

## Letter from the President

# SWSA's Leap into the Future of Jumping



Welcome to the 84th year of ski jumping in Salisbury. The weekend will span three days that include a night jump on Friday, February 5. Saturday, the 6th, begins with Junior jumping on our 20 and 30 meter hills followed by Ice Carving on the White Hart Green and an afternoon competition on the 65 meter hill. Sunday concludes our weekend with morning training on the large hill and official competition in the afternoon. There will plenty of action for all to enjoy throughout the weekend!

Eighty-four years of ski jumping is a very long dedication to a sport within a small town. Since its beginning, SWSA has operated with a very low key presence. Volunteers too numerous to mention have put relentless energy, sweat, ingenuity, and countless hours into this facility and the promotion of this event and the sport. During the last 20 years we have all worked very hard to save as much money as possible to update our facility and equipment used to continue this rich tradition.

As we updated things such as electricity, snow making equipment, staircases and much, much more, we have always looked up the hill and said, "Someday we need to build a new tower." The present, '50s-style tower, though structurally sound, has never been adapted to the dramatic engineering and ski technology improvements in the world of ski jumping.

We at SWSA realize that having the only 65 meter hill in the East puts us in a very important position for training young jumpers in the transition to the larger 90 meter hills in such places as Lake Placid Olympic Park and the newly renovated Harris Hill in Brattleboro, Vermont. Many of you would not realize how important this transition is, as jumping is a progression from 10 meter to 120 meter hills. Jumping is a step-by-step process—from 10 and 20 meter jumps to those of 120 meters—in which Salisbury's 65 meter hill plays an enormous role. It was clear to us that this venue needs to be a continuing place for ski education.

A second factor gave consideration of a new tower special urgency.

Last spring at the annual Eastern Ski Jumping Committee Meeting the question was put forth as to which club in the eastern US would be willing to host the 2011 US Junior Ski Jumping and Nordic Combined Olympics.

There are two hills big enough to be considered for this event, one in New Hampshire and ours here in Salisbury. Our 65 meter jump meets the size requirement, however the shape of our "old style" tower and judges stand do not measure up. This event rotates throughout the country every four years. It has bypassed the East many times for lack of facilities. With that in mind, the wheels started turning, and we wondered: Is this the time to move SWSA to the next level and continue our presence and education for generations to come? The group started to research the particulars of the event and what was involved to accomplish this undertaking.

At the SWSA board meeting following the annual meeting of the Eastern Ski Jumping Committee, we asked ourselves, "Are we ready to do this?" With

very limited discussion, there was a unanimous vote to go ahead with the process needed to host the JO's and complete a task that we all have wanted to accomplish.

Our first step was to apply to the US Ski and Snowboard Association to host the Junior Olympics. Approximately 60-80 jumpers, coaches and family members attend these events and logistics become an essential part of being the host. We needed to line up restaurants, hotels, and surrounding ski areas to host the cross country portion of the event. USSA and committee members agreed that Salisbury fit their criteria. Our jump did not. We agreed that it was time to keep moving not only for the JO's but for the club's perpetuity.

SWSA immediately turned to the engineer that had designed the new 90 meter tower in Brattleboro, Vermont. After a four-month exchange of questions and answers between SWSA and the engineer, we finally had a product that everyone agreed on. Our next step—over many meetings—was to prepare a bidding package to send to contractors: Five sent returned bids. Again, after many meetings SWSA chose Churchill Brothers LLC of Sharon, Connecticut, as the winning bidder. Rafe and Seth Churchill, the two principals of the company, have been great supporters of our program and are a great fit for the scope of work.

At this point a capital campaign became our next task. We have formed a campaign advisory committee and a campaign gifts committee to achieve complete construction. They will guide us through the steps to reach our goal: \$700,000. This amount will pay for our jump tower, judges' tower and the excavation needed on the landing hill. As we move ahead we will be asking for donations from all. I would personally like to thank all who decide to help in this historic event. The centerfold of this program shows the tower design and a range of donation options. Large or small, all donations are extremely important and needed. Again, thank you for any support you can give. The JO's are only one part of this project. The continuation of our programs and the small-town ski-jumping tradition are equally important.

The work on the new jump didn't prevent us from carrying on with SWSA's growing list of activities and events. There were countless hours of basic maintenance of the present ski hill and preparation for the

Jane Lloyd Fundraiser as well as SWSA's golf tournament. With summer's end, the maintenance continued and our Ski Swap was right around the corner. SWSA donates the proceeds from this to Salisbury Central School and is able to underwrite their downhill ski program at nearby Catamount Ski Area. Children are provided transportation and lift passes as well as equipment and lessons in this program. SWSA also contributed \$1,250 to neighboring North Canaan Elementary School to provide equipment for young skiers. All of us here at SWSA are delighted to help promote the sport and local programs.

As we have gone through a busier year than normal, I would like to thank the directors and scores of volunteers for their dedication and endless hours of work! We will be able to look back and be very proud of all we will have been able to accomplish. As always, sponsors and advertisers for our events throughout the year are truly important to our continuation as well. From everyone at SWSA thank you for your annual support!!!

I don't want to end this letter without mentioning the passing of SWSA's great friend, "Bam" Whitbeck. He gave an enormous part of his life to this club. We would all have enjoyed seeing Bam in the large crowds at the base of the hill looking up at a new tower. He will now be able to look down on the hill — and be very proud that we continue what he and many others worked hard to preserve in this small town he loved so much.

*Ken Barker*  
President

*Salisbury Winter Sports Association*

Best Wishes to SWSA  
& the Jumpers!  
*The Fiertz Family*  
*Randy, Carol, Charles, and Katja*  
*Washington, DC*

THE · SALISBURY · HOUSING · TRUST · INC



AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE TOWN OF SALISBURY  
P.O. BOX 52  
Salisbury CT 06068

*Falls Village*  
*Sawmill*

ROUTE 7  
FALLS VILLAGE, CONNECTICUT 06031 · (860) 824-7778

*By Appointment*