



August 10, 2020

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### Cross Country Skiing is Made for Social Distancing

When I worked for Trak Waxless cross-country skis in the late 1970's, manufacturers serving the sport were selling 700,000-750,000 pairs of Nordic skis per year. That number, sadly, has dropped to about 100,000 to 110,000 in 2019 according to the Cross Country Ski Areas Association (CCSAA), a member of NASJA.

But participation in the sport could be on the upswing next season. The boom in streaming services notwithstanding, North Americans are getting outdoors in record numbers.

Bicycle sales are booming, golf courses are booking previously undesirable tee times, and paddlesports and running are on the upswing this summer. In fact, CCSAA's executive director Reese Brown (xcski.org) predicts that given a decent snow year, the sport in 2020-21 could be up 30% over 2018-19 when Nordic skiing facilities in North America logged 6.2 million skier/days, the season before the novel coronavirus reared its ugly spiked head.

Reese tells me: "Anecdotally from conversations with cycling, hiking outlets, and looking at how Americans and Canadians are venturing outside for outdoor physical and psychological wellness, they'll embrace Nordic skiing more than ever before as a way to recreate in winter.

"We social distanced before it was cool," he said.

If ever there were a sport made for social distancing, it's X-C. Nordic ski areas – about 350 in North America, many within easy driving of major urban markets – are preparing for the COVID-19 era in anticipation of this growth, hosting biweekly Zoom calls to discuss best practices. Now's the time to start thinking about cross-country skiing and how you plan to cover this renewed interest in kicking and gliding.

Sincerely,



- Jeff Blumenfeld  
NASJA President

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## JOIN THE NASJA APRES SKI HAPPY HOUR, AUG. 20, 8 P.M. ET

How are we all faring during these unprecedented times? We're locked down, wearing masks, compulsively washing our hands, and running out of films and documentaries to watch on *Netflix*.

Join your fellow NASJA members for a one-hour update call among ourselves, learn what's being planned for 2020-21, and chat about your latest project with an adult beverage in hand. The Zoom link will be issued a few days before.



## NASJA CO-HOSTS VIRTUAL HALL OF FAME INDUCTION THIS FALL

The US Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame announced last month the cancellation of its annual induction and all Snowsport History Celebration (SHC) supporting events previously scheduled for December 9-13, 2020 in Sun Valley, due to travel concerns and other health risks related to Covid-19.

The Hall and its partner organizations, the International Skiing History Association (ISHA) and NASJA will instead present a series of virtual broadcasts this fall highlighting SHC features, including the 2019 ISHA Awards, a virtual version of the 2020 SnowStyle Fashion show, media briefings and exclusive interviews with Hall inductees.

All broadcasts will be hosted by Hall of Fame Inductee and extreme skiing icon Dan Egan with help from Pugski.com (<http://www.pugski.com>) which will provide promotion of the series and a platform for the broadcasts.

The next LIVE Snowsport History Celebration is slated for April 7-11, 2021, in Snowmass Village where a full schedule of events are planned to resume.

For more details: [www.skihall.com](http://www.skihall.com) or see the Hall's Facebook page. Dates and details for all broadcasts will be issued shortly.



## eBook Project to Pair Children's *Best Day on Snow Ever Stories* with WorldClass Illustrations and Learn-to-Ski Tips

Smartful Kids (Nathan Y. Jarvis) and NASJA member [braveskimom.com](http://braveskimom.com) (Kristen Lummis) announce a joint publishing project designed to involve skiing and snowboarding kids in sharing their love of winter sports with their friends and family.

Jarvis and Lummis are currently seeking submissions of no more than 250 words from students in grades kindergarten through 7th. Submissions should focus on the child's best day on snow ever while skiing or snowboarding. Submissions should be written by the child, although parents can help by transcribing for the youngest authors.

The goal of this project is to share fun, enthusiastic snowsports stories – written by kids, for other kids – to promote and grow winter sports.

In addition to the stories and "kid-to-kid" tips, Jarvis, an award-winning, internationally-known illustrator and PSIA Children's Specialist, and Lummis, an award-winning snowsports journalist, will share both learn-to-ski pro tips and parenting tips. The focus on personal stories paired with fun illustrations, and underlined with practical and useful information for families, will make this book unique.

Jarvis and Lummis plan to make the 2020 Anthology a "first annual" collection. Additional submissions not chosen for the book will be featured on [braveskimom.com](http://braveskimom.com) throughout the fall, winter and spring.

Read the full announcement here:

<https://braveskimom.com/calling-all-kids-share-your-best-day-on-ever-snow>

The deadline for submissions has been extended. Submit here:

<https://tinyurl.com/bestday2020>

For more information: Kristen Lummis, [braveskimom@braveskimom.com](mailto:braveskimom@braveskimom.com)

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*Heather Burke of FamilySkiTrips.com*

## Heather Burke Celebrates Over 20 Years with NASJA

Heather Burke, from Kennebunkport, Maine, grew up with a passion for skiing starting at the age of three. "My mom says I was better at skiing than walking," Heather recalls from her early Gunstock, New Hampshire, ski days. Heather later taught skiing at Smugglers Notch while at the University of Vermont studying journalism and foreign language.

"I caught the travel bug, and the love of writing about ski adventures. I spent my junior year abroad skiing the Alps with my fiancé, now husband of 30+ years. Today, Greg is also our trip planner and my photographer. We launched [FamilySkiTrips.com](https://www.familyskitrips.com) in 2000, then [LuxurySkiTrips.com](https://www.luxuryskitrips.com) (now [Snowpak.com](https://www.snowpak.com)) and [TheLuxuryVacationGuide.com](https://www.theluxuryvacationguide.com) in 2016."

When asked about her best ski adventure in 2019-2020, she doesn't hesitate: "Skiing Baqueira Beret, Spain, in February 2020 was extraordinary! The Pyrenees are vast and beautiful, and the Spanish people are so friendly and relaxed – more focused on their on-mountain tapas, espresso, and vino while sun-bathing than actually skiing – which suits us perfectly – more snowy slopes and untracked off-piste for us."

Heather adds, "Snowmobiling to dinner was particularly magical, through a dark snowy forest to an 11th century monastery, accessed only by dog sled, sleigh or snowmobile. Copious Rioja accompanied our hearth fire-cooked Spanish meal, followed by *digestif* that resembled lighter fluid."

She continues, "Spaniards dine very long and late, so our midnight ride back on an icy track was madcap, punctuated with flipping our sled. For the record, Greg did not miss a day of skiing due to fractured ribs, no days off on our media itinerary."

What's next?

"We're seeking unique places, off the grid, away from crowds and Covid. Lesser-known ski areas are calling our names, and we're excited to share new stashes with our followers and readers. Classic double chairs, even AT ski exploration, provide obvious 'social distancing' with your ski party," Heather says.

"Après ski will be dialed back from shot skis and dancing in ski boots (insert sad face). Greg and I have always enjoyed discovering new mountains, so we are enthusiastic. I believe longer trips will emerge as a pattern too, more of a European vacation model, since travel is

now more complex with new protocols. Our previous one or two night per resort pace, to cover lots of territory for content, will change, and I welcome less hectic, more in-depth stays as a consequence."

Heather adds, "Ending our season back in Vail for 2021 spring skiing, and favorite events - Taste of Vail and Spring Back to Vail, would be 'epic', so here's hoping the government's operation 'Warp Speed' works for a return to ski normalcy."

Follow Heather's travel journals at:

- [FamilySkiTrips.com](https://www.familyskitrips.com)
- [The Luxury Vacation Guide](https://www.theluxuryvacationguide.com)
- [facebook.com/familyskitrips](https://www.facebook.com/familyskitrips)
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## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

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### ISHA Awards Celebration to Go Virtual

NASJA member The International Skiing History Association (ISHA) will honor its 2019 ISHA Award winners with an online celebration this fall. "Acknowledging the deep concerns over travel and the Covid-19 pandemic, ISHA will not host live Ski History Week events in Sun Valley in December," ISHA President Seth Masia announced last month.

Masia added, "We will now focus on planning our 2021 events at Snowmass, Colo., April 7-11. Sun Valley Resort has been a great partner through these uncertain times. We are looking forward to hosting our events back in Sun Valley in 2022 instead."

In addition to lectures, historic film screenings plus ski and social gatherings, the highlight event of ISHA's Skiing History Week each year is the ISHA Awards reception and banquet. Award winners from around the globe are honored for their published ski histories, films and videos, broadcasts, websites and other media and lifetime achievements. The awards have been presented since 1993.

For more information on the 2020 awardees, visit:

<https://www.skiinghistory.org/news/swiss-academic-ski-club-named-isha-lifetime-award-winner-2020>

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## ISHA Content Manager Wanted

In a related story, ISHA is looking for a part-time content manager to help populate the home page of its [skiinghistory.org](http://skiinghistory.org) web site, and start to build its social media presence. Pay is per posting. Can work remotely. If interested, contact Kathe Dillmann at [kathe@skiinghistory.org](mailto:kathe@skiinghistory.org)

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### NEWS YOU CAN USE

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The image shows the words "NEW YORK" in a large, elegant, black cursive font. The letters are thick and have decorative flourishes, particularly at the beginning and end of the words. The text is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

#### How Ski Resorts Hope to Cope

Snow will not be the biggest source of uncertainty for skiers and ski operators, writes Josh Barro in *New York Magazine* (July 12). "Customers don't know what the status of the coronavirus pandemic will be by the winter, and what sorts of ski (and après-ski) activities will be available and advisable."

Barro continues, "They don't know how comfortable they will be about getting on airplanes to take ski vacations. They may also be uncertain about their own personal financial outlooks, and whether they will want to spend money on ski trips. So ski resort operators have had to adapt their season pass sale pitches to reassure customers that they're not going to waste money on a pass they won't use."

Read the story here:

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/07/how-ski-resorts-hope-to-operate-under-covid-19-this-winter.html>

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#### US Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame Launch Online Auction Site and Storefront

The US Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame has partnered with NASJA member [Pugski.com](http://Pugski.com), with help from Alterra/Ikon, to facilitate an online auction site and storefront that will benefit the Hall with donations and support. [Pugski.com](http://Pugski.com) will host the store, where one-of-a-kind items, vacation packages, lift passes, and next season's gear and ski fashions will be available for purchase or up for auction.

The short-term goal of this new initiative is to raise the necessary operational funds for 2020

that were lost due to the postponement of the Class of 2019 induction event in Sun Valley. The long-term plan is to build a fan following and create online opportunities for collectors and historians to find interesting gear and sport heritage memorabilia.

A new item will be available for bidding each week.

Learn more here: <https://store.pugski.com/hall-of-fame-auction>

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## New Website Catalogues Former Japanese Ski Areas

By Patrick Thorne, aka The Snow Hunter

A new website, [SnowJapanHistory.com](https://www.snowjapanhistory.com), is aiming to create an English language record of all of Japan's former ski areas.

Japan has a long history as one of the world's leading ski nations and in a period from the late 1970s to the early 1990s, skiing was especially popular in the country with ski areas springing up quickly and in some cases staying open 24 hours a day with floodlit slopes at night to meet demand.

Sadly, changing tastes and a financial crash in the 1990s meant a big drop in demand and a large number of ski areas have closed in the decades since.

Today, Japan is home to around 500 operating ski areas – keeping it in the world's top five in terms of areas open – and there has been new interest and growing international ski travel since around the year 2000. [SnowJapan.com](https://www.snowjapan.com) has been the main source of independent information on Japanese skiing over those past 20 years, and the creator of that site has now set up [SnowJapanHistory.com](https://www.snowjapanhistory.com) as a labor of love rather than a commercial venture, to try to catalogue all of the country's former centers.

[SnowJapanHistory.com](https://www.snowjapanhistory.com) is growing weekly and already has more than 100 former ski areas across 14 Prefectures listed, with over 800 original photographs.

There are some 50 ski areas currently open worldwide. Read how some are handling the thorny issue of social distancing:

<https://www.snow-forecast.com/whiteroom/the-different-approaches-to-social-distancing-in-ski-areas-around-the-world/>

Reach Patrick Thorne in Scotland here: [patrick@patrickthorne.com](mailto:patrick@patrickthorne.com)

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**HOLD THESE DATES**

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Here are some dates and tentative time periods to start thinking about, all subject to possible delay due to the current health crisis.

- **August 20, 2020** – Apres Ski Happy Hour on Zoom, 8 p.m. ET/5 p.m. PT
- **Media Briefing** – Zoom, fall 2020
- **NASJA November meeting** – Zoom
- **Pennsylvania Ski Areas Association (PSAA) Media Trip**– January 12-13, 2021
- **Outdoor Retailer Snow Show Networking Event, January 28, 2021, Denver**
- **Western Winter Summit** – January - February, 2021
- **Quebec Media Trip** – February, 2021
- **Snowmass, April 7-11, 2021** – NASJA activities will be co-located with ISHA and US Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame
- **Big Snow America, spring 2021** – NASJA’s media day at this new indoor ski area in the New Jersey Meadowlands, with discounted accommodations at the Hilton Hotel Meadowlands.

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Jeff Blumenfeld – President  
Roger Lohr, Kevin Gasior – Vice Presidents  
Megan Collins – Corporate Liaison  
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