



NASJA

NORTH AMERICAN
SNOWSPORTS JOURNALISTS
ASSOCIATION

April 24, 2019

Annual Meeting Recap

By Joan Wallen

More than 30 members, along with some guests, enjoyed sunshine, warm temps, great hospitality and wonderful skiing at NASJA's annual meeting in Park City, Utah April 3-7. The gathering started off with skiing at Deer Valley hosted by member and longtime friend of NASJA



Emily Summers along with Abby Railton. After a buffet breakfast and an introduction to the resort by new General Manager Todd Shallen, we broke up into several groups for a skiing tour of the mountain. Though there was lots of fog on the upper mountain – a complete white-out at times – the skiing was fine and we were able to get a good overview of the resort. A welcome reception that evening was hosted by Pendry Residences at the Canyons to introduce us to their upcoming project there – ski-in, lift-out residences scheduled to debut in the winter of 2021.

On Thursday we met at Park City for an extremely informative and interesting guided tour of the historic mining operations which were a significant part of the area's history. Margo Van Ness, Sr. Communications Manager, and Jessica Miller, Sr. Communications Specialist, were our hosts for lunch at Miners Camp, a mid-mountain lodge adjacent to the gondola connecting Park City Resort and The Canyons. We all quickly learned to navigate our way between the two resorts, about a 40-minute trip involving skiing and chairlifts as well as the gondola. The rest of the day and Friday were spent exploring both the resorts on our own with warm weather and enjoyable, soft skiing. Thursday evening found us at the Alf Engen Museum for an outdoor fashion show hosted by ski fashion legend Barbara Alley of pretty wild vintage ski wear followed by a reception and social hour hosted by ISHA.

The NASJA Annual Business Meeting was held Friday afternoon at the Grand Summit where we were treated to an amusing talk with video by board member Jeff Blumenfeld on how skiing has been perceived by TV sit-coms. There was some discussion as to whether we should continue having meetings in conjunction with the Hall of Fame, but no conclusions were reached. That evening Ski Utah hosted us for dinner in a private room at the Hearth and Hill, an upscale restaurant near Canyons Village, where we dined on multiple courses of unusual and creative small plates served family style. Saturday morning Kelly Pawlak, President of NSAA, addressed the group at breakfast before we all headed out for a final day of exploring the Canyons and Park City. Many of us departed for Salt Lake City during the afternoon to attend the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame dinner and induction ceremony that evening.

I think all were in agreement that the four days constituted an informative, fun annual meeting with some great skiing, delicious food, wonderful hosts and the opportunity to learn about the entire Park City area. The chance to ski, reconnect and socialize with friends from all over the country was certainly a big part of it as well.

It was a week of memorable chairlift rides and fun skiing. Check out the action via this short

Annual Meeting Pre-Trip to Ogden, Utah

By Tamsin Venn

NASJA journalists visited Ogden, Utah, April 1-2, to ski Snowbasin and Powder Mountain on a pre-trip to the Annual Meeting in Park City.

A first for everyone, Visit Ogden Marketing Director Sydnie Furton arranged for us to try axe throwing at Social Axe, a trending activity. Who knew?



Monday, we breakfasted in high style at the historic Bigelow Hotel. Then Communications Coordinator Megan Collins showed us Snowbasin's cruisers, chutes, Olympic downhill, and gorgeous views. During lunch at Needles Lodge, new General Manager Davy Ratchford talked about Snowbasin joining the Vail Resorts Epic pass (2019-20 season), ski demographics (teenage girls are key), and future plans for base area lodging (it's in the works). After

skiing, Jeff and Bonnie Hyde took us on a tour of the new Compass Rose Lodge in nearby Huntsville, and the high-tech telescope to explore Ogden Valley's International Dark-Sky Park. Next up was the Shooting Star Saloon, oldest bar in Utah. That night we regrouped in Ogden at Sonora Grill for dinner, and some strolled down historic 25th street.

Next day at Powder Mountain Marketing Director JP Goulet found us fresh powder and filled us in on the owner partnership's vision for this huge nearly 8,500-acre area. Lunch was at the Powder Keg, a popular après-ski spot where skiers really do dance on the tables.

NASJA Journalists Attending: Iseult Devlin, Rich Silver, Dan Giesen, Curtis Fong, Evelyn Kanter, Tamsin Venn, Cindy Hirschfield, Trica and Phil Pugliese, Joan Wallen, Martin Griff, Steve Cohen. Guest: David Eden.

Hosts: Sydnie Furton, Director of Marketing Visit Ogden; Megan Collins, Snowbasin Communications Manager; Davy Ratchford, Snowbasin General Manager; JP Goulet, Powder Mountain Marketing Manager; Brayden Floyd, Social Axe Throwing; Kym Buttschardt, Roosters Brewing Company; Susan Cross, Director of Sales Bigelow Hotel; Courtyard Marriott, Hampton Inn; Jeff and Bonnie Hyde, Compass Rose Lodge.

Ski Gear Experts Join Forces to Create New Buyers Guide



A group of veteran NASJA and ski equipment journalists have teamed up to create the [Masterfit Buyers Guide](#) to ski gear. The Winter 2020 edition will be available in mid-July as a digital magazine and in print by September 1. Packed with practical advice – not just on *what* to buy, but *how* to buy – the editors promise that even the most experienced ski enthusiasts will pick up a useful tip or three from their advice columns.

The publishing team is led by Publisher/Editor-in-Chief Steve Cohen who spent 15 years as the executive editor of *Ski Magazine*. It also includes:

- Editor Jackson Hogen, the voice and owner of Realski.com, the web's leading site for ski equipment information.
- Boot Editor Mark Elling, a world-renowned bootfitter and the curriculum director at Masterfit University.
- Managing/Accessories Editor Iseult Devlin, president of NASJA.

A copy of the team's preview edition for winter 2019 can be accessed [here](#). For more intel on the project or to learn more about Masterfit, contact Steve Cohen at [\(914\) 944-9038 x7001](tel:9149449038) or scohen@masterfitinc.com.

New Member Profiles



Bob Curley

Bob is a travel writer who spends a lot of time in the Caribbean but always looking to trade snow for sand when he's back home in New England. In addition to writing for outlets like *USAToday* and *AFAR* he has contributed stories on skiing to *TripSavvy*, covered the U.S. and Canadian national parks for outdoors app developers Chimani, and written about ski towns for *Coastal Living* and other publications. He's also a frequent contributor to *Ski Area Management* and *Adventure Park Insider* magazines,

where he's written about everything from family programs to obstacle courses and trail lighting. He says, "I'm just getting started with NASJA but looking forward to making more connections with this awesome 'family' of ski writers and ski industry professionals." To reach Bob, contact him at curleybob@gmail.com

Nicole Feliciano

Nicole Feliciano is the CEO of Momtrends Media, a million dollar brand that publishes Momtrends.com, one of the nation's top blogs for moms, and the nation's largest digital snowsports guide for families. The [Family Ski & Snowboard Guide](#) is celebrating its 6th year in 2019. Each year she visits more than 20 ski resorts to provide families with tips for creating the best experiences on snow.



Launched in 2007, her company produces digital content as well as virtual and live events all geared to delight and engage modern moms. She attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., and lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., with her husband and two girls. Her book *Mom Boss: Balancing Entrepreneurship, Kids & Success* (2016) provides a roadmap for startup success for women who have big ideas, but are struggling with how to fit it all in with family.

Each month Momtrends Media reaches millions of moms through their digital platforms. In snowsports, Nicole launched two snow-specific social media platforms @skimomson Instagram and Facebook.

P&G sent Nicole to the 2010 Vancouver Olympics to cover the Thank You Mom program as a Mom Correspondent. Though she came to skiing later in life, she's embraced the winter sport lifestyle and last year scored 43 days on skis (not bad for a city girl). She's usually the last one down the mountain in her family, but the only one with the trail map, and she makes a great bison chili, making her an indispensable ski mom.

"NASJA put together a terrific media trip to Stratton Mountain. I was able to create valuable content and make some solid connections in the industry," she says. Contact Nicole here: nicole@momtrends.com



Don Burch

In elementary school Don Burch was scolded for drawing trail maps when he should have been paying attention in class. Jump ahead a few decades and his love of skiing is just as strong.

In recent years Don's joy of skiing ramped up by joining the Mountain Laurel Ski Club and writing for SeniorsSkiing.com. In so doing, he's made new ski buddies and found a way to communicate his passion to others.

"In joining NASJA this year, I've made a whole new set of ski-loving friends. Attending the NASJA White Mountain Summit at Cranmore and Bretton Woods and the NASJA Winter Meeting at Bromley and Magic Mountains were highlights of this season. Being hosted by these ski resorts, learning about their heritage and future plans was fascinating," he says. "Joining NASJA has provided invaluable contacts and resources that support my writing. As a bonus I've also found a new avenue to put my videography skills to work. While skiing is my main passion I also enjoy cycling, hiking, trail running, working out, and recreational inline speed skating." Contact Don here: donburch@cox.net

Bob Wall Remembered

Robert Wall, president of Eastern Ski Writers Assn. from 1990-93, died Nov. 15, 2018. A native of Syracuse, N.Y., he was 96, which we all think is a great run. For 27 years Bob wrote a weekly ski column for the *Syracuse Herald Journal*. He also wrote ski and travel articles for the *Syracuse Herald American*, *Ski Magazine*, *Skiing*, and *Ski America*. As a member of the Board of Publishers Group International and an editor of the *Blue Book of European Ski Resorts*, he covered Austria and Germany.

He was a founding member and first president of the Onondaga Ski Club, as well as an active member and past president of the Syracuse Alumni Ski Club. Born in Syracuse, Bob was a veteran of WWII, serving in the European Theatre, and lived in Cazenovia, N.Y. for more than 30 years.

In addition to his ski resume, Bob spent 47 years with Gerrity Company, Inc. as Senior Vice President and member of the Board of Directors and was a graduate of NYS College of Forestry at Syracuse University. He is predeceased by his wife of 58 years, Mary Margaret Sweeney Wall, and survived by a son and daughter and many grandchildren.

"I remember Bob as an even handed leader who gave everyone a voice to express an opinion. He was a passionate skier even when his eyesight was faltering. I remember skiing with him at an ESWA meeting in Stoneham in Canada when we worried about his safety on the slopes. He kept up with us turn for turn on a dark blue slope to his great pleasure," says Ed Blumstein, freelance ski writer.

Adds Dave Irons, Past President, ESWA and NASJA, "Bob Wall was a long time and loyal member of the Eastern Ski Writers and NASJA. He and his wife, Mary Margaret, rarely missed a meeting and were always friendly company at any table or on any mountain. Those of us who served on both Boards with Bob recognized that unlike many writers, Bob brought his experience as an executive of a large company to the meetings. His steady hand kept both ESWA and NASJA on an even keel. As president of both organizations he used his management

skills to the betterment of the operations. As valuable as his work for the organization was, his friendship was even more important. Bob Wall was a true friend of everyone he met and he will be sorely missed."



From left: George Ouelette, Kenneth Maloney, Bob Wall, Allan Harvey, and Jacquelyn Jones at The Eastern Ski Writer's Association 40th Anniversary Celebration held at Killington, Vt., Dec. 6, 2003. Photo by Martin Griff.

NASJA Annual Award Winners Announced



The **Carson White Snowsports Achievement Award**, named after the organization's first president and bestowed annually since 1969, honors extraordinary achievement, influence and innovation in the advancement of North American skiing, snowboarding, and all snow-related sports. The 2019 winner, voted on by journalist and corporate members is **Rick Kahl** of *Ski Area Management Magazine (SAM)*.

By a vote of active-journalist members, the **Bob Gillen Memorial Award** for 2019 honors **Connie Marshall**, the long-time Director of Marketing at Alta Ski Area in Utah. The award, named after the former communications director of Crested Butte and Sugarbush ski areas and valued friend of NASJA, exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism in public relations and communications. Connie quite simply is a legend in the Utah ski world of communications.



Near and dear to the hearts of NASJA members is the **Mitch Kaplan Award**, honoring our late friend and colleague who was a consummate professional journalist and a passionate proponent of snowsports programs for children. By a vote of the NASJA board, the



2019 honoree is **Halley O'Brien** of New Jersey. It might be difficult to find a more fun-loving, irreverent, enthusiastic, and funny ski and snowboard reporter in the video world than Halley O'Brien.

Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 14-17, 2019. NASJA's first meeting of the year: Boston.com Ski & Snowboard Expo, Seaport World Trade Center, Boston, Mass. The annual BEWI luncheon takes place Friday, Nov. 15, during which time the new NASJA award winners will be presented.

The Colorado Ski & Snowboard Expo will be held in Denver on Oct. 25-27, 2019.

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.

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. **Tamsin Venn and Jeff Blumenfeld, co-editors**

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

