

Far West NewsFlash

December 2023

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO KLAUS OBERMEYER: Klaus Obermeyer turned 104 recently. He was born just after the turn of the century in 1919, and has been skiing on snow for a century, picking up hundreds of stories to tell. Obermeyer was born in Bavaria in the German Alps. He fastened orange crates to his feet at age three as makeshift skis and “skied” all around his property. He became quite talented and began skiing competitively. “I grew up in Nazi Germany, and as a boy, saw the horror they did and the horrible things they did. I thought, my God, I don’t want to be like that, I need to get out.” Dressed in all white with only a backpack of possessions, he took off on skis on a day he remembers as being quiet, “no one was around.” Or so he thought, until he spotted two S.S. officers with machine guns on the same ridge as him. “I skied straight down, and then fell over.” He had been shot. When he woke up, he was in the back of a hospital. He had been found in the snow and brought in on a sled. His backpack had saved his life from the bullet, but he had a broken leg. “When I got to the hospital, I told them that the Gestapo was after me, and the nurse said, ‘I will hide you in this room at midnight, when the other young doctors go home, then Dr. Brenner will take the bullet out of you and, get your leg set up’. Once healed, his next stop was to the United States. He landed in New York City with \$10 in his pocket. Relying on ski racing connections made back home, Obermeyer headed toward Sun Valley before settling down in Aspen, where he and his wife Nome, the niece of Katherine Hepburn, still reside today.

VAIL’S PLANS FOR RAIL REVIVAL: A proposal to rejuvenate passenger rail service is gaining traction among local officials. The plan is to connect the Eagle County Regional Airport directly to the town of Vail. It is seen as a potential solution to the region’s growing transportation and environmental challenges. With vehicle traffic at a tipping point, Langmaid argues for using the dormant Tennessee Pass Line, a rail line that has been inactive since freight service ceased in 1997 and passenger service ended in 1964. The proposal envisions environmentally friendly, battery-powered, or electric trains that minimize the regions’ carbon footprint. Transportation significantly contributes to Eagle County’s greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for over 40% of the total. The initiative aligns with the goals of the Eagle County Climate Action Collaborative, which seeks to reduce vehicular emissions through enhanced public transportation options.

SALT LAKE NAMED PREFERRED FUTURE OLYMPIC HOST: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has named Salt Lake City as the “preferred city” to host the 2034 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Once a preferred host has been selected, no other cities are permitted to apply to host the same Games, making Salt Lake now the sole candidate for 2034. Salt Lake City mayor, Erin Mendenhall, stated “we’re prepared for this deep dive, and I believe we can carry out another successful set of Games that unify our global community and do so with greater sustainability.” Salt Lake, which hosted the 2002 Winter Games, was selected for a variety of reasons including existing infrastructure, strong support from the public and the local government, a master plan that puts all venues within 60 minutes of the Olympic Village, and its experience organizing international events on this scale.

FEMALE SKI PATROLLERS CREATE CALENDAR FOR THREE CAUSES: Several female members of the Ski Patrol at *Palisades Tahoe*, California, have created a beautiful calendar for 2024 that will raise funds for three worthwhile causes. The 12-month calendar includes U.S. holidays and each month features a different female member of *Palisades Tahoe Patrol*, as well as some avalanche dogs. Proceeds from the calendar will go to the *Amy Holland Memorial Mountain Scholarship* - Amy helped forge the path for the next generation of females passionate about the outdoors, skiing, snow sciences, and emergency medicine; the *Alpine Avalanche Rescue Foundation (AARF)* – which strives to connect the community, dogs, and educational opportunities to build productive relationships to make a positive impact on avalanche awareness, safety, and education; and *Palisades Dogs* - a nonprofit dedicated to training Avalanche search and rescue dogs and their handlers to the highest standard. These teams are a valuable resource to the ski resorts and the community in the Greater Lake Tahoe region. As a nonprofit, we are also committed to helping fund avalanche rescue education.

WORLD'S LONGEST SHOT SKI RECORD BROKEN: *Ullr Fest* is underway in *Breckenridge* and during early events of the weekend, a world record reportedly fell. Breckenridge Distillery reports that they broke the record for 'world's longest shot ski', with their effort involving 1,377 people and 495 skis stretched 2,469 feet down Breck's Main Street. The previous 'shot ski' record was an effort that took place in Park City in October, involving 1,363 people. The push to break the 'world's longest shot ski' record has long been a tradition in Breckenridge, with this being the 11th time the record has been broken in the Colorado mountain town.

SAVE THE DATE: **Thursday June 6, through Sunday June 9th, 2024.** Put these dates on your calendar now, and plan to attend. These are the dates set for the 91st Annual Far West Ski Association Convention. The convention will be held at the beautiful *Atlantis Casino Resort Spa*, In Reno, Nevada....co-hosted by *Bay Area Snow Sport Council* and *Sierra League & Council*. Watch for registration documentation to come your way in mid-February, 2024. Please make a note now that hotel registration will close on **MAY 16th**. We're busy planning events and activities now. You will begin seeing more detailed information in this spot over the next few months. For any questions regarding Convention, contact your Regional Council President.

FAR WEST TRAVEL

FWSA 2024 NORTH AMERICAN SKI WEEK: **Steamboat Ski Week trip is SOLD OUT!** We do have a "wait list", so if you are interested in joining us, please contact Nancy Ellis for details. The dates are **January 27 - February 3, 2024**. The trip includes: 7 nights lodging, a Welcome Party, a Farewell Party, and lots of fun with your Far West friends and family. Racing will be available, along with Council get-togethers, and many opportunities to wine, dine and shop your way through Steamboat. Lift tickets will be: \$533-\$622 for a 5-6 day ticket; or \$472-\$561 for Seniors. Steamboat is an **IKON** Pass Resort. IKON Holders can purchase a 6th day for just \$72. Go to fwsa.org to get all of your Council Trip Leader contact information and request the Council's online registration link. For further information, contact Nancy Ellis: fwsatravelnancy@sbcglobal.net.

FWSA 2024 INTERNATIONAL SKI WEEK: **THERE IS STILL AVAILABILITY for 1 MALE.** on the 2024 International Ski Week will be to *Madonna di Campiglio, Italy*, with an extension trip to Northern Italy. The dates for Ski Week are **February 25-March 3, 2024**. This trip will include 7 nights lodging at the 4 Star *Hotel Relais des Alpes*. The lodging package includes daily breakfast & 5 nights' dinner at the hotel providing 2 nights to dine out on your own in Madonna. *We will be offering an optional day tour during the week if one chooses to explore the local culture.* The **FULL EPIC Pass (7 consecutive days)** is also valid on this trip. **Skirama Dolomiti** can be used at: *Madonna di Campiglio, Pinzolo, Folgarida-Marilleva, Pejo, Ponte di Legno-Tonale, Andalo-Fai della Paganella, Monte Bondone, Folgaria-Lavarone* for. The extension trip - **March 3-10, 2024** - will be in Northern Italy, which will include Milan, Lake Como, Verona, balsamic tasting in Modena, La Specia/Cinque Terra, Portovenere...with day tours included and free time to explore on your own. Initial trip registration will be handled in the traditional method – you will complete the forms and send along with a check payment for your initial registration 1st payment. Subsequent payment may be made by check, cashier's check, money order OR via our online Pay Pal Credit Card process. For further information, contact: Debbie Stewart, fwsaintltrl@prodigy.net.

FWSA 2024 NORTH AMERICAN MINI SKI WEEK: **COPPER MOUNTAIN has ONE opening for a single female. There are also 2 rooms at Cambria still available.** Go to: <https://fwsaminiCP.sat.tours> for further information. The dates of the trip are **March 17-22, 2024**. Noni Love, of Copper Mountain will be our representative host, while Sara Clemons, President of Sports America Tours will be the tour operator for this particular trip. For further information, contact Nancy Ellis: fwsatravelnancy@sbcglobal.net

FWSA 2024 DIVE TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES: We are going back to the Philippines! The 2024 FWSA dive trip will **October 19 – November 2, 2024** to Marco Vincent Dive Resort in Puerto Galera and Buceo Anilao Beach & Dive Resort in Anilao! A 3-hour drive away from Manila, Anilao is one of the world's best

macro photography destinations. It is literally heaven-on-earth for muck diving, blackwater diving, and macro photography. It is considered the Capital of Nudibranchs....colorful mollusks without shells. The Puerto Galera diving area stretches from White Beach right around to Coral Cove. It is part of the Verde Island Passage and named by some scientists as the center of the world's marine biodiversity. There are more than fifty dive sites that are an interesting mix of sloping reefs, coral gardens deep pinnacles, ship wrecks, channel dives, muck diving, drift dives and sea grass beds. The divers who joined us on the 2019 Philippines dive trip not only called it "*the best dive trip ever*", but many said, "*my best trip ever*". For more information, contact Randy Lew at: fwsa13randy@telis.net.

FAR WEST MEMBER BENEFITS

FWSA MEMBER BENEFITS PROGRAM: Check out some of the latest Member Benefits on our website. We've had renewals from many of our Lodging Partners, as well as THREE **NEW** ones: *Outbound Mammoth* (formerly *Sierra Nevada Resort*). Receive 15% to 20% off lodging with your FWSA ID. *Hilton Garden Inn, Old Mill* is offering 12% discounted lodging in Bend, Oregon, and the *Hampton Inn, Old Mill*, is offering the same 12% Discount, also in Bend. *Ship Skis* is back, as well as *The Transportation Network* in Park City and the Reno/Tahoe Area. *The Powder House* in the Tahoe area offers 25% off on ski and board rentals and **FREE** boot fitting. Visit www.fwsa.org/membercorner and click on "benefits" to see what all we have listed there.

FAR WEST SKI FOUNDATION

FAR WEST SKI FOUNDATION "YUM" FUNDRAISER: Thank you to all who participated in this year's Yum fundraiser. We are so grateful for all of our members and friends who purchase See's candies year after year. All of this aids in the Foundation's ability to make a difference in our many programs.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!