

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 21, 2016

**FAR WEST SKI ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZES RONNIE LUPE, JIMMIE NUNN AND BOB WILBANKS WITH SNOWSPORTS BUILDER AWARDS**



SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA: The Far West Ski Association conducted its 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Meeting June 9-12, 2016 at DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel Paradise Valley in Scottsdale, AZ, hosted by the Arizona Ski Council. The Far West Ski Association, founded in 1930, is a volunteer, non-profit organization representing 150 affiliated ski clubs located throughout nine regional councils in the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, South Dakota, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The Association conducts active programs in public affairs, skier safety, ski heritage, racing, communications, travel, council development, ski industry and community outreach. In addition to the 129 ski club delegates attending the annual meeting, approximately 75 ski and sports industry representatives participated in the weekend's events. Special guests included Billy Kidd (1964 Olympic Slalom Silver Medalist), Jordan Romero (Keynote Speaker), Jane Jackson (author of *Echoes of the Peaks*), Jimmie Nunn (architect of Arizona ski areas), Bob Wilbanks (founder and editor of *National Ski Club Newsletter*), and Ben Finley (co-founder of National Brotherhood of Skiers).

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Silent Auction on Friday evening raised over \$33,000 to support FWSA programs. The highest bidders purchased ski trips, bicycle trips, diving trips, and tour packages. Saturday morning's Travel Expo enabled industry representatives to meet with travel decision makers from the Association's clubs and councils.

Saturday afternoon was dedicated to a presentation by Jordan Romero, who in 2010, at the age of 13, became the youngest person to climb to the summit of Mt. Everest. At the age of 15, Jordan became the youngest person to climb the highest peaks on all seven continents, an achievement he began at the age of 10 by climbing to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Bids were presented to the FWSA Travel Committee for selection of the 2018 FWSA Ski & Snowboard Week with the result to be announced later in the summer. The 2017 FWSA Ski & Snowboard Week will be held in Breckenridge, Colorado, January 28-February 4. A Mini Ski & Snowboard Week will be held at Sun Peaks, BC, March 21-26, 2017. The 2017 FWSA International Ski & Snowboard Week will be held in St. Anton, Austria, March 12-19, with optional travel to Vienna and Budapest, March 19-26.

The FWSA Snowsport Leadership Academy classes were held on Saturday. Todd Hood presented an excellent morning session on "Who Are You and Who Cares: Building and Supporting Your Brand." Richard Lubin, D.C. and Barbara Razo, NSP presented "Safe Travels on the Slopes" in the afternoon. Mike Sanford, VP of Public Affairs, moderated morning and afternoon panels on issues related to ski area development, ski related legislation, environment, ski history and ski safety.

FWSA Snowsports Builder Awards were presented to: Ronnie Lupe, Chief of the White Mountain Apache Tribe and Visionary; Jimmie Nunn, Architect of Cities and Slopes; and Bob Wilbanks, Founder and Editor of the "*National Ski Club Newsletter*." Ronnie Lupe was singularly responsible for the tribal decision in the 1960's to develop Sunrise Ski Park, Arizona's last major ski area which opened in 1971. Jimmie Nunn began patrolling the Arizona Snowbowl at the age of 13. His 33 year career in architecture involved ski trail and facility designs at 4 Arizona ski areas. He still maintains his Arizona Ski Museum near the base of the slopes at Arizona Snowbowl. Bob Wilbanks began publishing the "The National Ski Club Newsletter" in 1987 with a listing of officers in 560 clubs. His publication has evolved into a full color newsletter mailed to 2,500 clubs. Bob also has an online version of the newsletter.

Two FWSA Industry Awards were presented: the FWSA Tommi Tyndall Award for Outstanding Ski Industry Contribution, to Telluride Ski Resort and the FWSA Bill Mackey Award for Outstanding Ski Industry Employee, to Katie Balkwill of Big White Ski Resort. Three FWSA Media Awards were presented: the Bill Berry Awards for Featured Article, to Jordan Romero and Linda LeBlanc for their book "*No Summit out of Sight*" and for Hard News, to Linda McGavin, editor & writer for "*Northwest Snowsports Guide*." The FWSA Warren Miller Modern Media Award was presented to High Fives Foundation for the B.A.S.I.C.S. 5 video "*Choices*."

Debbi Kor, Northwest Ski Club Council (Vancouver, WA) received the FWSA Hans Georg Award for long-term service to organized skiing. Other individuals receiving recognition awards included: the FWSA Elizabeth "Schatz" Wood Award for a decisive contribution to skiing to Karen James, Los Angeles Council of Ski Clubs (Glendale, CA); the FWSA J. Stanley Mullin Award for a decisive contribution to skiing to Norbert Knapp, Los Angeles Council of Ski Clubs (Los Angeles, CA); the FWSA Jordan-Reily Award for Outstanding Contribution to Public Affairs, to Jo Simpson, Sierra League and Council (Reno, NV); and the Terry Smith Award for greatly contributing to the advancement of intramural skiing to Dale Parshall, Northwest Ski Club Council (Fairview, OR). The FWSA Jimmie Heuga Award for Outstanding Humanitarian, to Dave Ludwig founder of Hope On The Slopes and HOTS, Ski & Ride For A Cure. The FWSA Councils' Man & Woman of the Year program, sponsored by Big White Ski Resort, recognized Colleen Stroeder of Northwest Ski Club Council and Mike Ferketich of Bay Area Snow Sports Council. The FWSA Presidents Award was given to Jeannine Davis, Silent Auction Chair and member of Bay Area Snow Sports Council, and to Steve Nyman, US Ski Team.

The Tollakson Award for the Outstanding Ski Club was presented to Pacific Rim Alliance (Masters Class). The Wentworth Award for the Outstanding Publication was presented to Pacific Rim Alliance (Masters Class) and Snowchasers (Novice Class). The Outstanding Website Awards were given to: Pacific Rim Alliance (Masters Class) and Snowchasers (Novice Class). Bay Area Snow Sports Council received the Outstanding Council Publication Award. Los Angeles Council of Ski Clubs received the Outstanding Council Website Award. The FWSA Charity & Community Service Recognition Awards were presented to Skiyente Ski Club (Double Diamond Class), Castro Valley Ski Club (Diamond Class). Bay Area Snow Sports Council received the Snowsports History Recognition Award.

Special presentations were made to Sue Rimkeit, a member of Northwest Ski Club Council, for the FWSA Safety Person of the Year Award, sponsored by Telluride Ski Resort and Mountain Lodge Telluride (CO). The FWSA Western Ski Heritage Award, sponsored by Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation, was presented to Jane Jackson, author of *“Echoes of the Peaks: An Early History of Skiing in Northern Arizona.”*

The FWSA Athletic Scholarship Program raised \$3,480 during the Convention through a raffle, silent auction and oral auction of two trips sponsored by Whitefish Mountain Resort and Grouse Mountain Lodge. The FWSA Athletic Scholarship Program, which began in 2004, has awarded 90 scholarships for a total of over \$100,000 to deserving USSA racers throughout the western United States.

Elections were held at Sunday’s General Session. FWSA Officers for 2016–2017 are: President, Stephen Coxen (Ridgefield, WA); Secretary, Sheri Parshall (Fairview, OR); Treasurer, Randy Lew (Truckee, CA); Chairperson Board of Trustees, Gloria Raminha (Bakersfield, CA); VP Communications, Cindy Krupp (Cottonwood, CA); VP Council Services, Jo Simpson (Reno, NV); VP Marketing, Debbi Kor (Vancouver, WA); VP Membership, Jane Gutierrez (Hawthorne, CA); VP Public Affairs, Mike Sanford (San Diego, CA); VP North American Travel, Nancy Ellis (Truckee, CA); VP International Travel, Debbie Stewart (Visalia, CA); VP Racing, Bob Ellis (Truckee CA); Trustees, Tom Bundgard (San Diego, CA); Fran Long (Pasa Robles, CA); and Jane Wyckoff (Irvine, CA).

Far West Ski Association is appreciative of the many sponsors who are a big part of the success of the FWSA Annual Convention. Sponsors included: Aspen Skiing Company & Snowmass Tourism (CO); Big White Ski Resort (BC); Brian Head Resort (UT); Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (CA); Pillsbury Wine Company; Big Sky Resort (MT); Holiday Ski Tours; Jackson Hole Mountain Resort (WY); Cahilty Hotel & Suites (Sun Peaks, BC); Ski.com; Sports America Tours; Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation (CO); Taos Ski Valley Resort (NM); Telluride Ski Resort and Mountain Lodge Telluride (CO); Whitefish Mountain Resort (MT); Grouse Mountain Lodge (Whitefish, MT); Vail Resorts – Afton Alps, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Canyons, Heavenly, Keystone, Kirkwood, Mt. Brighton, Northstar, Park City and Vail; Brundage Mountain Resort (ID); Mt Bachelor (OR); Riverhouse on the Deschutes (OR); DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bend (OR); Breckenridge Ski Resort (CO); Boise Centre; Boise CVB; Atlantis Casino Resort Spa (NV); Cowboy Adventures (ID); Central Council of Ski Clubs; and Arizona Ski Council.

The 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Far West Ski Association Convention is scheduled for June 7-11, 2017 at The Grove Hotel, Boise Centre in Boise, Idaho hosted by Bogus Basin Ski Club and the Intermountain Ski Council. For additional information regarding the Far West Ski Association, please visit our website at [www.fwsa.org](http://www.fwsa.org).

Photographs are available upon request.