

- 
- 
- 
- 



January 22, 2019

**Shinn, Ballard and Griff win Hirsch Awards for Excellence in Journalism**

Peggy Shinn, Lisa Densmore Ballard and Martin Griff have won NASJA 2018 Harold S. Hirsch Awards.

**PEGGY SHINN Winner of the Book category**

Peggy is a senior contributor to TeamUSA.org, the U.S. Olympic Committee’s website, and has covered five Olympic Games.



Her second book, *World Class: The Making of the Women’s Cross-Country Ski Team*, was published two weeks before Kikkan Randall and Jessie Diggins won a gold medal in the team sprint at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang. *World Class* was also named the winner of the International Skiing History Association’s Ullr Award for 2018.

A four-time winner of the Harold S. Hirsch Award in feature writing (1998, 2004, 2009, 2010), Peggy lives in Rutland, Vermont, with her husband, daughter, and no remaining cats.

Judges’ comments: "Women's cross country skiing finally has the book it deserves. Meticulously researched and beautifully written, Peggy Shinn's *World Class* is a top-drawer look at what it takes to become the best in the world."



**LISA DENSMORE BALLARD Winner of the Words category**

A professional writer since 1991, Lisa's articles have appeared in hundreds of regional and national magazines and websites. She writes extensively about her outdoor experiences and far flung adventures as well as instructional articles and articles on gear, cooking, plants, wildlife, people, and conservation initiatives.

She currently blogs for *NewYorkByRail.com* for The Nature Conservancy's Cool Green Science.

Lisa has written 11 books, including her latest for kids, *Gasparilla, A Pirate's Tale* (Richter Publishing, 2019) and for skiers, *Ski Faster! Guide to Racing and High Performance Skiing* (Rocky Fork Media, 2016).

NASJA has honored Lisa with seven Harold Hirsch Awards, three for television/film (1997, 1998, 1999), and four for writing (two in 2016, 2017, 2019).

Lisa tunes her skis in Red Lodge, Montana.

Judges' comments: "Her writing is flawless and entertaining. Great travel writing, interesting topics."

### **MARTIN GRIFF Winner of the Images category**

Martin was a New Jersey based newspaper photographer for 35 years and snowsports columnist for 20 of those years.

He won the Hirsch Award for columns in 2000, 2002 and 2008.



Martin now writes and photographs the "Not The Mama" column for [BraveSkiMom.com](http://BraveSkiMom.com) and is a contributor to [fristtracksonline.com](http://fristtracksonline.com). During the skiing off season he photographs baseball for [Pinstripedprospects.com](http://Pinstripedprospects.com). His photography can be found on Instagram under the username Photogriff.

Judges' comments: "I like the feel of the images, even though they appear to be color corrected or stylized. Simple to the point and directly related to life on and off the hill."

Since 1963, the Harold S. Hirsch Award has recognized excellence in snowsports reporting, emphasizing journalistic creativity and editorial or artistic content. The concept for these awards came after the 1960 Winter Olympics from Hirsch, a ski clothing pioneer and founder of White Stag, to promote professionalism in winter sports coverage.

Award recipients are chosen by a panel of judges with the highest credentials in the fields of journalism, writing, education, snowsports and visual media.

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.

Also in 2018, the competition was opened to all journalists, not just NASJA members.

The 2018 Harold S. Hirsch Award Judges:

- Jerry Jackson: Senior Photo Editor, The Baltimore Sun
- Earl Saline: Director of Education Programming, National Ski Areas Association
- Marcia Biggs: Editor of St. Pete Life magazine, former travel writer at Tampa Tribune, Tampa Bay Times, Allegiant Airlines, VisitSouth.com and others.
- Rachel Blount: Sports reporter, Minneapolis Star Tribune
- Candus Thomson: Journalist for 40 years. Jersey Shore rat. Outdoors and Olympics writer.
- Dana White: The executive editor of Skiing Magazine in the 1990s. She co-wrote, with Picabo Street, the 2002 memoir "Picabo: Nothing to Hide."

## NASJA Annual Meeting

Register now for NASJA's Annual Meeting in Park City, Ut., April 3-7. It will take place in conjunction with the Snowsport History Celebration by the Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame. Registration cost is only \$95 and includes daily activities and several meals. Lodging is in



Canyons Village at reduced prices. Some of the highlights include a ski day at Deer Valley; Welcome Reception at Canyons base area; three days skiing at Park City; U.S. Ski-Snowboard Hall of Fame Kick-Off Reception at the Utah Olympic Park; Dinner hosted by Ski Utah; Annual Meeting; and capping it off the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at Little America in Salt Lake City. Get ready to enjoy great spring skiing, learn what's new for next year, and network with your media and communications colleagues. Pre-trip options to Powder Mountain and Snowbasin outside Ogden are also planned. Three feet of snow in Park City in the past week, another 15 inches tomorrow. Woohoo. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER FOR THE NASJA ANNUAL MEETING](#)

### February 28 – March 3 White Mountain Summit, New Hampshire.

New England Ski Museum's Hannes Schneider Meister Cup race and activities, SnowCoach on the Mount Washington Auto Toll Road and the new Glen House at Great Glen Trails, Bretton Woods Ski Resort. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER ON LINE.](#)



### Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort & Spa Earns #1 Spot from *USA Today*

Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort & Spa, located 65 miles west of Denver in Tabernash, Colo., climbed into the #1 spot this year in *USA Today's* 10 Best Cross Country Ski Resorts, according to the *USA Today* reader poll to vote for favorite North American Nordic resorts. Number one Alpine spot was

Winter Park, Colo.

A panel of experts partnered with 10Best editors to pick the initial 20 nominees, and the top 10 winners were determined by popular vote. NASJA members Jonathan Wiesel (Nordic Group International) and Roger Lohr ( [XCskiResorts.com](http://XCskiResorts.com) ), as well as Jennie Bender (former World Cup Nordic racer), Reese Brown ( [Cross Country Ski Areas Association](http://CrossCountrySkiAreasAssociation.com) ), and Cami Thompson Graves (U.S. Collegiate Ski Coaches Assn. Nordic Coach of the Year) were chosen for their knowledge of the industry to be on the panel.

"It is a true honor to be selected by readers of *USA Today* as their number one pick for cross country skiing and to have our Alpine ski resort partner, Winter Park Resort, be jointly selected," said Eric Mason, COO for Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort & Spa.

Devil's Thumb offers 120km of groomed and tracked cross country ski and snowshoe trails, plus a full range of instruction, guide and retail services, and events. Accommodations include two lodges, 15 eco-luxe ridge-top log cabins and the community-based Bunkhouse, dining in two on-site restaurants, plus an 18,000-square-foot spa, horseback riding, sleigh rides, snowshoeing, skijoring, fat tire biking plus yoga and spa classes.

For more information, [www.devilsthumbbranch.com](http://www.devilsthumbbranch.com).



## Impact of Rising Temperatures upon North American Ski Areas

NASJA member Tony Crocker has been collecting snowfall data from North American ski areas since 1992, with much data going back to the mid-1970's and some to the late 1960's. Summary data for 116 locations are on his website [www.bestsnow.net](http://www.bestsnow.net) and he updates more than 80 of these

ski areas annually. He brought pages of data to the recent Northeast Winter Weather Summit to share with attendees at the event.

While there is strong scientific consensus upon rise in temperatures since 1950 and that those increases will continue under current assumptions, there is very little consensus that the climate models can accurately predict clouds, precipitation, or regional climate nuances.

Crocker's focus has been narrowed to the ski regions that have always experienced significant rain, those being the Northeast and the lower elevations along the West Coast. For example, the unprecedented levels of rain vs. snow in the Northwest in 2014-15 and in the Northeast in 2015-16 are very prominent and he assumes that such seasons may become less rare as temperatures increase further.

"Overall there has been no trend of declining snowfall in the vast majority of North America's ski areas in the past 40 years. A handful of areas in the most sensitive locations show a slight increasing trend of more rain and less snow."

NASJA members interested in Crocker's data regarding ski areas' rain and snowfall and his thoughts regarding ski areas in the Northeast and in lower locations in western areas, are invited to contact him in California at [crockeraf@gmail.com](mailto:crockeraf@gmail.com)



## NASJA Meeting: Southern Vermont Gems *By Tamsin Venn*

NASJA members gathered Jan. 9-11, to ski and shred two iconic southern Vermont areas, Magic Mountain and Bromley. Thanks go to past NASJA president Martin Griff for organizing, and seven inches of fresh powdah. The meeting started at Magic Mountain with a 6:30 p.m. welcome reception Wednesday. That was followed by Burgers and Beer Night in locals' favorite Red Slate Restaurant. NASJA stayed slopeside in the Upper Pass Lodge.

NASJA members attending: Don Burch, Iseult Devlin, Kathe Dillman, Martin Griff, Peter Hines, Phil Johnson, Roger Lohr, Mike Roth, Richie Silver, Tamsin Venn, and Joan Wallen.

Thursday NASJA got off to a good start in fresh powder as it prepared to follow through on the entrance sign message, "You've Officially Taken the Road Less Travelled." President Geoff Hatheway was notably absent, testing the snow for us (owner's prerogative). But the group caught up with him soon after as he graciously took time out of his busy schedule to show us around, then handed us over to Ski Patrol Head Andrew Belcher alias Bubba, for more of a tour of this fun, old style, challenging mountain.

Following a hearty lunch in the base lodge, Hatheway and Operations Manager Matt Cote gave NASJA a run down of Magic's current challenges.

Hatheway and his group of 16 investors have launched on an ambitious five-year plan to make the mountain attractive both to die hard skiers as well as families and the 18- 19-year-old set. The group is investing in infrastructure, snowmaking, and lifts. In January, it opened the new Green Chair that provides access to mid-mountain skiing, serving novice and intermediate trails plus some outstanding glades. The goal is to infuse cash into the area for more reliable skiing, and return it to its loyal following who have never deserted it. Good news. Hatheway noted the mountain is ahead of schedule on the five-year plan. Thursday afternoon, NASJA held a general membership meeting to discuss the upcoming White Mountain Summit, the ISHA partnered meeting in April, and other business.

Friday, the intrepid band, armed with face masks and boot warmers, made the 20-minute drive to Bromley. The day was frigid with windchill, but Bromley delivered as Vermont's Sun Mountain, making it bright if not exactly tropical.

Marketing director Janessa Purney and marketing coordinator Savannah Strom showed us around this family-friendly mountain's excellent snow conditions and answered multiple questions. Assistant General Manager Michael Van Eyck provided an update on new slopeside lodging developments. Human Resources Director Erik Laaken and Terrain Park Manager Mike Scholz were also available. Lunch was in the Wild Boar Tavern with some members choosing PBRs (Pabst Blue Ribbon) in honor of Bromley's original developer, Fred Pabst, grandson to the beer company's founder. The group came away with much fodder for good articles, especially in the contrast of the two ski areas.

Watch the video that NASJA member Don Burch put together by clicking [here!](#)

Peter Hines and Martin Griff kept the outing well documented. Check out NASJA's Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/Nasjasnowmedia/>.



### **Western Winter Summit**

It's official. Seventeen Active Press NASJA members head to Utah Jan. 27-31 for the 29<sup>th</sup> Western Winter Summit to explore the slopes of Big Cottonwood (Brighton, Solitude) and Little Cottonwood (Alta, Snowbird) Canyons. Some of the story angles to explore: The new Snowpine triple at Alta. What plans Solitude's new owners, Alterra, have in store for this easy-going resort. Qualifying rounds for the 2019 Skier/Boardercross Championships at Solitude. Upgrades around Snowbird. Brighton's high speed quad access to all its terrain, the only Utah resort with that bragging right. HQ for the meeting is Hyatt Place Cottonwood, launch spot for the commute up the canyons, and a Welcome Reception is hosted by Visit Salt Lake. Let it snow.

### **Is Skiing Less Expensive Than Ever?**

"Roughly speaking, anyone willing to lay down between five hundred and a thousand dollars before the end of November is enjoying the lowest lift prices, adjusted for inflation, in the sport's history," writes John Fry in the November/December issue of *Skiing History* magazine, the bimonthly magazine of the International Skiing History Association ([skiinghistory.org](http://skiinghistory.org)). Fry is author of *The Story of Modern Skiing* (University Press of New England, 2010). You can read Fry's story here:



<https://www.skiinghistory.org/news/impact-soaring-season-pass-sales-ski-and-snowboard-participation-rates>

To contact him directly, email: [snowfry9@gmail.com](mailto:snowfry9@gmail.com)

In a related story, Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort in western Massachusetts, in an effort to dispel the notion that skiing or snowboarding is prohibitively expensive, is offering a seven-hour night skiing lift ticket for \$19 on three Monday nights this month including the upcoming January 28th. The pass, valid from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m., is the equivalent of skiing for just \$2.71 an hour on the resort's 21 lighted trails.

## Seniors Ski For Free at Selected Resorts

Many of us have waited all our lives to become seniors.



The first directory of areas in the United States and Canada where older people can ski free is available for no cost at SeniorsSkiing.com, the free weekly online magazine for older skiers, boarders, and snowshoers.

**111 US Resorts Where Seniors Ski Free\***  
**During the 2017-2018 Season**  
(Age Indicated for Each Resort)

One-hundred-forty-six ski areas are listed. Each requires a specific age for free skiing. The youngest is 55; the oldest, 90. Those 70 years and older have a choice of 76 ski areas where free skiing is available. This is the first time SeniorsSkiing.com included Canadian areas.

"Free skiing for seniors continues an industry tradition of encouraging older people to ski and rewarding them for their years of dedication to the sport. Unfortunately, those privileges are disappearing as many areas become holdings of large organizations," said Jon Weisberg, co-publisher, SeniorsSkiing.com.

According to the National Ski Areas Association, 20 percent of all skiers and boarders in the US are 52 or older. NSAA reports that on average all US skiers/boarders go 6.5 days per season. SeniorsSkiing.com reader surveys indicate that its readers (average age, 67) go 16 days per season.

Want to know more? Contact Jon at: [jon@seniorsskiing.com](mailto:jon@seniorsskiing.com)



### NASJA Member Steve Cohen Launches Masterfit Buyer's Guide to Ski Gear

As traditional ski magazines continue to shrink their commitment to equipment coverage, skiers who wonder where to find independent, expert advice on buying new ski gear have a new best place to turn— *the Masterfit Buyer's Guide to Ski Gear*.

They are supported by a team of experienced ski writers, editors and photographers. NASJA President Iseult Devlin served as managing editor of the magazine.

A joint venture combining content and talent from the ski world's two leading gear websites, America's Best Bootfitters

and RealSkiers.com, the Masterfit Buyer's Guide is headed by long-time ski equipment journalists Steve Cohen, Jackson Hogen and Mark Elling. They are supported by a team of experienced ski writers, editors and photographers.

"In addition to ski and boot reviews, gear experts have also shared their insider tips on selecting just the right bindings, poles, helmets, socks, boot bags and more," Cohen says.

Produced using state-of-the-art flipbook magazine technology, Steve, Jackson and Mark and the Masterfit Buyer's Guide are a terrific resource for NASJA members to use when covering the latest in ski gear.

You can view it here: <https://masterfitmedia.com/19-buyers-guide/#pg1>

## Coming to the Outdoor Retailer Snow Show? Catch This Media Preview



Working Media is invited to register in advance for the Snow Show in Denver, Jan. 30 to Feb. 1, 2019. The Snow Show Media Preview, called The Catch, on Jan. 29, offers exclusive, early access to new brands and new products, and the opportunity to hear directly from the people behind them. Journalists attending the show can preview some of the latest products and newest exhibitors in the outdoor industry before the show opens. It will be held in the Colorado Convention Center on that Tuesday from 5-7:30 p.m.

Here's the direct link to register for the Snow Show:

<https://www.outdoorretailer.com/media-registration/>

Register separately for The Catch here:

[https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4691090/Outdoor-Retailer-Snow-Show-2019-The-Catch-Media-Preview?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=reach\\_mailing&utm\\_campaign=131002](https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4691090/Outdoor-Retailer-Snow-Show-2019-The-Catch-Media-Preview?utm_source=email&utm_medium=reach_mailing&utm_campaign=131002)

The press contact is:

Lisa Ramsperger  
Public Relations Manager  
[Lisa.Ramsperger@outdoorretailer.com](mailto:Lisa.Ramsperger@outdoorretailer.com)  
(949) 225-3329

## NASJA Members - Dates to Remember:

Jan. 27 - 31, 2019: **Western Winter Summit**, Salt Lake City, Utah

Feb. 28-Mar. 2, 2019: **NASJA White Mountain Summit**

Apr. 3, 2019: Deer Valley, Utah. **Deer Valley hosts NASJA**

April 4-7, 2019: **NASJA Annual Meeting, Park City, Utah**, held in conjunction with U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame meeting.

If you have any questions about any of the meetings, please contact NASJA President, Iseult Devlin, [iseultdevlin@gmail.com](mailto:iseultdevlin@gmail.com).

**New Executive Secretary** - NASJA President Iseult Devlin named Peter Hines of Latham, New York, as the NASJA Executive Secretary. Many of you know Hines, a long time NASJA member and past president of NASJA East. For years he maintained the NASJA website working closely with previous NASJA Board members and Vicki Andersen who is currently the NASJA



Treasurer. Hines stated that he looks forward to the role and has jumped off the headwall heading down the slope. If there is anything the new Executive Secretary can help with, feel free to contact him at [peter.hines@nasja.org](mailto:peter.hines@nasja.org) .

## NASJA Members

It's time to send nominations for the next season's board. Please nominate eligible members for President (2 year term), 2 VP positions (1 year term). Send nominations to Martin Griff, [timesgriff@aol.com](mailto:timesgriff@aol.com).

## Join the NASJA Clipbook

Attention NASJA press members: NASJA wants your clips. We have been revamping the clipbook during the last year to include more writers and to make it more graphically appealing. [Take a look here.](#)

If you haven't sent clips in or want to update what you have, please send .pdfs or links to Peter Hines, NASJA exec secretary, [execsec@nasja.org](mailto:execsec@nasja.org) .

## Tell Us a Story

This is your newsletter, a monthly publication we hope will provide you with new information about skiing, snowboarding, and XC, and offer leads about stories you can pitch, or include in your own blogs and websites.

Send your casual musings, anecdotes, news tips, and humblebrags to NASJA vice president Tamsin Venn at [ackayak@comcast.net](mailto:ackayak@comcast.net) . **Tamsin Venn and Jeff Blumenfeld, co-editors**

Iseult Devlin, NASJA President  
Tamsin Venn, Jeff Blumenfeld - NASJA Vice Presidents



**Confirm that you like this.**

Click the "Like" button.