2018, the service has provided nearly 250,000 rides, transported over 500,000 passengers, and removed nearly 90,000 cars from resort community roads, resulting in a reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by more than 150,000 miles.

Mountaineer Transit Company is the collaborative effort of Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows homeowner's associations, lodging properties and Palisades Tahoe ski resort. Mountaineer's mission is to provide winter season transit within Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows to assessed businesses' guests, employees, owners, and visitors to improve resort traffic congestion, guests' experiences, and safety. Mountaineer is funded by a microtransit district which includes 1.5% assessment on Palisades Tahoe lift

tickets and pack products, and on transient lodging and vacation rentals within Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows.

Learn more about Mountaineer and its achievements, visit [www.Mountaineer-Transit.org](http://www.Mountaineer-Transit.org).

## CARPOOL PARKING PROGRAM OFFERS REWARD

Palisades Tahoe is introducing Carpool 4+ parking reservations as part of its expanded winter parking program. Each Tuesday at 12 p.m., reservations will open online for the upcoming weekend and holiday periods. Upon arrival, vehicles with four or more passengers can check in with a parking attendant to confirm eligibility. As a thank you for reducing traffic and supporting sustainability, carpool drivers will receive a \$20 resort voucher. For reservations go to [PalisadesTahoe.com](http://PalisadesTahoe.com). \*

## BEYOND THE VALLEY, RIDE TART CONNECT

Placer County's TART Connect free on-demand, micro-transit service can be used to travel between Olympic Valley and River Ranch to North Lake Tahoe, including Tahoe City and the West Shore daily during TART Connect's winter operating season. Beginning Dec. 11, 2025, TART Connect will operate from:

- 6-11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday
- 6 p.m.-12 a.m. Friday and Saturday
- Request these rides through the free TART Connect app
- Go to [TahoeTruckeeTransit.com](http://TahoeTruckeeTransit.com)

# THE MOUNTAIN MONEY MONITOR

Financial Observations from 6,225 feet

by Trent B. Green

## Gold's Record Highs: A Dollar Story, Not a Gold One

### "Gold reaches another all-time high!"

We have been seeing this headline in the news nonstop over the past few years. Gold is up nearly 64% in 2025 and over 128% in the last three years. At first glance, gold may seem to be growing at an unprecedented rate. However, I would say that gold's value, specifically in U.S. dollars, is growing. I believe gold's monumental growth over the last few years is due to perceived instability in the U.S. dollar's status as the world's reserve currency. Historically, when the value of currencies is in question, people turn to gold.

Gold is one of the oldest forms of wealth in the world. Gold has acted as the most important and globally accepted measure of wealth in recorded history. It wasn't



until 1944 that the U.S. dollar became the world's reserve currency. However, the USD was backed by gold from 1944 to 1971.

When the U.S. left the gold standard in 1971, the dollar truly replaced gold's dominance in the global economy. This marked the first time a medium of exchange not backed by gold controlled global trade. Yet this period of dollar supremacy has been in question in recent years.

Skyrocketing national debt, sanctions on foreign governments, and increased demand from foreign banks for gold contributed to a weakening of the U.S. dollar's dominance on the global stage. Foreign banks are monitoring

the ballooning of the U.S. national debt, which has expanded to a \$ 8 trillion-dollar monster. These foreign banks can see that the national debt is now 121% of the United States' Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which makes them nervous about the currency's stability. This, in turn, has led central banks to increase their gold reserves, as central banks around the globe have purchased over 1,000 tons of gold annually since 2021.

After 50 years of playing second fiddle, gold is nipping at the heels of the U.S. dollar as the powerhouse in international wealth. On July 1, 2025, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) classified gold as a Tier 1, high-quality liquid asset. That means U.S. banks can count physical gold, at 100% of its market value, toward their core capital reserves. The BCBS is the primary global standard setter for the banking industry. The only other Tier 1 asset in the world is the U.S. dollar. This 2025 decision by the BCBS is monumental because it marks the first time in five decades that gold could rival the U.S. dollar on a global stage. But insti-

Continued on p. 12

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April 22, 2026

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- Put your plan into action
- Report results via our super simple online form

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tutional recognition only tells part of the story, as gold's true strength is best understood by what it can actually buy.

#### Gold's Purchasing Power

It can be challenging to gauge the purchasing power of gold because it is typically priced in U.S. dollars. However, one way to conceptualize gold as a measure of wealth is to measure the prices of goods and services in ounces of gold rather than in U.S. dollars. Take the value of an average home in the U.S. as an example. In 1965, the average house sale price was \$23,000. At the time, gold was \$35.31 an ounce. Therefore, the value of an average home in 1965 would be 651 ounces of gold. By 1975, the average home was worth \$42,600, and gold was up to \$166.40 per ounce. The average value of a home by 1975 was about 256 ounces of gold. Between 1965 and 1975, the relative value of gold increased. By 1980, gold's purchasing power had increased further, as the average home cost only 115 ounces of gold. Due to the U.S. abandoning the gold standard and high inflation rates in the late '70s and early '80s, gold's relative purchasing power increased. In 1980 inflation was nearly 13% which weakened the dollar and strengthened gold. At the same time the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in the U.S. was 16.5%.

These elevated mortgage rates made it difficult for homeowners to pay down their interest, let alone chip away at the principal of their home loans. However, as inflation began to ease, the relative purchasing power of gold weakened. By 1990, inflation was down to 6%, and the average home was worth \$145,000. Gold was worth \$417 an ounce, so it would cost 350 ounces of gold to buy a home in 1990. Gold lost substantial purchasing power in 1990; it would take three times as many ounces to buy a home as it did in 1980. From 1990 to 2000, this trend continued, with the

inflation rate dropping to 3.3%. Mortgage rates dropped with inflation, as the 30-year fixed-rate fell to 7.6%, allowing buyers to pay more for a home because their monthly payments were going more towards principal and less towards interest. This brought the average home price in 2000 to \$202,900. At the turn of the millennium, it would cost you a staggering 717 ounces of gold to purchase a home. Gold's relative value had plum-

met amid a strong dollar and decreasing interest rates.

However, with uncertainty comes a strengthening gold market. During the 2008 housing bubble, people flocked to gold as the value of their assets declined amid the recession. This led to a massive rebound in gold's relative value. In 2010, the average home was worth \$275,300, and the price of gold had risen to \$1580. With 248 ounces of gold, you could purchase a home. Between 2000 and 2010, gold had almost tripled its relative value.

Yet this momentum did not carry over into the 2010's, as the economy continued to strengthen. By 2020, the relative strength of gold had remained consistent for ten years, with the average house being worth 242 ounces of gold.

This brings us to today. The average home in the U.S. as of July 2025 was \$512,800. At that time, an ounce of gold was worth \$3,300, which would make a house worth 154 ounces of gold. The rela-

IKON Pass became available in 2018, it cost \$1,049. The price of gold at the time was \$1,220, which made the value of an IKON pass 0.86 ounces of gold. The relative value of gold has risen significantly since 2018, partly due to COVID-19-induced inflation. Today, an IKON pass costs \$1,519, while gold is over \$4,000, making an IKON pass worth 0.37 ounces of gold. From 2018 to 2025, the relative value of gold for an IKON pass doubled.

Today, gold's record-setting price is telling a story that goes beyond simple gains. While headlines focus on new highs, gold's recent rise is less about sudden strength and more about growing unease with the system that values it. The fact that gold still trades at a discount to its peak decades ago suggests that this rally is driven largely by concerns about the U.S. dollar, mounting government debt, and the greenback's uncertain long-term role as the world's reserve currency. When confidence in currency wavers, people have historically turned to gold. In that sense, gold's monumental rise over the past few years reflects not just enthusiasm for the metal itself, but a broader question about the durability of the dollar's dominance in the global economy. \*

*This newsletter was written and produced by the Cojo Bay advisors, which is another business name of Independent Advisor Alliance, LLC.*

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*within the financial markets, opinions are subject to change without notice. Information is based on sources believed to be reliable; however, their accuracy or completeness has not been verified.*

## ***The price of gold may be at an all-time high, but the purchasing power of gold is not. Which begs the question: Does gold's price reflect its strength, or does it reveal the dollar's weakness?***



**SIGN UP!**

## **FOR THE 96146 NEWSLETTER**

Your monthly snapshot of what's happening in the Olympic Valley and Alpine Meadows: Community- local updates, handy resources, environmental notes, safety tips, events and useful insights.

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# RESORT DIRECTORY

**PALISADES TAHOE 800-403-0206**

Phone numbers are 530 area code unless otherwise noted

## LODGING

Olympic Village Inn	581-6000
The Village at Palisades Tahoe	584-1000
Red Wolf Lodge	877-344-0686
Everline Resort & Spa	412-7039
Palisades Tahoe Lodge	562-4881
PlumpJack Inn	583-1576

## DINING & APRÉS

The Arc	452-4533
Asian Fusion	
Dubliner Irish Pub	584-6041
Coffeebar	580-4200
Euro Snack	
Euro Sweets	581-0600
<b>Everline Resort Restaurants:</b>	<b>583-6300</b>
Cascades	
Iron Road Noodle House	
Sandy's Pub	
Six Peaks Grille	
Fireside Pizza Co	829-0982
Granite Bistro	452-7278
Little Bear	584-6120
Le Chamois	583-4505
Plaza Bar	452-8750
PlumpJack Café	583-1578
Rocker	584-6080
Slot	584-6170
Sunbowl	584-6161
Terrace Restaurant	452-7278
39 North	452-4547
Tremigo Mexican Kitchen	584-6021
Twenty Two Bistro	584-6170
Wildflour Baking Co.	583-1963

## RETAIL

Alice's Mtn. Market	581-2014
Adventure Center	581-7536
Gallery Keoki	583-1404
Gold Coast Demo Center & Sport Shop	452-4172
KTees Logo Wear	452-4379
Lather & Fizz	584-6001
The Ledge Board Shop	452-4477
Leffler Leather Goods	925-323-1560
Little Bear	584-6120
Mind Play	584-6133
The North Face Store	452-4365
Oakley	452-4378
Olympic Bootfitters	581-0747
Palisades Tahoe Logo Company	584-6250
Parallel Mountain Sports	452-4478
Patagonia	452-4455
Roark	584-6252
Surefoot Custom Bootfitters	581-2421
Uncorked	584-6090
<i>Some of the above listings are seasonal.</i>	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
Alpenglow Expeditions	877-873-5376
Info/Lost & Found	452-7185
Mountaineer	MountaineerTransit.org
OV Fire Dept.	583-6111
OV Post Office	583-5126
OV Public Service Dist.	583-4692
Palisades Press	412-0249
Palisades Rentals	452-4115
Palisades Yoga	584-6140
Tahoe Forest Health	
System Clinic	452-4181
TART Connect	TahoeTruckeeTransit.com
Inn Ski Shop	583-2195
SnoVentures	452-4474
Olympic Valley Chapel	581-4011

## REAL ESTATE

Lux Mountain Collections	584-6282
Intero	412-3070
Kennedy Property Management	608-9150
Lawrence Realty	583-1529
Sierra Sotheby's:	
David Gemme	277-8881
Jovanah McKinney	414-6500
Bill Murphy	386-1533
Rick Raduziner	308-1628

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## Andiamo!

### Recalling *Fantastico* Times at the Torino Games



Anne Chippendale celebrates a banner day in Italy.

Twenty years ago this February, a series of circumstances coincidentally congregated ski racing lovers from the Olympic Valley area to the high alpine village of Sestriere, Italy. It was the XX Olympic Winter Games, also known as Torino 2006, and I was there on a whim and a prayer.

Everyone remembers Al Michaels' famous line: "Do you believe in miracles, yes!" when the U.S. Hockey Team pulled off the "Miracle on Ice" at the 1980 Winter Games in Lake Placid. (Most folks don't remember that the first miracle on ice occurred in Squaw Valley in 1960 as an upstart U.S. Hockey Team beat a heavily favored Soviet squad on its way to winning the Olympic gold medal. But that is another story.)

In 2006, I found out that Olympic miracles could still happen.

On my first day at the Italian Olympic site, the towering peaks stretched to the clouds, the air was clear and crisp, and the energy of the gathered international crowd was electrifying. Although I was lacking lodging reservations and event tickets, I was determined to cast my fate to the wind and

wing it. As my ancestors would say, I was hoping for some "buona fortuna."

Sestriere is a resort town part of the Vialattia Ski Domaine, in the Cottian Alps in the Piedmonte province of Italy. Vialattia translates to "milky", undoubtedly because the mostly above treeline mountains are covered by meters of snow through most of the year. The town hosted a grueling finish in last year's Giro di Italia.

I had friends who were working as volunteers for the men's alpine events which were all held here. A contingent of long-time SV Comp Services employees: Dick Banfield, John Holbrook, and Jeff Rouse were serving as slide slippers, those folks who "pizza" through the courses between races, removing excess snow from the piste.

Jeff's wife, Susan, and Anne Chippendale, a retailer and SVST coach, were also volunteering and the local group was interviewed on site by Sacramento's KCRA-TV hosts Deirdre Fitzpatrick and Brian Hickey. Afterward, Susan hosted everyone for homemade Limoncello in their slopeside apartment.



and well maintained town squares complete with local markets on the weekends. We were staying at La Muraglia, a two-star hotel run by a Chinese family who spoke no English. The springy beds were terrible and the dingy shower was only occasionally hot. But we were there at the Games, and only paying a measly \$50 per night! That is not much denaro, molto bene!

Down on the quaint street with its covered walkways you could get a quick caffè latte at a stand up service spot for a few Euros. While the locals ignored you for the most part, we got to mingle each morning with the Swiss and Canada curling teams. Phil was stoked to practice his German while hanging with "Team Suisse," and I stuck with what I knew, meaning English, and was struck how accessible and nice the athletes were. Ever since then, Mr. Olsen has acquired a serious curling addiction, an interesting by-product of this trip.

Pinerolo was definitely out of the limelight, but they still had the "Passion Lives Here" banners up (the official slogan) and national flags ev-

#### Numero Uno

My first "Torino miracle" was running into a Tahoe attorney I knew, a longtime Olympic Valley regular, the famously bearded Phil Olsen. He was one of the first of many other "Tahoe-ites" I met on the morning of the men's downhill, which is always one of the first events scheduled due to possible

***At the finish corral the crowd explodes as Olympic history is made right in front of you with the P.A. blasting in Italian and English, snow spraying, and lots of cowbells. We saw dreams made and dreams crushed and broadcast live around the world.***

postponements. Using his fluent Italian, he found us a cheap room down the valley in Pinerolo, the town hosting the curling competition. This was the real Italy, with narrow cobblestone alleys, towering imposing churches, lush

everywhere. There was a huge welcome center complete with local food selections and beverage options at reasonable rates, many large TVs with the Games on, and comfy furniture, but it was always empty. It was only the



**The spirited locals dressed for the occasion.**

friendly and energized local volunteers and a handful of visitors in the center it seemed. I was there, alone, comfortably watching Julie Mancuso racing high on the mountain when she won the Giant Slalom gold medal in a full on blizzard. I loudly cheered "Fantastico!" Her training in the Sierra served her well that day.

The small town of Pinerolo did give us easy access to the train line to Torino, or the buses up the valley that allowed us to catch some other events. I made it to speed and short track skating, big hill ski jumping and a few USA hockey games. Italians are not big on hockey so buying from scalpers was easy, and I even saw three USA games which I considered a small miracle.

#### **Ted Ligety's Miracle Medal**

OK, so we are now set up with a place and need to find tickets and go! Curling was easy, 25 euros at the box office for qualifying rounds. With the skiing events it is all about the general admission area at the finish corral which is standing room only. Tickets were usually still available at the box offices. General admission is a multi-national, raucous flag-waving party complete with international "boom cam" coverage. Definitely the cheapest and yet the most fun part of the crowd. And it is there where inevitably a re-occurring conglomeration of Olympic Valley pilgrims would seemingly congregate. There was Jodi Distasio, the Resort at Squaw Creek concierge; SV race announcer extraordinaire John Haines; Zane of Huck Doll fame, USA boardercross star Nate Holland and his rep Bob Klein, and longtime ski rep O Jay Merrill somehow all collected at one spot. At the finish corral you watch most of downhills on the huge big screens until the racer appears for the final turns. The crowd then explodes as Olympic history is made right in front of you

with the P.A. blasting in Italian and English, snow spraying, and lots of cowbells. We saw dreams made and dreams crushed and broadcast live around the world.

One of the most memorable moments was Bode Miller leading after the Downhill in the Alpine Combined, a run he barely survived, having to ski on one foot for an unbelievable distance before recovering enough to make a critical turn. A couple hours later, he barely straddled the second gate in the first run of Slalom and DQed. Then, in the same race, the then unheard of Ted Ligety came from 32nd in the Downhill to rip the two Slalom runs and take gold under the lights that evening. Officials whisked him right by me as the shuttled him off for the medal awards. Ligety's win was a surprising miracle gold for USA.

#### **The Karma Continues**

The good karma continued a few nights later when I went looking for a particular souvenir at the ski jumping venue. Got the banner I wanted, then stopped for a "Bombardino", the famous hot brandy and eggnog cocktail skiers love to warm up with. I scored a face value ticket from an American ski jumper who happen to be rolling his luggage down the dark street (small miracle). He had not qualified and was heading out of town. It was the team event that night and was held under the bright lights. USA was not a contender, but the Japan, Austria, Germany, and Norway fans kept the crowd in a frenzy. Not only was it amazing to see how far skiers can fly in person, but I scored another miracle.

The jumpers at the top appear as dots from the bottom, the TV screens covers them un-

til you see them in the flying "V" position coming over the knoll. Then it seems like forever before their (usually) graceful landing far down the hill, slamming on the brakes right in front of us. I was waving my long avalanche probe rigged with an American flag when an elderly man approached me, "I see you are American, we have to leave tomorrow, I am hoping you will buy my tickets to tomorrow's USA hockey game." It was a quick yes with no negotiating the face value price because I already knew about the game: USA vs Russia! It was only a preliminary game, but the intensity of this rivalry harkened back to those previous miracles on ice. Truly a stroke of "buona fortuna."

#### **Grand Finale**

There were many other special moments during the almost three weeks, too many for this story, but there was one more miracle to play out on the last day.

The Closing Ceremonies were held downtown in the stadium, and the hockey gold medal game in the ice arena was located right next door. It was the last hours of the Games, and I spent over three of them standing on the meridian in the middle of a very busy street husking for a reasonably priced ticket to the hockey final which featured Finland and Sweden. Scalpers wanted 100-200 Euros. In my mind I was not going to pay more than 50. In English, loudly proclaiming, "I am NOT a professional, I just need one!" for over two hours but had no luck. I did, however, have the good for-

tune to introduce myself as a fan from Tahoe to Bode Miller as I spotted him passing me in the crosswalk. He responded kindly, with a "thanks" and was off to the Closing Ceremonies as were many others.

The gold medal hockey game is one of the last events, but now it was past the start time. Something has to happen I thought or it isn't going to be. But then a healthy looking black man in a USA sweat suit approached me. The conversation goes like this:

Him: "You still looking for a ticket?"

Me: "Yes, but I am looking for a miracle" (A nod to Deadheads)

Him: "I have a ticket but can not make the game, and I can't sell it to you."

Me, a bit baffled: "Well what do you want for it?"

He then simply handed it to me.

"Caspital!" another miracle!

Walked in right at the first intermission, got to the seat which was right at the press box, looked at the ticket and realized it was priced at zero Euros. Gratis! All my others had a price, I found myself with others in a section for volunteers and athletes from other disciplines. Knowing there weren't many black athletes on Team USA, I then realized my final miracle came from the speed skater Shani Davis who had won gold in the 1000 meters.

That was the perfect miracle finish for me, and I hope on having a couple more as I will be back in Italy for the Milano-Cortina Games in search of more "buona fortuna."

*Look for my updates on the Palisades Press Facebook pages and my Instagram page.*



**Phil Olsen, Jodi Distasio and John Haines display their enthusiasm at the finish corral.**



EIGHT PEAKS.

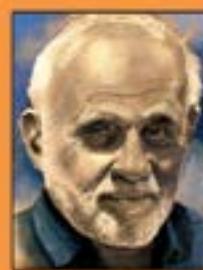
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# QUICKTURNS

## A Glimpse Back at the VIII Olympic Winter Games

When the 1960 Olympic Winter Games were awarded to Squaw Valley (now Palisades Tahoe) 70 years ago, the fledgling resort consisted of a double chairlift, two rope tows and small lodge in a remote valley inhabited by two year-round families and serviced by a dirt road. Despite its humble stature, Alexander C. Cushing defied the odds and succeeded in convincing the International Olympic Committee to bring the VIII Winter Olympics to the Sierra Nevada mountains and ultimately usher the Winter Games into the modern era. Tahoe City author David C. Antonucci's book, *Snowball's Chance: The Story of the 1960 Olympic Winter Games Squaw Valley & Lake Tahoe*, expertly chronicles the momentous event which vaulted the California ski industry into the international spotlight.



The first 'Miracle on Ice'



Athletes at the Tower of Nations



Walt and Lillian Disney



The official Olympic program



U.S. contingent marches in parade at opening of Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley, Calif.

Games were front page news

The 1960 Olympics were also highlighted by memorable moments and technological advances. Here are some:

- The first Winter Olympic site built entirely from scratch.
- An intimate layout enabling spectators easy access to venues and the first Olympic Village for the athletes. Hollywood producer Walt Disney orchestrated the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.
- The biathlon made its Olympic debut, combining cross-country skiing and rifle marksmanship.
- Women's speed skating was introduced.
- Frenchman Jean Vuarnet won the men's Downhill on metal skis.
- First Winter Olympics to be televised in the U.S.
- First use of instant replay and electronic scoring.
- In the first "Miracle on Ice," an underdog U.S. men's hockey team won an improbable gold medal, defeating the favored Canadian and Soviet teams, who took silver and bronze respectively. The feat was repeated 20 years later in Lake Placid.

# Valley à la Carte

Photos courtesy PT



Alexander's offers a cozy ambience and stunning views.

## Sunset Happy Hour at High Camp

Sunset Happy Hour at High Camp is the perfect way to cap off a day on the slopes.

After a scenic Tram ride up the mountain to the High Camp complex, guests may step out onto the observation deck for a complimentary drink and soak in the spectacular mountain and Lake Tahoe views. Inside, The Terrace Restaurant & Bar offers a curated small-plate menu with perfectly paired, featured cocktails and live music.

Après Hour runs from 4-6 p.m. and tickets are \$29 per person which include Tram access and one complimentary drink. Specialty cocktails, wine, and beer are available at the bar. Tickets can be purchased at the base of the Tram Building until 5 p.m. on the day of the event or in advance online. Tickets and drink vouchers must be picked

## High Camp's New Slopeside Speakeasy

Discover Alexander's Bar, a slopeside speakeasy, nestled beside Granite Bistro in High Camp. The specialty cocktail menu features a Smoked Maple Old Fashioned, Alexzerac, Whiskey Sour Bomb, Winter Boulevadier, Rye Paper Plane, Smore's Espresso Martini, and other libations. Savor a beverage and bar snacks while admiring the breathtaking Olympic Valley view. Whiskey enthusiasts can also join Alexander's Whiskey Club. This exclusive membership offers unparalleled access, premium storage, and unique tasting experiences.

## Take a Tasty Trek to The Chalet

Embark on a memorable alpine experience with a guided hike under the stars to The Chalet at Alpine Meadows for a cozy, four-course Bavarian-inspired dinner. The



Take the Tram up for Happy Hour or enjoy a libation in the Tram Car Bar.

up at the base of the Tram Building. All ages welcome; alcoholic drinks only available for 21+. Dates: Feb. 15, 20-21; more TBD. For more information or assistance with booking call 1-800-403-0206.

Chalet's on-mountain restaurant and beer garden is lauded as "a toast to all things German" by USA Today and features schnitzel, brats, monster-size pretzels and other Bavarian indulgences.

The adventure begins at Last Chair Bar in the base lodge with a warm welcome and a hot glass of mulled wine. Once everyone has checked in, the ascent begins to the Chalet on a groomed ski trail. The walk takes approximately 15 minutes and follows a moderately pitched route; participants should be prepared for a short uphill trek. Upon arrival, settle in for an intimate dinner at our charming mid-mountain venue. A full bar will be available featuring draft beer, wine, and handcrafted cocktails for purchase.

This season a \$55 Michael Mondavi Family wine pairing for each course is available for purchase on site. Age 21+. no exceptions.

Patrons should meet at the Last Chair Bar in the main lodge no later than 4:45 p.m. This event usually lasts around 3.5 hours. Age 21+. no exceptions.

Dates: Feb. 14; more TBD. More information at 1-800-403-0206 or email [alpin-ebanquets@palisadestahoe.com](mailto:alpin-ebanquets@palisadestahoe.com)

## Feel Good Fridays

TGIF has an elevated new meaning at the Auld Dubliner in The Village. Stop by for live music, \$5 drink specials, and raffle prizes, all in support of Achieve Tahoe a local nonprofit that provides adaptive sports and outdoor recreation opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. Runs from 6-8 p.m. thru March.

## WHEN IT'S TIME FOR WINE

**Any time is time for wine and If you're staying in the valley, you don't have to go far:**

### PlumpJack Café

PlumpJack patrons can peruse an extensive wine list which includes over 600 selections from a wine cellar that holds over 3000 bottles.

A friendly, knowledgeable staff is on hand to recommend or assist with a food pairing. [Plumpjackcafe.com](http://Plumpjackcafe.com)

### Uncorked

Uncorked in the east end of The Village stocks their shelves with vintages from around the globe, reflective of the season, and offer a Monday Wine Flight Deal and a Wine Club which features a monthly theme. There are Uncorked locations in Tahoe City and Truckee, too. [Uncorkedtahoe.com](http://Uncorkedtahoe.com)

### Tahoe Wine Collective

Located in the Boatworks Mall in Tahoe City, TWC features a wine tasting menu that changes weekly, highlighting different boutique producers from the Sierra Foothills. They also offer Blind Flight Fridays with a curated flight of mystery wines, charcuterie and cheese plates, a weekend tasting menu by Chef Kevin Liu, display local artwork on the wall and sometimes spin vintage vinyl on weekends and host open mic comedy shows.

Another event growing in popularity is Paint & Sip, led by local artist Veronica Licher who runs Painted Vine, Tahoe's Traveling Painting Party. Create your own masterpieces guided by her original artwork while discovering a new varietal or savoring a favorite. \$50/painter includes all art supplies. For more information and to sign up for the Wine Collective's newsletter go to [tahoewinecollective.com](http://tahoewinecollective.com)



A group of Creekside School moms at Paint & Sip.

Photo by Tricia Leddy

# High Camp Sunset Happy Hour



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# Valley Vibe



please sign-up in person at the TERC outreach table on Fridays for the day-of tour

## Disco Tubing

Disco Tubing is a thrilling, family-friendly experience on the tubing lanes at the SnoVentures Activity Zone, featuring flashing lights, lasers and a live DJ. Gather your crew, wear fun costumes and ride down the neon lanes from 5-7 p.m. Check the Palisades website for dates.

## Alpenglow Winter Sports Speaker Series

The Alpenglow Sports Winter Speaker Series, presented by North Tahoe Chamber, is the largest free community speaker series in the country. Some of the biggest names in the outdoor in-

dustry share stories about outdoor adventure and their passion for it. The series has two simple goals: to inspire and motivate mountain athletes to pursue their outdoor dreams, and to raise funds for nonprofit organizations making a tangible difference in the North Lake Tahoe and Truckee community.

Each event is held at the Olympic Valley Lodge and admission is free. All shows are live streamed on Alpenglow Sport's YouTube channel. Register for the livestream and receive a free entry in the online giveaway. In-person attendees can buy tickets at the door and win prizes from athlete and event sponsors. Go to [alpenglowsports.com](http://alpenglowsports.com).

### SPEAKER SERIES SCHEDULE

**2/13: Caite Zeliff & The Headwaters Science Institute**

**3/6: Dave Nettle**

## Patagonia Snow Tour

"Human Powered: The Patagonia Snow Tour," a grassroots gathering of the snow-sliding community, comes to Palisades March 6-8. Patagonia's newest event series is a celebration of all things snow and will be on hand to share stories, teach classes, lead on-mountain group rides, and even offer an opportunity to get your gear fixed. All proceeds will be donated to Protect Our Winters. For more information go to [humanpoweredtahoe.splashthat.com](http://humanpoweredtahoe.splashthat.com)

## MS Vertical Challenge

Hit the slopes with Jonny Moseley at the MS Vertical Challenge, returning to Palisades Tahoe on March 21. The annual fundraiser combines your passion for skiing and riding with a purpose - supporting the ongoing battle against multiple sclerosis. Carve out as many vertical feet as possible, partic-

ipate in exciting on-mountain activities, fundraise for a chance to win prizes, and at the end of the day, head to the après party to keep the good times rolling.

Early bird registration starts at \$50. Rally your friends and register today for the SKI for MS Vertical Challenge. Runs from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. For more information go to [support.cando-ms.org](http://support.cando-ms.org)

## Pain McShlonkey Classic

Celebrate the memory of legendary skier Shane McConkey with radness and gladness to extend kindness at the Annual Pain McShlonkey Classic March 21 which coincides with International Snow-blade Day. Festivities include the Snow-blade Hot Dog Downhill, awards a huge raffle. Stream the virtual event and post a picture to Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag #SnowbladeDay and you will be entered into the photo contest. Benefits the non-profit McConkey Foundation. For more information go to [shanemcconkey.org](http://shanemcconkey.org).



Sherry McConkey, center, is the driving force behind the PMS Classic.

## The Mothership Classic

A pledge-driven event held March 22 on the world's greatest chairlift, KT-22. Each participant will challenge themselves to hot lap KT-22 as many times as possible from first chair to last on skinny skis, retro snowboards, mono-skis, snow blades, etc. Nostalgic ski attire is encouraged. Must raise \$150 to participate.

Awards are given out for a variety of categories including:

- Most Laps
- Most Money Raised
- Best Costume
- Raddest Goggles & more!

All funds raised go directly to the healing efforts of athletes that have suffered life-changing injuries through The High Fives Foundation. For more information go to [highfivesfoundation.org](http://highfivesfoundation.org).

**February and March mark the peak of the season. Although we've only received a peek of winter so far, it's far from over, and there are lots of mid-winter events and activities to enjoy.**

**So make some turns, enjoy some tunes and embrace the good times. Please remember all events are subject to weather conditions. For the latest updates go to the Palisades app..**

### Music on the Mountain

Live music means lively times, and you'll find both at the weekend KT-22 Bass Bar Music Series and the Alpine Lodge Music Series. These vibrant après-ski scenes are the perfect end to a perfect day on the slopes in a festive outdoor setting on either side of the resort.

The KT-22 Bass Bar Music Series runs from 2-6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and the Alpine Lodge Series from 2-5 p.m. on Saturday. Both are free and open to everyone so bring your friends, family, and good vibes.

### Throwback Thursdays at Rocker

Rock the retro vibe and bring your throwback energy to The Village every Thursday until the end of the season. Live music, happy hour specials, vintage gear and nostalgic neon are the order of the day. Runs from 2-5 p.m.

### Trivia Night at Tremigo

Put your knowledge to the test at Trivia Night at Tremigo Mexican Kitchen & Tequila Bar in The Village. Join host Tessa every Wednesday for an evening of fun, friendly competition, and great food and drink specials. Runs from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

### Paint & Sip at Little Bear

Grab a drink, pick up a paintbrush and let your creativity flow

at Paint & Sip on Feb. 19 at Little Bear Cafe in The Village. Our local artist will guide you step-by-step as you create your own winter-inspired tote bag, no experience required. Runs 5:30-7:30 p.m.

### Presidents' Week Activities

Presidents' Week is filled with activities and events for the entire family, including six consecutive days of music at the KT Bass Bar, disco tubing, Kid's Club, a special Valentine's Day whiskey pairing dinner at the Terrace Restaurant and the "Meet Your Match" NASTAR race. MYM participants will receive a sticker with a number on it and can meet their match at 4 p.m. at the KT Bass Bar. Matched couples receive a free gift from Palisades Tahoe.

### Ski with a Scientist

A unique opportunity to learn about the research and education of the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC), the environmental history of Alpine, and the role of the U.S. Forest Service and public lands at Palisades Tahoe. Program starts at 1 p.m. on Fridays through April 10. Tours will last approximately 1.5 hour.

All tours are free, but participants must be riding/skiing at an intermediate level and comfortable on all blue terrain. Tours are limited to the first 15 participants,



The Alpine Lodge Music Series offers live entertainment through the season.

Photo by Tricia Leddy

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# SNOWFEST Winter Carnival Celebrates 'All Things Tahoe'



Hardy competitors brave the frigid waters of Lake Tahoe at the Garwoods Polar Bear Swim.

Since 1982, the North Lake Tahoe mountain community has come together to celebrate winter and all things Tahoe with SNOWFEST-- ten days of parties, live music, outdoor adventures, and family-friendly fun. Events are held across the North Shore and many of the activities raise funds for local nonprofits, public programs, and student organizations and scholarships. Last year, approximately \$180,000 was raised for worthy causes.

This year's SNOWFEST runs from Feb. 26-March 8 and features many long-running favorite events such as the Garwoods Kick Off Party, the Dog Pull Contest, the Polar Bear Swim, the Tahoe City Street Faire, the Kings Beach Parade, the River Ranch Snow Sculpture Contest and live music and fireworks. New events for 2026 include a Paint Your Pet art show, full moon snowshoe hikes, a youth skating recital, the Nevada Freeheel Fest. The complete

schedule can be found at [tahoeshowfest.org](http://tahoeshowfest.org).

The North Tahoe Chamber proudly sponsors Tahoe SNOWFEST with support from TOT-TBID Dollars At Work. Other major sponsors include Rivian and Elevated Boat Club, Tahoe Fit!, Pomin's Hot Tubs and Tin Cup.

## PALISADES SNOWFEST EVENTS

### Le Chamois Throwback Party

Le Chamois and Loft Bar celebrate SNOWFEST with a Throwback Party from 2-5 p.m. on Feb. 27. Wear your finest Le Chamois throwback valley ski outfit and party like it's 1982 (founding year of SNOWFEST), Benefiting Lake Tahoe Ski Club Foundation.

### Town Race League Series Mardi Gras Kickoff

Celebrate the kickoff of the 2026 Town Race League Series and get in the spirit

Photo provided

The River Ranch Snow Sculpture contest wraps up SNOWFEST.

of SNOWFEST on March 4 with a Mardi Gras themed night of racing, costumes, and community fun. Skiers and snowboarders of all levels are welcome to join this weekly series, running every Wednesday through April 8. Each week features a new theme, and the best-dressed racer wins a prize.

#### DETAILS

Check-in table located at the base of the Exhibition Lift opens at 1 p.m.; races held from 2-4:30 p.m.

Two runs per racer; must be 18+ years old to participate. Helmets required

### River Ranch Snow Sculpture Contest

The River Ranch Snow Sculpture Contest on March 8 is one of SNOWFEST's longest-running events and brings the winter carnival to a close. Teams turn snow into masterpieces and revelry prevails. Runs noon-3 p.m.



Locals take their turns in Town League.

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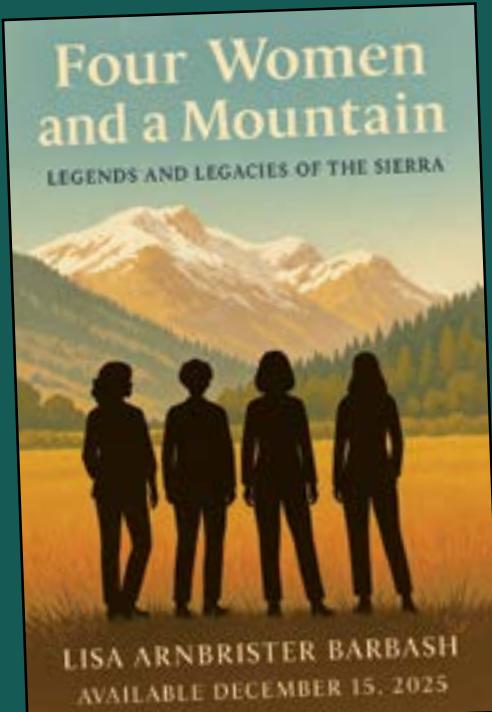
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- Sherry McConkey,  
founder of the Shane McConkey Foundation and EcoChallenge

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The flyer for Crystal Bay Casino features a pin-up girl logo at the top. It includes a QR code, the text 'NORTH SHORE • LAKE TAHOE', and 'www.crystalbaycasino.com'. A 'WINNER' ribbon badge says 'BEST OF N. LAKE TAHOE & TRUCKEE 2024'. A large red arrow-shaped graphic with a yellow border and a yellow border contains the text 'Thank You FOR JOINING US!' with two playing cards. Below this is a section for 'Live Entertainment Line-up' with four main shows listed:

Date	Artist/Show	Time	Price
Fri. Feb. 13	<i>Big Gigantic</i> 2 Night Run! + FREE Red Room After Parties Each Night!	8PM	\$55 ADV/DOS
Sat. Feb. 14	<i>TROUBLE</i> THE MUSIC OF COLDPLAY	8PM	\$55 ADV/DOS
FRI. FEB. 20	<i>THE MOTHER HIPS</i> + FREE RED ROOM AFTER PARTY W/ BLACK PINE REVIVAL	8PM	\$22 ADV \$25 DOS
SAT. FEB. 21	<i>Stu Allen &amp; Mars Hotel</i>	8PM	\$25 ADV \$30 DOS
Fri. Feb. 27	<i>Stu Allen &amp; Mars Hotel</i>	8PM	\$25 ADV \$30 DOS

At the bottom, it says 'All Shows 21+ - Standing Room Only - Live Entertainment Taxes Included in Ticket Price - Ticket Fees May Apply - No Refunds - Smoke Free Venue'. Logos for 'CRYSTAL BAY CLUB', 'BACKSTAGE', 'VIP', and 'The Crown Room' are at the bottom right.

# More Big Mountain Fun & Activities



Nation's best mogul competitors to soar on Red Dog.

## Toyota U.S. Mogul Freestyle Championships

For the second year in a row Palisades Tahoe in partnership with Olympic Valley Freestyle, will host the Toyota U.S. Freestyle Championships from March 27-29

## Rahlves Banzai Tour Returns

After a 10-year hiatus, the legendary Rahlves' Banzai Tour is making its long-awaited return to Palisades Tahoe, April 10-12. Sponsored by Red Bull, this adrenaline-fueled race was created by U.S. ski



Master the moguls with new bump program.

on the legendary Red Dog course. The nation's top moguls and dual moguls skiers will compete for national titles in one of the most challenging disciplines in winter sports.

## Town Race League

The Palisades Tahoe Town Race League returns for its second year, with local skiers and snowboarders of all levels competing in a fun series of alpine races. Competition is held every Wednesday night from March 4-April 8. New this year is a team racing format. Each week will also feature a new theme, with prizes for the best-dressed racer.

icon and Red Bull athlete Daron Rahlves. Combining big mountain freeride terrain with the head-to-head intensity of ski and snowboard cross, the Banzai on KT-22 promises to bring back the raw, high-speed energy of competitors charging down natural terrain features in a no-holds-barred battle to the finish.

## Ski Super Session Debuts

The Natural Selection Tour announces a Ski Super Session, which will serve as the first stage of competition in the 2026 YETI Natural Selection Ski journey. Super Sessions embrace a collaborative, session-style format that prioritizes progres-

winners—the top-finishing man and woman - will be revealed in the episodes as they premiere leading into Alaska's final event.

"I'm stoked to see what these skiers can do as they feed off each other's energy at one of the most hallowed grounds for our sport. Palisades Tahoe was made for an event like this," says Mike Douglas, the head of Natural Selection Ski.

## Mogul Magic Clinics

A new program focused on bump-skiing and designed for intermediate to advanced adult skiers. Master your line choice, rhythm, and control in moguls with expert coaching at Alpine on Saturdays and Sundays at Palisades.

This clinic is perfect for skiers looking to build confidence and refine technique on challenging terrain, all while experiencing supportive, high-level instruction. Clinics are held from 1-3:30 p.m. and run through March. For more information go to the resort's website.

## Amie Engerbretson Signature Women of Winter Camp

Professional skier and big mountain athlete Amie Engerbretson returns to Palisades Tahoe with her Signature Women of Winter Camp, taking place April 6-8. Designed for advanced intermediate and expert skiers, this three-day camp blends personalized coaching, confidence-building, and exploration of Palisades Tahoe's legendary terrain. With support from our Mountain Sports School instructors, participants will progress their skills in a supportive, all-female environment.

A global adventurer, Amie seamlessly transitions between roles behind and in front of the camera, with a portfolio spanning films, print, videos, and her own podcast, "Long Underwear." Beyond her athletic prowess, Amie is a committed climate advocate, recognized with the 2021 Alliance Member of the Year award from Protect Our Winters for her impactful work in climate action.

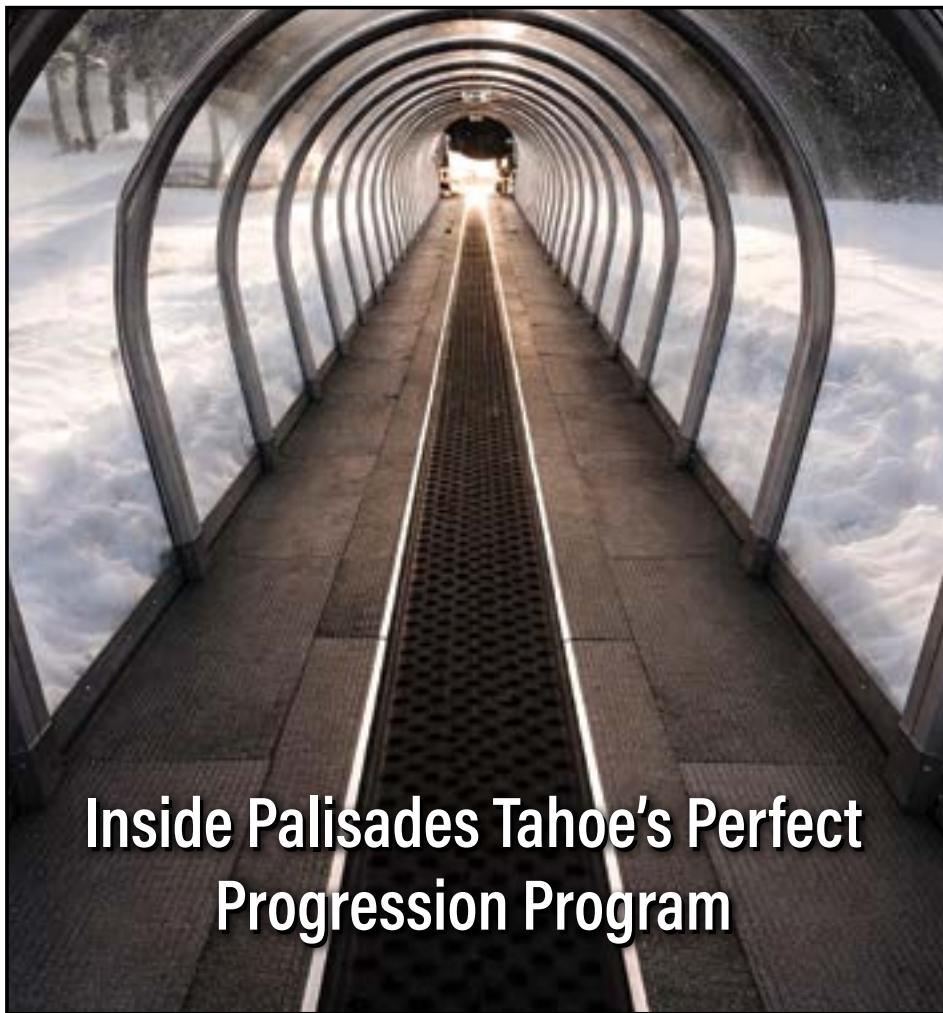
To read more about Amy and other prominent Palisades Tahoe athletes visit [PalisadesTahoe.com](http://PalisadesTahoe.com). \*



Banzai Tour is top to bottom action.

# From First Turns to Forward Momentum

by Michael Kennedy



## Inside Palisades Tahoe's Perfect Progression Program

I arrived at Palisades Tahoe's Alpine base with unfamiliar equipment and no real idea of what to expect. Like many first-time skiers, I was curious, a bit timid, and uncertain. But that was about to change.

For the past seven years, I've hiked up the mountains of Lake Tahoe. My wife, Nicola, has enjoyed the thrill of skiing down these same mountains... without me. And as a resident of Olympic Valley, it seems almost shameful not to participate in this winter sport.

So, when I learned about Palisades Tahoe's Perfect Progression Program, I realized there were no more excuses not to give it a try.

Within an hour, I was skiing confidently down Subway Run, smiling with the cold wind on my face, and already wondering how soon I could go higher.

That shift, from hesitation to exhilaration, is exactly what the Perfect Progression Program is designed to deliver.

Built specifically for true beginners, the program offers more than an introduction to skiing or snowboarding. It provides a structured, supportive pathway into the sport, pairing professional instruction with equipment, lift access, and an incentive that turns learning into lasting engagement: complete the program, and you earn a full, unrestricted Palisades Tahoe season pass.

### The Program's Plan

The Perfect Progression Program is intentionally narrow in its focus. It's

designed for adults and teens (ages 13 and up) who have never skied or snowboarded before. This is about starting from square one and doing it right.

That clarity is part of what makes the program work. By grouping true beginners together, instructors can teach fundamentals without rushing. The environment becomes collab-

*That shift, from hesitation to exhilaration, is exactly what the Perfect Progression Program is designed to deliver.*

orative rather than intimidating, and progression feels natural instead of forced.

In a sport where early experiences often determine whether someone sticks with it, Palisades Tahoe has built a model that removes common barriers: confusion around gear, the cost of lessons and lift tickets, and the anxiety of not knowing where to begin.

For a package price of \$799, the Perfect Progression Program unfolds over three separate half-day lessons, allowing time for skills to settle and confidence to build. Each lesson includes lift access and equipment rentals, along with lunch vouchers and retail incentives that help participants gear up properly.

But the defining difference comes at the end. Participants who complete all three lessons receive a complimentary unrestricted season pass, valid for the remainder of the winter. It's a powerful motivator considering someone in this program gets all the perks mentioned above, along with a season pass for the equivalent cost of about four lift tickets purchased day-of at Palisades Tahoe. This program is structured to build real competency, and it's about joining the mountain community.

### Learning From the Right People

Palisades Tahoe instructors are part of an extensive professional ski school network with elite standards rooted in national certification systems, such as those administered by the Professional Ski Instructors of America & American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI), which govern quality and teaching methodology across the U.S. ski industry.

My first day was spent with instructor Miles Weiss, who quickly oriented me to my equipment and the terrain. His teaching style was calm, efficient, and encouraging, the kind that builds trust fast. Within the first hour, I was comfortably skiing Subway Run, absorbing the basics and already eager to challenge myself more.

My second and third lessons were with Ellie Holland, who guided me onto Meadow Run, a step up in both pitch and perspective. Under her instruction, I began linking turns with intention rather than reaction. Each run layered confidence on top of control, replacing uncertainty with awareness.

That combination - technical clarity paired with emotional steadiness - is what great instruction delivers. Palisades Tahoe's instructors don't just teach mechanics, they teach judgment, safety, and how to read both terrain and oneself.

### A Long Term Investment

The value of the Perfect Progression

Program extends beyond the numbers, though financially, the bundled lessons, equipment, perks, and season pass represent significant savings.

More importantly, participants gain: **Foundational technique** taught correctly from the start

**Confidence** built through structured progression

**Safety awareness** that reduces injury risk and bad habits

**Momentum** - the ability and motivation to keep skiing independently

By the end of my third lesson, the transformation was undeniable. I walked away from the mountain exhilarated, more educated, and eager to return to the slopes with more passion and confidence. I wasn't just thinking about skiing again. I was planning my next steps to ski with Nicola.

### Progressing Forward

For anyone who has ever stood at the base of a mountain wondering if skiing is "for them," the Perfect Progression Program offers a clear answer. With expert instruction, thoughtful structure, and a season-long invitation



Author Michael Kennedy with instructor Miles Weiss.

to continue learning, it transforms uncertainty into capability and curiosity into commitment.

The mountain isn't going anywhere. Sometimes, all it takes to begin is the right guide and the first confident turn.\*

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## TAHOE TRUCKEE EARTH DAY

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