



NASJA

NORTH AMERICAN
SNOWSPORTS JOURNALISTS
ASSOCIATION

SNOW

SCOOPS

The well-groomed source
for all things **snowsports**.

January 18, 2022

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A Snowy Weekend in Crested Butte

Crested Butte snow depths went from zero to hero when 99 inches of snow fell over the holidays. Nicknamed the *Santa Slam*, it was a snowfall of biblical proportions. When NASJA held its first media trip since this Covid mess began, Jan. 6-10, our group experienced two bluebird days with a snowstorm day sandwiched in between.

We were vaxxed to the max and wore mask indoors everywhere. We showed vax cards to enter the mid-mountain restaurant, receiving vax stickers for our Epic passes so we only had to do that once.



Members of the Crested Butte NASJA media trip tour the mountain.

Indeed, you can say the trip to this southern Colorado ski resort celebrating its 60th anniversary was full of future story ideas. For instance, new this year is a three-person fixed

grip Peachtree lift that services beginner terrain at the base.

After a day of guided skiing on Friday, Jan. 7, the group enjoyed Hungarian mushroom soup at the Crested Butte Museum which showcases the history of snowsports in the Gunnison Valley, along with its railroads, ranching, mining, mountain biking, its food and beverages. The quirky museum gift shop even sells pouches of Gold Nugget Bubble Gum, a personal favorite that I haven't seen since a visit to Freedomland in the 1960s.
(www.crestedbuttemuseum.com)



Executive director Than Acuff of the small, independent Crested Butte Avalanche Center, founded unofficially in the back of a bagel store in 1991, told us that the CBAC has three full-time forecasters who cover 402 square miles of southern Colorado terrain. It offers daily and weekly avalanche advisories, daily mountain weather forecasts, travel advice and a growing education and outreach program for those traveling in the backcountry on touring skis, splitboards, snowmobiles, snowshoes and Nordic skis.

The pandemic has led to a meteoric rise in backcountry users. Trailhead use went from 22,000 in 2019-20 to nearly 44,000 in 2020-21.

"We're here to make sure people come home safe. We educate outdoor enthusiasts so they make the right decisions in the backcountry," he says. "We're not trying to scare people, we just want people to have fun in a safe manner." (www.cbavalanchecenter.org)

Guided skiing continued Saturday, Jan. 8, during a full-day snowstorm, bringing fresh snow for every run. That evening we were joined for a dinner at Bonez by our host, Andrew Sandstrom, marketing director, Gunnison Crested Butte Tourism and Prosperity Partnership (TAPP), and Crested Butte Mayor Ian Billick who also serves as executive director of the Rocky Mt. Biological Laboratory (RMBL).

More than 250 scientists pass through RMBL's doors every year – it's a world-renowned scientific field station that studies a variety of topics such as pollination, plant genetics climate change, even the behavior of marmots (RMBL.org).

"Climate change is placing huge pressure on ski communities," Billick told us. "There are mass transit, labor and housing issues, and further challenges as people move out of cities and know they can work effectively from anywhere."

Lodging tax revenues are up 40% through October 2021, on top of 11% growth in 2020, again due to the pandemic.

Billick continued, "We want to ensure a quality of life for everyone as we effectively manage this growth."



On Sunday, some of us visited the Crested Butte Nordic Center, which maintains 50 km of world-class groomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, accessible right from downtown CB. Last season set records for the 35-year-old nonprofit. There's also an outreach program to Spanish-speaking residents of the area, and some 180 children in a school program. There are future plans for a major facility expansion in 2022-23. (www.cbnordic.org)

NASJA last held its annual meetings at CB in 1992 and 2007. This latest trip provided an informative update about this quirky, historic skiing oasis in southern Colorado.

Our thanks to Scott Clarkson, executive director at Crested Butte/Mt. Crested Butte Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center; Jessica Miller, senior manager communications, Crested Butte Mountain Resort; Tara Schoedinger, Crested Butte's female vice president and general manager; Laura Puckett Daniels and Molly Susla of CB Nordic; the CBAC's Than Acuff; the Honorable Ian Billick, and Andrew Sandstrom of TAPP.

Learn more at: www.skicb.com

Download the Updated Membership Directory – The latest and greatest and updated version of the NASJA membership directory is now available for you to upload. If you'd like a copy, send an email to execsec@NASJA.org for the link.



- Jeff Blumenfeld
NASJA President



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

One of the aspirations of humanity in this will-it-never-end? Covid epoch is to try to return to

normal as soon as possible. To that end, we would like to announce that we will Keep Calm and Carry On with our NASJA Awards for 2022 – the Carson White Snowsports Achievement Award, the Bob Gillen Memorial Award, the Mitch Kaplan Award and the Paul Robbins Outstanding Competitor Award.

Please put on your thinking caps and come up with worthy candidates for our awards and then use your sorting hat to find the most suitable honor for your nominees. In case you've forgotten, here are the parameters for each award:

Carson White Snowsports Achievement Award– NASJA's highest honor, bestowed to an individual or individuals who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of snowsports in North America, either achieved with a single, defining accomplishment or through a lifetime of snowsports endeavors. Carson White was the first president of the U.S. Ski Writers Association, our predecessor organization. Nominations are submitted by and voted on by Active press members of NASJA.

Bob Gillen Memorial Award– Awarded to an individual corporate member of NASJA for contributions to the advancement of snowsports, exemplifying the highest standards of professionalism in public relations and communications and understanding the working relationship between the information specialist and the journalist. Named for Bob Gillen, former SKI Magazine editor and marketer at Crested Butte and Sugarbush resorts, and a staunch ally of NASJA. Nominations are submitted by and voted on by the journalist members of NASJA.

Mitch Kaplan Award– Presented to the journalist whose work best captures the spirit, enthusiasm and dedication that Mitch Kaplan brought to the coverage of snowsports. Mitch was a former NASJA Secretary-Treasurer and multiple Harold S. Hirsch Award winner. The nominee does not have to be a NASJA member. Focusing on a specific assignment or a body of work, any member can nominate a candidate, who will be submitted to the NASJA Board for consideration and final choice.

Paul Robbins Outstanding Competitor of the Year Award– Awarded to North American snowsports participants who have distinguished themselves in amateur or professional competition during the current season. The award is named in memory of Paul Robbins who was primary journalist for the U.S. Ski Team for 30 years. The nominations by any NASJA member are submitted by and voted on by all members attending the Annual Membership Meeting. (Date/location TBD)

Members are requested to submit a short bio and/or corroborating materials and photos to justify their nominations.

Deadline for White, Gillen and Kaplan is Jan. 31. Send nominations and materials by mail or email to:

Dino Vournas
Dino.v@sbcglobal.net
21274 Birch St
Hayward CA 94541
510-209-6743

Deadline for Paul Robbins Competitor nominations is Feb. 28– these go to: Dan Giesin, dgiesin@gmail.com, 415-246-0639

Further information about NASJA Awards is available in the Membership Directory under Guidelines. Watch for further information on entering the Harold S. Hirsch competitions in the Images and Words category.



JOIN NASJA'S OLYMPIC PREVIEW

A Zoom-based Professional Development Seminar
Thursday, January 20, 2022, 4 p.m. PT/7 p.m. ET

The Beijing Winter Olympics will hold opening ceremonies on Friday, Feb. 4. Closing ceremonies will take place Sunday, Feb. 20.

Beijing is 13 hours ahead of the U.S. Eastern time zone and 16 hours ahead of the U.S. Pacific time zone. Evening events, including the popular opening ceremonies, will air live in the morning U.S. time. The [full schedule of events](#) is already live.

What do we need to know in advance about the snowsports competitions? What to watch? Ask the experts. Learn what it's like to cover an Olympics. Our PD session will feature short presentations by:

- **Peggy Shinn** – Peggy is a senior contributor for TeamUSA.org and has covered six Olympic Games. She has also contributed to *Ski Racing*, *Skiing*, *SKI*, *SNOW*, *Ski Press*, *MSNBC.com*, and *Vermont Life*, as well as the *Boston Globe*, *Rutland Herald*, and *Burlington Free Press*. For her work in ski writing, she is a five-time winner of the Harold Hirsch S. Award for best feature writing, presented annually by NASJA. She heads to Beijing shortly to cover her seventh Games for TeamUSA.org.
- **Steve Porino** - A former U.S. Ski Team downhill racer, Steve has been the expert broadcast voice of alpine ski racing in America for 25 years and has been a part of the NBC Olympic broadcast team since the 2002 Olympics. He will be on-site in Beijing providing insight into the sport. In addition to skiing, Porino has been an integral part of NBC's Tour de France cycling coverage.

The session will be moderated by Tom Kelly, the former voice of the U.S. Ski Team through three decades – and 100 Olympic medals.

Other guests are possible. This latest in a series of NASJA Professional Development seminars is open to NASJA members and their guests only. Watch your email for the Zoom link.



GET PSYCHED FOR SMUGGS!

Feb. 28 – Mar. 2, 2022

Smugglers' Notch Resort, in the heart of Vermont, is excited to welcome NASJA members for a fun-filled, information packed, alpine and Nordic skiing, and snowshoeing adventure. Smuggs is bringing in speakers to talk about the history of the Resort, how it got its name, the measures the Resort takes to protect the environment, the unique feel of this independently owned Resort, and much more.

There are so many stories to uncover at America's Family Resort. Find out what makes *SKI Magazine* readers rate Smuggs #1 for families, for service, in the east, in grooming, and overall. Learn what makes Smuggs a place that families come back to year after year to make magical memories. As journalists, you'll find compelling stories that will be intriguing to research and write. We hope you'll come to the conference and experience all Smuggs has to offer. Our media contact is Stephanie Gorin, sgorin@smuggs.com.

Watch your email and next month's newsletter for further details. This will be open to Active members and one guest each.

CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS



Crystal Clear

Established in 1956, Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville, Michigan, is a family-owned, four-season resort. The 1,500-acre facility features downhill and cross-country skiing, lodging, two championship golf courses, shopping, award-winning Crystal Spa, Michigan's only alpine slide, Peak Fitness, the Park at Water's Edge, Michigan Legacy Art Park, weddings, a conference center, and real estate options.

Snowmaking upgrades were driven by opening the 58 alpine slopes sooner, sustaining fluctuating weather patterns throughout the season and drawing out the snowsports season as long as the four-season resort can.

The recent addition of 14 snow guns increases the fleet of 167 snowmaking machines to help ensure skiers and riders have a long and happy season.

Crystal Mountain also invested in 3,500 feet of snowmaking pipe, bringing the total length of pipe to more than five miles.

Wait, wait, there's more: the team of 20 with about 162 years collective experience, were named finalists in *SAM Magazine's* I AM A Snowmaker Award. Crystal Mountain is the only resort in the Midwest nominated. Media contact: Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Sammie@crystallmountain.com



Waxing Poetic

Welcome to new corporate member Fast Wax, based in Bozeman, Montana, which produces over 60 types of wax, for every skier, in any condition. The company focuses on hard and

paste waxes and is pioneering "FlowerCarbon" technologies (fluorocarbon alternatives). Fast Wax uses 99% of USA-sourced base materials to make its waxes and ski tools. Back in 1994, founder Dan Meyer dreamt of a faster ski wax while working in the labs of 3M. The early wax prototypes had Dan winning Nordic ski races he had no business winning. To this day Fast Wax is still the best-kept secret in Ski Wax.

Media contact: Casey Kirt, casey@skifastwax.com, www.skifastwax.com



Sunday River Adds Doppelmayr D-Line Jordan 8 Lift as Part of Long Term Expansion Plan By Jay Flemma

Maine's iconic Sunday River Resort, a NASJA corporate member, will bring a new Doppelmayr D-Line eight-person lift on line for the 2022-23 season. Dubbed the "Jordan 8," the new lift will service terrain on the Oz and Jordan Bowl peaks.

"The Jordan 8 will be a game-changer for Sunday River," explained Sunday River Director of Communications Karolyn Castaldo, a member of the NASJA Credentials Committee.

"Not only will it mitigate wind issues that have plagued Jordan Bowl for years, but it will also act as a gateway to future terrain expansion in the peaks beyond Jordan."

With each chair weighing a whopping 2,262 pounds, the Jordan 8 is expected to move 3,200 people per hour up the mountain in just four-and-a-half minutes from point of entry to terminus.

The Jordan 8 is one of three chairlift upgrades to come in the next three years. Sunday River is currently installing a Doppelmayr fixed-grip triple chairlift on Merrill Hill, a new real estate development featuring mountaintop home sites. The current Jordan Bowl Express, a high-speed quad, will be redesigned and rebuilt on Barker Mountain to replace the Barker Mountain Express for winter 2023-24, sporting a 33% increase in uphill capacity and a 25% increase in speed.

SnowScoops reported earlier this year that nearby Loon Mountain Resort in New Hampshire started spinning a Doppelmayr D-line eight-person lift this season called the "Kancamagus 8."

Learn more about Sunday River here: <https://www.sundayriver.com>.

Watch the Jordan 8 animation here: <https://tinyurl.com/Jordan8Animation>

MEMBER BENEFIT OF THE MONTH



Discounted Subscription to *Ski Area Management*

The bi-monthly Ski Area Management (SAM) magazine is the professional trade publication for the mountain resort market. It is wholly independent, working closely with all trade associations, but the official organ of none.

SAM is packed with story ideas for Active members. In one recent issue, you could have read about the resort housing crisis, the latest in terrain parks, a look at the Nordic skiing consumer, and three small ski areas brought back from the brink.

SAM, a Corporate member of NASJA, is offering 50% off its subscription price.

The discounted link is:

<https://simplecinc.com/subscribe/sam/NASJA50>

NASJA REWIND



Holiday Party Was Great Fun

Congratulations to Jeremy Davis and Parker Riehle for winning the trivia contest organized by NASJA board member Marie-Piere Belisle-Kennedy. Shout-outs and hearty welcome to new members: Ryan Belmore, Eric Gagnon, Marc Galt, Rochelle Lash, Tim Meyer, Mike Ruzek, Stuart Winchester, and Ali Wines. Twenty-seven members joined the festivities. Watch us make fools of ourselves. The fun begins at approximately 2:00.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

I've Skied Everywhere Man

Tired of looking at your screen all day? Stand up, bend your knees and take a break watching this clever parody of the famed Johnny Cash song. It was produced by <http://firsttracksproductions.com/> for <http://skiduck.org>. SkiDUCK provides free skiing and snowboarding for disadvantaged and at-risk youth. Our thanks to Corporate member Bernie Weichsel for sharing this link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uOaxoqecrY>

Utah Symphony's Ode to Winter

Keep standing while you watch the Utah Symphony set to music fresh tracks through alpine groves in Utah's world-class ski resorts. It's a video tribute to the Utah Symphony musicians who find inspiration and rich notes in the mountains. It was posted by Visit Utah.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1lucN3Exls>

Coping With Climate Change

Fires, Landslides, Lack of Snow: The Ski Industry Girds for Battle

From firestorms in California's Tahoe region to melting glaciers in the Alps, ski areas face a daunting array of environmental threats, writes Tim Neville in *The New York Times* (Dec. 14). Here's what some resorts are doing:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/travel/global-warming-ski-resort.html?smid=em-share>

How Skiing is Transforming

Here's How Climate Change and Covid Are Transforming Skiing

There's less snow and stricter rules, but skiers are adjusting in surprising ways, writes Lauren Jackson in *The New York Times* (Jan. 7).

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/climate/skiing-climate-change.html?smid=em-share>

REMEMBERING JERRY C. LEEK AND BOB GOLIGOSKI



Jerry C. Leek (1939-2022)

NASJA mourns the passing of Jerry Calvin Leek, 82, of Potsdam, New York, who died Jan. 10, 2022. A long-time NASJA member, he was the father of current Active member Christine Leek Eldred.

Jerry was born December 11, 1939 in Washington, D.C., the son of the late Harry Corwin Leek and Helen Geneva Kephart. He was a 1962 graduate of The University of Tennessee and received his Law Degree from Vanderbilt University in 1965. Jerry served in the U.S. Armed forces from 1965-1970 and was a JAG Officer in the U.S. Army. He was stationed for two years in Korea followed by three years in Germany, where he rose to the rank of Major and prosecuted Nazi war criminals.

Following his time in the military, Jerry resided in Staten Island and worked as an attorney for Merrill Lynch on Wall Street. In April 1970, on the slopes of Killington Ski Resort, he met his future wife, Eleanor Jeannette "Jean" Kellenberger.

After the couple relocated to Potsdam, NY, in 1975, Jerry worked as an attorney for the Saint Lawrence County Department of Social Services, before opening his private law practice in Potsdam.

Jerry loved the outdoors and was full of life. He enjoyed skiing, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, tennis, playing guitar and singing. Through skiing, he traveled the U.S., and took his wife and family on many ski adventures. He also penned the weekly Snowsports Column, "Ski Trail Notes," published in the *Courier Observer* from the mid-1970's to the mid-2000's.

You can read his full obituary here:

<https://lawrencefuneralhome.org/tribute/details/824/Jerry-Leek/obituary.html>



Bob and his wife Ellaraine Lockie during happier times.

Bob Goligoski (1940-2021)

By Dino Vournas

Robert "Bob" Goligoski, a 40+ year member of USSWA/NASJA, died on May 4, 2021 in his hometown of Sunnyvale, California, three weeks short of his 81st birthday. Bob was born and raised in Havre, Montana, eventually making his way to the University of Montana in Missoula, earning a Master's Degree in Journalism.

His passion for writing took him to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* for a few years and then in 1976 to Santa Clara Valley, California, a lot of it still orchard land, when the "Silicon Valley" was in its infancy. He settled in to a journalist-reporter position at the *San Jose Mercury-News* covering healthcare and earning a Pulitzer Prize nomination for his work. Concurrently, he would also contribute stories to the paper about his favorite sport, skiing of course, mostly highlighting the numerous Lake Tahoe and Sierra resorts.

In that era, good writers frequently ended up in public relations and Bob sampled several semiconductor and data storage company jobs before settling down for a long run at SanDisk in Silicon Valley. He continued to freelance ski stories for his former newspaper, now a part of the Bay Area News Group. He also wrote about his second sports passion, the game of golf. Bob enjoyed travel abroad and to the wine country with his wife Ellaraine Lockie, and loved being with their two-boy, two-girl combined family and later with their six grandsons.

In memoriam, the family asks for donations to the High Five Foundation of Truckee. Alternately, you can also make a donation to Ridge Winery and proceed to drink that donation!

Bob will be remembered by his NASJA colleagues for a quiet low-key demeanor and for his enthusiasm about all things skiing.

If you would like to contact the family or ask about his memoir *The Good Life According to Bob*, please email his son Bryan at bryangoligoski@gmail.com

HOLD THESE DATES

(All are subject to change pending Covid restrictions)

Professional Development – Olympic Preview, Jan. 20, 7 p.m. ET/4 p.m. PT, on Zoom

Outdoor Retailer Snow Show, Jan. 26-28, 2022, Denver (NASJA Active members can apply for credentials directly with lisa.ramsperger@outdoorretailer.com)

ISHA/Hall of Fame Breakfast, Jan. 27, 2022, OR Snow Show, Colorado Convention Center.
(For ticket information: seth@skiinghistory.org)

Smuggler's Notch Media Trip – Feb. 28 to March 2, 2022

Tamarack/Brundage pre-trip, March 20-22, 2022 (tentative)

Sun Valley, Idaho March 23-27, 2022 (induction gala March 26)

Jeff Blumenfeld - President
Marie-Piere Belisle-Kennedy - Tom Kelly – Vice Presidents
Troy Hawks - Corporate Liaison
Iseult Devlin - Immediate Past President

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