

The Record-Courier

'Save the Basin' helicopter effort gets \$100,000 boost



A firefighting helicopter returns from a drop on the Tamarack Fire near Woodfords.
Photo by [Kurt Hildebrand](#).

Staff Reports
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An effort to purchase a firefighting and rescue helicopter for the Lake Tahoe Basin got a \$100,000 boost last month.

Tahoe Douglas Fire Chief Scott Lindgren spoke at the Chase International annual company meeting on March 23 about Basin fire agency's effort to raise money.

There are no dedicated aerial resources in the Tahoe Basin to help when there are fires, Lindgren said.

“Everyone in the room, many of whom were personally affected by the recent Caldor and Tamarack fires, was shocked to hear the lack of aerial support and the benefits that Operation Save the Tahoe Basin could provide,” said Mike Dunn, VP Development for Chase International.

After hearing from Lindgren, meeting attendees raised \$100,000 to support “Operation Save the Tahoe Basin” fundraising project to purchase a Fire Rescue Helicopter.

Chase International representatives and EKN Development Group, developers of the former Tahoe Biltmore in Crystal Bay spearheaded the idea before the annual meeting.

Within moments of Lindgren’s presentation, Dunn announced that if every agent donated just \$62 that Chase International could raise \$20,000. He then revealed that EKN would match that amount if that occurred. Chase International Founder and CEO Shari Chase announced that the Chase Cares foundation would match every dollar raised by the people in the room.

“As stewards of the Lake Tahoe Basin’s most significant revitalization project, we feel it is our duty to support initiatives that positively impact the entire region,” said Ebbie K. Nakhjavani, President and CEO of EKN. “We collaborated with Chase International, which oversees the sales and marketing for our project, to discover ways to be effective. When we heard about Operation Save the Tahoe Basin, there was no question that we had to be involved.”

During every annual meeting, Chase International sets aside time to unveil their annual project as part of their company-wide mission to support the communities in which they live.

“The room burst with a mind-blowing scene of the participants pledging donations at every level,” said Dunn. “The passion we have for our community is what Chase International is all about.” Twenty minutes later, agents and staff of the Chase International Family of Companies, Chase Cares and EKN raised \$100,000.

“There is no better cause than to protect our environment and our homes from fire,” said Chase. “We are so proud to partner with Tahoe Fire Chief Lindgren to support his dream of purchasing a desperately needed response helicopter for our region. Thanks to everyone for a magnificent effort.”

For specific details and to donate to the Fire Rescue Helicopter project, visit TahoeFire.org/helicopter. “We are so appreciative of the energy that Chase International and EKN put forth to jump-start the fundraising for this critically needed resource to help save the Tahoe Basin from catastrophic wildfire,” said Lindgren. “The exposure we will receive from everyone who participated will be the key to our success.”