



# NASJA

NORTH AMERICAN  
SNOWSPORTS JOURNALISTS  
ASSOCIATION

March 11, 2020

## A NOTE ABOUT COVID-19 AND THE SUN VALLEY ANNUAL MEETING

We recognize that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is top of mind for many travelers. Currently, there are no mandatory restrictions on travel within the United States.

We will continue to keep a close watch on the latest developments related to COVID-19 and will follow the guidance of government and public health officials.

At this point, plans for the NASJA Annual Meeting have not changed. If you feel you must cancel, NASJA will refund your \$50 Pre-Trip registration, and/or your \$95 Annual Meeting registration if you notify Peter Hines in advance of the start of both trips.

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### Education and Planning Help Avoid Overcrowding

It was the perfect storm at Vail in early February, but not a particularly good one. Fresh snow – one of the top-five deepest snowfall events in Vail's 58-year history; a previously closed I-70 leaving Front Range skiers chomping at the bit; limited terrain due to avalanche work; and a busy Saturday rope drop that funneled thousands of skiers to the bottom of the dead-end Sun Down and Sun Up bowls, resulted in liftlines of one to two hours. Photos of the crowd went viral. CBS Denver TV reporter Jamie Leary reported 24 inches in 48 hours (it was actually 38 inches), tweeting, "Five min. of pure joy followed by 2 hrs of misery." According to one Vail ski instructor, the lines extended a quarter-mile up the hill, reminiscent of the late Bob Cram's classic cartoon of skiers riding a lift only to immediately enter a crowded liftline to ride back up.

Vail Mountain COO Beth Howard apologized, "I am confident this was an isolated incident in the midst of extreme conditions," she said in a statement appearing in the Feb. 12 Summit Daily.

Just as churches and synagogues are built for high holidays, so too many ski areas must build their base areas and parking lots for busy weekends and holidays, although they are relatively empty midweek. For those of us who can time shift our careers, skiing midweek is a vastly more pleasurable experience. More incentives, such as midweek discounts and package deals, are needed to lure those trapped in the Monday-Friday, 9 to 5 p.m. routine, to consider ways to experience the sport off-peak.

According to the NSAA's Adrienne Isaac, Director, Marketing and Communications, "NSAA helps its member ski areas by providing advice and best practices for messaging to guests and managing the pain points within their operations. Some ski areas that are crowded on the weekends do a great job using messaging and dynamic pricing to drive midweek traffic.

"However, the majority of guests have off on Saturdays and Sundays (including school-aged kids); to that end, some resorts use blackout dates to manage those crowds on the days people are most likely to ski," Isaac tells NASJA in an email.

"A little education and planning can go a long way in terms of having an experience worth repeating."

Good advice for the next time you write about ski resort overcrowding.



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## LAST CHANCE TO BOOK - NASJA ANNUAL MEETING PRE-TRIP – TAMARACK AND BRUNDAGE, IDAHO

Take advantage of this opportunity to discover two picturesque Idaho ski resorts. Checking in on Mar. 21, NASJA members will gather for a meet and greet with complimentary welcome cocktail. On Mar. 22, skiing is provided by Tamarack resort. NASJA will then participate in a hosted media day at Brundage Mountain on Mar. 23. This includes demo gear, complimentary lunch reception and hosted skiing with April Whitney and her team of ambassadors. Departure for Sun Valley will be on Mar. 24.

The registration fee for the pre-trip is \$50 and accommodation for 3-nights starts at \$314 (total includes taxes/fees for all 3-nights) for a 1-bed king hotel room. Act quickly as our reserved block has been released but the resort has confirmed that they can honor our special pricing.

For complete details and the link to the registration page, view: <https://nasja.org/explore-nasja/events/nasja-2020-annual-meeting/2020-annual-meeting-pre-trip/>

Contact board member Kevin Gasior with questions, 514 756 3486, [kevin@skipros.ca](mailto:kevin@skipros.ca)

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## REGISTER NOW FOR NASJA ANNUAL MEETING 2020 AT SUN VALLEY

Sun Valley is a dream resort to visit with its impeccably groomed terrain, open bowls, fun glades and endless cruisers. NASJA's 2020 Annual Meeting kicks off on Tuesday, March 24, with a Welcome Reception at the Sun Valley Lodge Bowling Alley (6-8 p.m.). Press registration (\$95) includes Welcome Reception, skiing at Sun Valley, free x-c ski or snowshoe outing including gear and luncheon at Galena Lodge, two professional development sessions, Visit Sun Valley/Limelight Hotel reception, Hall of Fame Harriman Cottage reception and more. Once registered you will receive links to discounted lodging. Visit Sun Valley also has reasonably priced lodging options. Don't wait – register now for NASJA's annual gathering at a beautiful destination. March is one of the snowiest months! Expect sunny skies and lots of smiles. Guest/Corporate registration is \$119.

To register, click: <https://nasja.org/explore-nasja/events/nasja-2020-annual-meeting/>  
Final registration deadline is Mar. 19, 2020.

Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony tickets are available to NASJA members at a discount for \$95. There is limited availability so please email Peter Hines ASAP at [peter.hines@nasja.org](mailto:peter.hines@nasja.org)

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## HAROLD S. HIRSCH 2019 AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED





## **NASJA Member Eric Smith Wins for Words**

In the Words category, congratulations to Eric Smith. The judges praised Eric for his newsworthy stories about the effect of a strong start to the snow season on resorts, the impact of the coming winter Olympics on snowsports in China, and the boom in backcountry skiing. His stories were well-researched, with original reporting, informative use of data and a good selection of appropriate interview sources who gave solid quotes.

Eric, who grew up in Memphis, and now lives in Louisville, Colo., is a senior business editor at the longtime B2B trade publication *SGB Media*, where he covers the snowsports, outdoor and active lifestyle industries.



*Ray and Alicia Alba*

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## **Ray and Alicia Alba (Alba Adventures) and Dino Vournas Tie for Images**

Co-winners of NASJA's 2019 Harold S. Hirsch Award in the Images category are Ray and Alicia Alba (Alba Adventures) from New York City.

Instead of skiers taking insane runs in places most of us will never see, much less ski, the Albas focus on relatable ski experiences. Their message is an important one: unplugging, getting outdoors, and reconnecting with family and friends. Their latest film shorts can be found at [Albaadventures.com](http://Albaadventures.com).

The judges' praised their submissions as excellent examples of using video for story telling –

they complimented Alicia and Ray on their in-depth reviews of the locations and the surrounding areas, saying in part, "Great sense of the location, good use of lighting, action, sound and editing was employed."

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*Dino Vournas*

The other co-winner of NASJA's 2019 Hirsch S. Hirsch Award in the Images category is five time Hirsch Award recipient Dino Vournas. Dino is a Hayward, Calif.- based freelance photographer/ski and outdoor writer who has worked for the (SF) *Bay Area News Group*, *East Bay Times/San Jose Mercury*, *Associated Press*, *Outside Magazine*, *Tampa Tribune*, *Skinet.com*, *Colorado Expressions*, *Examiner.com*, others. He is a member of SATW and has been an active member of NASJA since 1977.

The judges complimented Vournas on his photographs, especially those depicting action, drama, and risk, adding, "It all added up to compelling use of photography for storytelling."

Since 1963, NASJA's Harold S. Hirsch Awards have recognized excellence involving snowsports, emphasizing journalistic creativity and editorial or artistic content. Dedicated to promoting professionalism in winter sports coverage, it is named after the ski clothing pioneer and founder of White Stag. Award recipients are chosen by a panel of non-NASJA members who are well regarded in the fields of journalism, writing, education, snowsports and visual media.

Click here to read more about the Harold S. Hirsch Award Winners:<https://nasja.org/harold-s-hirsch-award-recipients/>

Note: The Hirsch Awards were revamped in 2018 to better reflect the changes in the ways journalists communicate. Several categories were merged so that words could be judged against words, whether in paper or digital form. Video and Photography are now judged together in a new Images category. The Book award is given every third year and was included in the 2018 contest.

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*Lisa Ballard and Peter Hines*

## **BALLARD PRESENTED 2018 HIRSCH AWARD**

Lisa Ballard from Red Lodge, Montana was presented with her 2018 Harold S. Hirsch Award for Words on March 3, 2020. NASJA Executive Secretary Peter Hines made the presentation. Ballard was at Whiteface Mountain, New York, where she was co-hosting a “Your Turn” women's ski clinic with Olympic Medalist Andrew Weibrecht. Ballard’s clinic was based at the Mirror Lake Inn in Lake Placid and included breakfast, a presentation on trends in women's gear, the opportunity to demo women's skis, two days of instruction with her and Weibrecht, video analysis and door prizes from event sponsors.

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## **NASJA ELECTION BALLOTS DUE MAR. 15; WRITE-INS WELCOME**

Voting is underway for the positions of vice presidents of NASJA. The candidates running for a second year term are:

Vice President – Roger Lohr  
Vice President – Kevin Gasior

You may vote one or both vacancies. Information regarding the candidates is on the web-based ballot form:

<https://nasja.org/nasja-2020-21-online-voting/>

Other nominations are still welcome so if you would like to nominate yourself or anyone else. If you are submitting a write-in candidate, make sure the candidate has already agreed to serve. Voting will close on March 15, 2020.





*Ski Vermont Day. (Photo courtesy of Ski Vermont)*

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## **NASJA PARTICIPATES IN SKI VERMONT MEDIA DAY AT BOLTON, TRAPP'S**

In mid-February, Ski Vermont held its annual on-snow media day at Bolton Valley Resort and Trapp Family Lodge attracting over 30 attendees including 20 media and 19 resort/marketing partner reps. NASJA members participated in a variety of activities and enjoyed great mid-winter conditions.

With the highest base area in Vermont, Bolton Valley had powder to enjoy especially for those who participated in the Intro to Backcountry Clinic outlining alpine touring gear and its application in the backcountry. A more advanced group also explored terrain in Bolton's backcountry with 1,500 acres of terrain. An apres-ski reception offered ample opportunity to mingle with reps from Bolton Valley, Cabot Creamery, Killington, Long Trail Brewing, Mad River Distillers, Smugglers' Notch, Stowe, Suicide Six, Sugarbush, Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports, and Woodstock Nordic Center.



*Media enjoy a backcountry tour. (Photo by Martin Griff)*

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On Day 2, Sam and Kristina von Trapp guided the main group to the Slayton Pasteur Cabin, a hearty 3-mile climb from the Trapp Family Lodge Outdoor Center. A smaller group enjoyed a guided backcountry tour from Bolton to Trapp's. Trails were soft and impeccably groomed and a long downhill led to a delicious lunch at Trapp's Bierhall. Joannes von Trapp joined the group for a tour of the brewery.

NASJA members welcome opportunities such as this to partner with ski area associations. Media benefit by accessing a myriad of story angles, enjoy extended time with multiple resort representatives, and learn about new accommodations, special packages and restaurant options they can share with their audiences. The NASJA Board is looking to encourage other ski area associations to host such media programs in the future.

### Let's Go to the Videotape

One again we're indebted to NASJA member Don Burch for this video keepsake of the event: <https://tinyurl.com/SkiVTDay2020>

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## WATCH FOR NOTICE OF THE CARSON WHITE AND BOB GILLEN AWARDS VOTING

Watch shortly for the call to vote for our most prestigious award, the **Carson White Snowsports Achievement Award**, first presented in 1968, which honors a person or in some cases persons, who have distinguished themselves by notable contributions to the North American ski and snowsports experience.

Also up for vote is the **Bob Gillen Memorial Award** which honors the recipient for excellence in ski industry public relations and media news dissemination.

Our **Mitch Kaplan Award**, which singles out a journalism professional whose work and character most exemplifies our late colleague's journalistic ethic, inquisitive nature and love of snowsports is voted on by the NASJA Board.



The awards voting notification is coming soon in an email from Executive Secretary Peter Hines. Voting will take place on our NASJA website.

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## NEW MEMBER PROFILE

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*Lisa Gosselin Lynn*

**Welcome Lisa Gosselin Lynn, editor/co-publisher *VT Ski+Ride* and *Vermont Sports***

Lisa Gosselin Lynn recently joined NASJA. She is Editor/Co-publisher of *VT Ski+Ride* and *Vermont Sports*, based in Middlebury, Vt. Lisa's mother was a ski bum from Boston living in Chamonix when she met Lisa's father, an American working in France. Lisa grew up learning to ski in the Alps, before coming to the U.S. to go to Yale. After graduating, she worked as an editor at *Yachting*, then *Ski Magazine*. Since then, she has been the editor-in-chief of *Bicycling*, *Audubon*, *Islands*, and *EatingWell* magazines.

*EatingWell* (based in Shelburne, Vt.), took her to Vermont – a state she has fallen in love with. Most recently, Lisa worked as Vermont's Commissioner of Economic Development before joining her husband, Angelo Lynn, at his family business, Addison Press, publisher of a

string of regional newspapers and magazines.

Together, they have turned *VT Ski + Ride* into a glossy, print quarterly covering the mountain lifestyle in the Northeast with 25,000 print distribution in outdoor retailers in seven states. In 2020, *VT Ski + Ride* won General Excellence, the highest award for specialty publications from the New England Newspaper and Press Association. Lisa also oversees sister publication, *Vermont Sports*, an outdoor sports and adventure newsmagazine published nine times a year.

Both publications also have vibrant websites, e-newsletters and social media feeds. Lisa still occasionally freelances, and her features have appeared in *Men's Journal*, *Town & Country*, *Forbes*, and *Newsweek*, among others.

Lisa says, "I've been a member of NASJA in the past and it's great to reconnect with so many people in the small, small ski world and to be a part of a community of fellow journalists who love snowsports."

When reached recently, she tells NASJA they are looking for an assistant editor. For more information on that, view <https://vtskiandride.com/were-hiring/>

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## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

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*Bogus Basin hosts CCSAA next month*

### **Attend the CCSAA Annual Conference 2020, April 7-8, 2020, Bogus Basin, Idaho**

Speaking of Bogus Basin, NASJA is welcome to join CCSAA at its Annual Conference April 7-8 at the resort in Boise, Idaho. The Conference is a great opportunity to not only learn from relevant speakers within the cross country community, but to spend time with owner/operators of cross country ski areas, and to get some great spring skiing.

There is a \$250 media rate which covers all meals. If you prefer not to join the group for meals there is no charge.

Register here: <https://www.ccsaastore.org/product-category/meeting-registration/>

For additional information: <https://ccsaa.org/annual-conference/>

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## HOLD THESE DATES

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### **Mar. 21-24, 2020 – NASJA Annual Meeting Pre-Trip – Tamarack and Brundage, Idaho**

For complete details and link to the registration page, view: <https://nasja.org/explore-nasja/events/nasja-2020-annual-meeting/2020-annual-meeting-pre-trip/>

**Mar. 24-29, 2020 – NASJA/ISHA/U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame** meeting in Sun Valley. Includes NASJA annual meeting, professional development, and X-C day trip and luncheon at Galena Lodge. Ski rentals will be provided courtesy of Ski Butlers.  
To register: <https://nasja.org/explore-nasja/events/nasja-2020-annual-meeting/>  
Final registration deadline is Mar. 19, 2020.

Tentative Annual Meeting schedule:

#### **Tuesday, March 24 – Arrival.** Check into Sun Valley Lodging

6-8 p.m. Welcome Reception at Bowling Alley and Game Room in the Sun Valley Lodge. Hors d'oeuvres served; the first drink is on NASJA.

Dinner on your own.

#### **Wednesday, March 25 – Ski Day at Sun Valley —** Hosted by Kelli Lusk, Public Relations & Communications Manager

7 a.m. Legends Breakfast – Continental Room, Sun Valley Inn (included in registration price)

9 a.m. Ski Day at Sun Valley – Meet at River Run Plaza for mountain tour hosted by Kelli Lusk, Public Relations & Communications Manager. Note: Sun Valley will provide lift vouchers for two days for NASJA press members.

Noon Lunch with Kelli Lusk and her team (location TBD)

4:30 p.m. NASJA annual meeting, Professional Development session

#### **Engage Young Audiences: Telling Snow Stories Where the Twenty Somethings Read**

Jean Arthur will present how to connect with young audiences where they seek news, and will discuss how they want to find information. She will also explore when they tend to tune in—and out. Backpack journalism and new audiences may enhance your paycheck.

Jean Arthur, a Montana State University Teaching Professor, works with undergraduate journalism students and other young writers. Her writing and photography appear in Alaska Air's *Alaska Beyond* magazine, *Ski Trax*, *Out There Outdoors* and other publications. Her latest book, *Top Trails: Glacier National Park Must-Hikes* (Wilderness Press, 2014) is available on Amazon.

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Reception at Limelight, Ketchum, Hosted by Limelight Ketchum and Visit Sun Valley (included in registration)

Evening Dinner in Ketchum (on your own)

#### **Thursday, March 26 – Ski Day at Sun Valley**

9 a.m. Meet at River Run Plaza

Noon Lunch on your own. Options include Roundhouse, River Run Day Lodge,



Lookout Day Lodge (Taco bar)

4-5:30 p.m. Reception: Hall of Fame at Harriman Cottage (no charge)

Evening ISHA Awards Reception & Banquet (optional expense)

### **Friday, March 27 – X-C Ski Day at Galena Lodge**

7:30 a.m.-10 a.m. ISHA Ski Historians' Colloquium (by invitation only) Sun Valley Inn (Sage Room). Must pre-register, limited seating, \$20 donation at the door.  
Contact Kathe Dillman, [kathe@skiinghistory.org](mailto:kathe@skiinghistory.org)

9 a.m. Galena Lodge cross-country skiing and lunch. Free x-c ski or snowshoe gear included.

3 p.m. Professional Development with Tom Kelly, former 32-year VP-Communications for U.S. Ski & Snowboard

### **Telling YOUR Own Story**

As journalists we're experts at telling stories ... about others? But what about telling our own story? Communications professional Tom Kelly will speak on how journalists can use social media platforms to better tell their own stories, sharing their work to build greater value.

4 p.m. Ski Hall of Fame Vintage Fashion Show (optional expense)

### **Saturday, March 28 – Ski Day at Sun Valley or Dollar Mountain**

6:30 p.m. Ski Hall of Fame Induction dinner and ceremony (optional expense; tickets available for \$99)

### **Sunday, March 29 – Depart**

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*NASJA members Steve Cohen, Bernie Weichsel and Martin Griff get fresh tracks at Big Snow.*

**June 26-28, 2020 – NASJA Summer Ski Outing at Big Snow American Dream, Meadowlands, New Jersey** – Now every day is a snow day. Join us for what could possibly be NASJA's first-ever summer U.S. ski outing. The weekend will include complimentary indoor skiing and equipment rentals, hosted breakfast and lunch and discounted hotel accommodations in New Jersey. Sidetrips are being planned to Manhattan, just a ferry or train ride away across the Hudson. Big Snow is North America's first real-snow, year-round, indoor ski and snowboard resort, located adjacent to the New Jersey Meadowlands Sports Complex within the American Dream retail and entertainment center. For information about Big Snow, see: <https://www.bigsnowamericandream.com>

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Jeff Blumenfeld – President  
Roger Lohr, Kevin Gasior – Vice Presidents  
Megan Collins – Corporate Liaison  
Iseult Devlin – Immediate Past President



### **CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING NASJA**

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