

Special events create excitement

By Ronni Hannaman

Special events coordinators Maxine and Fred Nietz have seen many changes in our community since their arrival over 22 years ago

When they arrived, the thriving downtown Carson City was the place to play, dine and shop. There was every reason to come to town: the post office was in the heart of the city as was the local movie theater. There were interesting shops and plenty of bars and restaurants. Downtown was where everyone went to see and be seen. As in most communities, things changed: the post office moved, the theater moved, governmental entities leased or bought former retail shops. Shopping centers, big box stores and strip malls lured shoppers from downtown merchants.

It's been a battle to remind locals and those living in our region that we still have a viable downtown. Fred and Maxine have built their successful event planning business on creating events to bring life and people to the city core. As one of the early participants in the Main Street movement, Maxine remem-

bers, "Fred and I had a hand in coordinating a variety of interesting events such as Handshake Day, A Downtown Affair and chili cook offs as well as organizing the original Ghost Walk and Wild West Days with Mary Walker, former economic development director." They ran the Carson City Rendezvous for 13 years, the Silver Dollar Car Classic and various other events created with the expressed purpose of creating synergy and pride in the downtown. Of the original Main Street events, they are still organizing the annual Silver & Snowflake Festival to kick off the Christmas season.

Their most current undertaking will take place on June 30th as Carson Street is closed to welcome the 2nd Annual Legends of the West Bike and Car Fest sponsored by the Downtown Business Association. A success in its first year - in spite of the rain last year - this year Legends is expected to draw even larger crowds to enhance the coffers of downtown merchants. The main feature will draw police officers from all over the west to participate in the Extreme Motor Officer Training Challenge where those who you wish never to see behind you with their lights flashing will compete to determine the best of the west. And, there will be street vendors, live entertainment and good food.

When asked whether local events



Maxine and Fred Nietz coordinate a series of events to attract locals to the downtown.

attract those from outside the community, Fred responded, "Local events generally are not about attracting outsiders, instead they are about attracting locals to enjoy downtown and revisit their city." Maxine added, "Most community special events are family oriented and become a place to spend quality time together." For many locals, events become "aha" moments reminding them to think Carson City first for their entertainment and shopping needs. Merchants often hear, "I didn't know you were here!"

Events such as the recently held Taste of Downtown kick off the summer season and create excitement as people stroll the historic streets and spy friends they haven't seen since the last Taste event. Special events provide the opportunity to catch up with friends and what is happening in the downtown perhaps giving us the needed reminder that downtown is truly a special place worth a visit now and then.

From now until the Nevada Day

Parade, Carson City will be offering many reasons to play. Invite family and friends to spend their vacation in our city this summer for there will be plenty to keep them occupied. Don't forget to enjoy the Saturday Farmer's Market at Third and Curry Streets, the Downtown Wine Walk the first Saturday of each month where you join 200 or more wine enthusiasts as they tour downtown merchants and sample a variety of wines. For those who enjoy dining outdoors, downtown has the most outdoor patios to soak up the rays and enjoy friends over good food and cocktails. And, familiarize yourself now and then with our fabulous museums. The Nevada State Museum is offering many special events not to be missed.

Carson City is a special place. Enjoy it! ■

Summer Special Event Highlights:

June 30: Legends of the West Bike and Car Fest featuring some pretty awesome cars and motorcycles.

Fandango Gourmet Food Truck Fest where mobile restaurants from Reno, San Francisco, Sacramento and Los Angeles will be serving up a variety of fresh authentic, exotic cuisines.

July 6-8: Ribmaster Rumble promising the "Best racks on the tracks!" Finally, our very own Rib-Cook-Off coming to the Best Western Carson Station.

Aug. 3-5: Silver Dollar Car Classic promises a fun filled weekend with beautiful cars and music that will transport you back to the 50's!

Aug. 4-19: Jazz & Beyond : Carson City Music Festival will feature Jazz, Blues, Cajun, Latin, Folk music - all live, mostly free!

August 9-12: Haven't had enough of cars? Come to the **Silver Auction** at the Silver Oak Golf Course! The very best of the cool cars will be auctioned. ■



Exotic Cars can be seen at Legends of the West

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Travel makes the heart grow fonder

By Ronni Hannaman

Having just returned from another sojourn to Europe, I find coming home to be sweeter each time. While the sites, sounds, smells, food and cultures of the world are truly fascinating, there is absolutely nothing like sleeping in your own bed, enjoying the daily routine, getting back to work, catching up with the news and being in charge of your own destiny – that is until the travel bug bites once again.

This week, I returned from another one of Collette Vacation's great escorted tours this time to the Italian Lakes Region incorporating a cruise from scenic Venice to several of the more famous Greek Islands with a special stop on the way back to Venice to tour Olympia, the site of the great archaeological site uncovering the Olympic Village built for the first Olympics held in 776 BC. Here some of those on the tour who professed to be "athletes" were able to run in the ancient outdoor arena following the footsteps of those who dedicated their efforts to Zeus.

The islands of Santorini and Mykonos reminded us a bit of our scrubby landscape, but looks are deceiving for although the islands appeared dry, the humidity was for many of us who live in the arid, dry

west a bit of a challenge. The high humidity also caused a slight overcast on all the islands causing us to miss our blue, clear Nevada sky. I also learned that although cruising is the most perfect way to see the Greek Islands, that I am not a cruiser. Too much idle time, too much food, too many bars, and lots of people from all over the world; however, I know that sounds like heaven to many.

Since the Chamber started working with Collette Vacations, I have enjoyed several escorted tours that bring people together from all over the U.S. to learn about the culture of a foreign destination. The tour guides hold your hand every step of the way and all the important sites are included. Those who have any trepidation about travel abroad soon realize that they are safe and well cared for and become frequent escorted tour travelers. Single older women find this a perfect way to travel.

The Chamber has several trips on the horizon for the remainder of this year and for 2013 including our now famous low cost (but very first class) travel to China.

Join us as we enjoy the very best of Scotland departing October 15; Southern Italy and Sicily departing on

November 8th and the newest offering for this year, the chance to see Cuba legally departing on November 1 with a stopover in Miami that could extend your travel.

For 2013, we are planning to return to China in April for the awesome price of \$2200 all inclusive per person. In fact, we're going to explore the Pacific region in 2013 planning an excursion to Thailand and Hong Kong in November 2013 and a great get-a-way to Australia/New Zealand in early August 2013. On this trip, Collette will take you from Cairns with a chance to snorkel the Great Barrier Reef, to a tour of the famous Sydney Opera House. Cultural events will include learning about the Tjapukai Aboriginals. On New Zealand, you'll see most of the island and have the opportunity to extend the trip to include Fiji. Early booking will save you \$500 per person!

We'll be offering more Europe in 2013 as well. All planning will be completed by late August so that you may join us in our travel meeting in late August to hear all the details.

If you wish more information about any of our trips, go to our homepage



Ever wonder what a handsome Venetian Gondolier does while waiting for a "gig?"

under Travel Club. And, we'd love to have you join the Travel Club as well by calling 882-1565. Collette is now offering dollar incentives to all those who join their club.

Traveling with the Chamber is a fun, easy, affordable and safe way to travel and where you will meet great new friends. We may even be able to arrange for roommates to save dollars.

Travel does make the heart grow fonder – for home and for more travel!



A great way to get to know your neighbors is to share green spaces with your dogs.

Gathering places waiting for a gathering

By Ronni Hannaman

It is summer in the City and time for the outdoors as we begin to enjoy those lazy – but not hazy – days of summer.

While our backyards may be one of the favorite places to laze, it's always nice to meet family and friends in some of our great outdoor gathering places to enjoy. Too often we ignore that which is right in our backyard: Centennial Park, the almost over-loved Mills Park, the Legislative Plaza in the very heart of the city, Fuji Park, and the various other parks managed by the city's parks and recreation department that allow for kids to play in large expanses of green and the dogs to socialize with their kind. Our parks allow adults to socialize as well.

The most underutilized gathering place we have is located right in the heart of downtown. It's a place full of cool, green shade, benches, green, green grass to sit upon and beautiful artistic statues to enjoy as you stroll the area. Sometimes there are free concerts to enjoy such as those put on by the Mile High Jazz Band and guest orchestras during the Jazz! Carson City festival in August. It's a great place for a casual lunch or a casual meeting. It's the beautiful Legislative Plaza maintained by the State Division of Lands.

Fuji Park is a perennial favorite for families and those with dogs. Situated right across the street from Costco, this park is the perfect picnic area and dogs are free to

roam in our only enclosed dog park. Kids, too, can enjoy their own fenced play area while parents observe.

Centennial Park is for those who want a bit of sports action. With two golf courses, tennis courts and various ball fields, this is the place for a game of soccer with family and friends.

Mills Park is the site of many events all summer long and when not filled with hundreds of event goers, it's a peaceful place to sit and enjoy watching kids play ball or skateboard. It's a shady place and perfect to meet friends for an impromptu picnic.

There's absolutely no reason to sit alone in your backyard when there are so many fine gathering places to enjoy. ■

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Turn in your map at the Carson Nugget at 5 pm for prizes.

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OUT & ABOUT IN THE CITY

I once complained we had no public art in our city. Thanks to the organization **GROW**, that's no longer the case. All along our freeway underpasses, we now have the history of our community depicted in steel and graphics that make exploring along this section of freeway a great reason to dust off the bicycle. Now if we can only convince our natives to keep this section of the city litter free! Great art and litter aren't compatible!

Have you seen the great affordable marble gifts now being produced by **Radtke Tile and Marble**? Every kitchen – and every bride – needs to have a marble pastry and cheese board. You can visit their “bone yard” and pick your own marble and have them create a one-of-a-kind gift for you. Call Monica at 882-6486.

We have a new bakery in town and this is not just any bakery! It's a place where beautiful wedding cakes are created and the elegant pastries are fit for the tea with the Queen. Just wait until you try their mini quiches that melt in your mouth. It's a new place for a casual lunch to enjoy outdoor dining while you still can. **LA Bakery** is located at 220 John Street –885-CAKE.

As we think of food, for those who love **macaroons**, we challenge you to find a better macaroon than made by Joanie of **Joanie's Creekside Café** located at the corner of Goni and E. College Parkway. In fact, all of her cookies are amazing and maybe the Queen would like these at her tea as well!

Still thinking of the **Cuba** trip being coordinated by the Chamber on behalf of **Collette Vacations**? Don't tarry too long since these trips are filling fast. Who knows when Cuba will be open to Americans again? Join us as we depart Carson City on November 1 for quite the Caribbean adventure. This is a people-to-people tour authorized by the U.S. Treasury where you will serve as an ambassador. Go to our website for full details or call us at 882-1565.

Put a big red X on your calendar not to miss all the events slated for June 30th! Trucks, motorcycles and exotic cars will be the main event this weekend in two separate events not to miss. Like men in uniform? Want to see them compete for the top spot in an extreme motorcycle competition sponsored by our own Carson City Sheriff's Office? Be sure to go downtown this weekend to enjoy **Legends of the West** where you'll be able to talk bikes and cars and mingle with great folks. Then grab your wheels and mosey on down to the **Casino Fandango** to grab a plateful of gourmet foods served from **gourmet food trucks** – just like you see on TV!

Congratulations to the winners of the primary election! The Chamber respects all those who put their names out there in what many think to be an unfriendly political climate. Those who did not win will be back again! Now the real fun begins as you head on toward the “big boy” election in November. And, dear voter, the messages you hear now will be very important.

Silver Oak Golf & Event Center wants you business! Terri Carrette has announced that they are back with a great lunch menu and want you to consider them when you think of holding any kind of event, wedding, meeting, class reunion or whatever it is that will cause you to gather folks together in a beautiful setting. Terri can be reached at 841-7000.

Cars will be the focus of the Silver Auction to be held at **Silver Oak** August 9-12. This is a perfect setting for the legendary cars that will bring many international visitors to our community for a few days of bidding and reminiscing of another era. It was a fun event last year, don't miss it this year! ■

Jones takes Chamber helm



Stan Jones, co-owner of the Purple Avocado, assumes his duties as incoming Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Carson City Chamber beginning July 1, 2012 and will officially be installed at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on July 23rd. He succeeds Court

Cardinal, President of Casino Fandango.

Also being installed to the Chamber board for three-year terms will be Peter Fishburn, Area Representative Brown & Bigelow; Dr. Carol Lucey, President Western Nevada College; Lisa Lee, Executive Director Advocates to End Domestic Violence; Chris Utley, Owner Geeks of Nevada. In addition, the Chairman is allowed two additional one-year appointments. Joyce Whitney-Silva of Greater Nevada Credit Union and Gordon Gagnon of REDCO are the Chairman's picks.

The annual meeting will be held at Silver Oak Golf Club and will honor past chairs. ■



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