Powder Smile!
The concepts of sliding and teaching sliding enter my thoughts constantly, it can be maddening at times and delightful at others. This past September for example, while I was waiting for my son’s marching band to come down the street during their homecoming parade, I noticed the group ahead of the band was from a local swim club. Printed in large type on the back of their shirts was the phrase, “be better today than you were yesterday.” “PERFECT!” I thought to myself, “what a great perspective! What a great goal! What a great way to look at life, at sliding and at teaching sliding!”

In an effort to “be better today...” I have some things to share that will make your experience as a snowsports instructor better today than it was yesterday. At our last in-person Board of Directors meeting I took a quick poll of the directors in attendance and asked this simple question: How do you teach a beginner student to stop? The responses were split evenly between the following two answers:

1. Turn across the fall line, and
2. Use a braking wedge (heel side skid to a stop).

Everyone in the room was fairly certain their response was “correct.” The reality was, BOTH answers were correct. When we talked about it further as a group, everyone in the room realized you need to teach both methods, and students need command of both maneuvers to slide safely. Right then and there, we were better today than we were yesterday, because we had come together as a group.

Knowing more about a subject doesn’t always make that subject easier to teach but knowing the subject more deeply gives you, the instructor, more tools with which to help your students learn and enjoy snowsports. To illustrate that point, a level 1 certified instructor may understand “what” to teach beginners, while a level 2 instructor may understand “how” to teach the “what” to beginners and a level 3 instructor may understand “why” it’s important to know “how” to teach the “what” to beginners. All three instructors will get the job done, but the deeper your understanding the better the experience for your students. Seeking that deeper understanding, of even the most basic maneuvers like trying to stop, will make you better today than you were yesterday.

To provide a better product today than we had yesterday, the division Education Staff has focused their training so that everything we teach, no matter the level of the lesson, performs as well for the expert as it does for the beginner. Our resort owners and snowsports school directors have asked that we focus our attention on creating a great beginner experience for our shared customer, the sliding public. The fall Professional Development Series has focused on this very topic.

To be better today than we were yesterday, the Central Division Education Staff has devoted their fall training to explore more ways to create and deliver an enhanced beginner experience. This is more than just providing solid teaching techniques for beginning students, this is a holistic approach to creating a learning experience that students will want to experience AGAIN and AGAIN! Repeat business is good for the student, the instructor, the resort and good for the industry! Everybody wins!

To be better today than we were yesterday, the Education Vice President has developed, with the help of the Adaptive and Alpine discipline
administrators, a series of online webinars focused on improving movement analysis skills at every level of student, from beginner to expert. These webinars will be available in the fall and late spring to accommodate instructors who may need to attain their Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the season. These webinars are equal to one year’s worth of CEUs and are a great way to start, or end, your teaching season. Keep an eye on the website for announcements.

To be better today than we were yesterday, the events calendars, divisional budget and the board of directors meeting schedules have all been forecast forward for the next three seasons. This planning will help us achieve operational efficiencies and cost savings year after year while providing better products and services to you the membership.

To be better today than we were yesterday, the board has planned “Party Central” events throughout the division. Party Central is a themed event to be held at the Boyne Highlands, Mad River and Afton Alps events. The festivities include Saturday evening banquets, giveaways and lots of sliding. Even if you’re not taking a course at the event, please come join us for the banquet – it will be great food and fun, and it’s sure to be a blast!

So there you have it, there’s a TON of positive energy in Central Division surrounding the sport we love. There will be lots of educational opportunity this season to help you grow as an instructor, a coach and a trainer. Now it’s up to you to “be better today than you were yesterday!”

Have fun, stay safe and we’ll see you on the snow!

Grant Nakamura, M.D.
Grant grew up all over the Twin Cities. He taught skiing at Buck Hill Ski School and continues to consult with the ski school on their ELearning system. He is a Level 3 Certified Ski Instructor with a Children’s Specialist 2 Credential. He has been a PSIA-AASI member for over 30 years. He is also a Medical Doctor.

Grant is a professional photographer and many of us have viewed his photographs which were taken at the National Academy and at the National Team Selection. This photograph depicts Grant skiing at Mineral Basin, in Snowbird, Utah.

Photography credits and thanks to Tom Schultz, Snowsports Director at Buck Hill Ski School.
PSIA-AASI Central Division Election: Call for Nominations

By Richard Wren
Executive Vice President PSIA-AASI C

Be a part of something bigger,” they said! “Make a difference,” they said! “Think about our customers,” they said! “Make new friends,” they said! “And, have Fun,” they said!

Well you know what, THEY were right! What is it THEY are talking about? They are talking about becoming a member of the Board of Directors for PSIA-AASI Central Division. It’s the time of the year when we start to think about who the next leaders of our organization will be. By nominating and voting in the 2017 PSIA-AASI C election, you can help ensure that WE continue to make a difference, and do bigger things, both while having fun and making new friends.

Our election process has changed a little this year. In an effort to streamline the process and make it fair for everyone, we have made some minor changes. The biggest and most notable change is that the election committee has shortened the election timeframe from approximately 3 months down to one month. Another Notable change will be that the elections ballots will follow a Direct voting process versus a Proxy voting process. These changes will allow the elections to be more concise which will positively impact the timing of introducing new directors to their role on the board. Further details on the rules of the election and voting process will be provided following the nominations process.

The Next step in the process is to nominate those members who are qualified as “Members in good standing,” to run for one of the three open seats on the board. The nominations will begin on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 and must be received by our division office by 7:00 p.m. EST, on December 15, 2016. Once all Nominations have been received and verified, the voting will commence on February 1, 2017, and conclude on February 28, 2017, at the election meeting held at our organization’s office.

Q: Who can be nominated you may ask?

A: Members in good standing can nominate any other member in good standing who meets the criteria listed below. Members may also nominate themselves if they feel that they have what it takes to be a leader in the snowsports industry. The requirements for nominees are a person:

- who has three or more consecutive years as a Certified Member,
- has reached the age of 18;
- is a resident of the United States, has Snowsport work affiliation and permanent legal residence within the ASEA-C geographic boundary.

As many of you may already know, the Central Division Board of Directors voted to change the terms of service from 2 years to 3 years. This allows the board to maintain consistency and forward movement by only changing one third of the board seats each year. The 2017 election process will be the first election in which we are in “full swing” of the three year cycles, and thus only a few seats are open this year. The seats being filled in this election cycle are listed below, and if you are a member of one of these sections, please consider becoming a member of the leadership of our organization.

- Alpine section 1 representing members in the Minnesota area along with Bottineau Ski Area, ND, and Great Bear Recreation Area, SD,
- Alpine Section 2 representing members in Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan West of Hwy 77
- Alpine Section 6 representing members in Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Nominations will begin on November 15, 2016. To Nominate a candidate please visit the “Board of Director’s” link on the PSIA-C.org website under “About Us”. If you are going to nominate another member, please confirm with that member his/her willingness to serve, and that the person will meet the above criteria to serve as a board member. Please help your organization by nominating yourself or your fellow snowsports instructors, and by voting in the upcoming Board of Directors election. Ballots will be available on the Central Division website and from the office when the Election commences.

Richard Wren is a PSIA Alpine Level 3 Certified Instructor and Children’s Program Director at Boyne Highlands Resort, in Northern Michigan. Richard was also recently invited on to the Central Division Education staff. In addition he also serves at the Section 4 Alpine Representative and is currently the Executive VP Chair and Chairman of the Elections Committee.

A true industry liaison, Richard works full time in the SnowSports industry. He is employed year round by Boyne Resorts, spending part of the summer overseeing the Adventure Sports Programs. Currently a husband and father to a high energy three year old, you will find him spending much of his summer free time boating, his second favorite thing next to skiing.

“I spend 8 months of the year waiting for the 4 month ski season.”
Winning the Pole Position

By Thomas Shaw

Poles and pole fit are two very important parts of cross-country ski equipage and teaching. Sadly, they are also often overlooked when outfitting skiers for successful performance.

Poles themselves are crucial tools in propulsion. Unlike Alpine poles where a $20 pole will do the job just about as well as a $150 pole, cross-country poles have a direct influence on skier performance. For beginners, cost and quality is not an issue of major importance. Since beginners so often fall, a strong pole is helpful. The heavier, taller and stronger a skier is, the more they will benefit from a stiffer pole. Ideally, a significant amount of forward motion is achieved by effective use of poles. Less expensive poles are made of aluminum or fiberglass. When a skier engages their poles with their body weight and momentum, the pole naturally flexes. The more the pole flexes, the more energy is lost and the harder the skier has to work for the same amount of forward drive.

The cost of modern poles is proportionate to their stiffness and lightness. Expensive poles are stiffer than cheap poles. A stiffer pole is simply a more efficient tool for changing weight transfer into thrust. Since cross country skiing is a human-powered sport, anything that has a positive effect on efficiency makes it more enjoyable. A lighter pole requires less energy use over the length of a tour, workout or race. One hundred percent carbon fiber pole shafts are very efficient but even here, not all are equal. The stiffest (read most expensive) poles are stiff not only because of their material but also because of the way the fibers are arranged in the shaft. It is possible to “over-buy” poles. The most expensive poles are rather fragile and must be gently cared for. Even the best racers don’t use them for training or mass-start races. A lower-end, 100% carbon fiber pole is often a good compromise. Any person who skis a lot, including active youth racers, are best served by poles that are at least 60% carbon fiber.

Proper pole length is important to all skiers. There is no difference in modern poles between those for classic skiing and those for skating. Length is the sole determinant of efficiency. Most rental facilities dole out poles that are too short. For classic skiing, a pole fits if the top of the grip fits snuggly and slightly uncomfortably under the arm pit, when you are standing off the ski. This is a good starting length [Figure 1]. It is important to remember why classic pole length increased from the arm pit to shoulder height in the mid-eighties. In racing circles, the influence of skating, better grooming and wax technology made double poling a more prominent technique. The increased pole length improved double poling efficiency as this technique gained popularity with World Cup competitors.

For the beginning skier, a classic pole length at top of shoulder height used by many racers can interfere with proper body position in diagonal stride. The new skier may exhibit limited dorsiflexion (ankle bend) and frequently arches the back or hyperextends the lumbar region in an effort to extend a pole forward. A skilled instructor/coach should be able to identify whether a pole is the best length in a few strides. Exchanging for a shorter or longer pole will likely put the athlete in more efficient body positioning and set them up for greater success. Therefore, correct pole length is dependent upon the ability of the skier to maintain proper positioning in diagonal stride. More advanced skiers can handle the longer length in part because they know how to move their center of balance forward with greater dynamism while still maintaining efficient body positioning through the three phases of the stride.

Figure 1: A good beginner classic pole length fits snugly under the armpit.

Figure 2: Many classic racers prefer a somewhat longer pole to increase efficiency during double poling.
Skating poles are generally properly sized when the top of the grip touches between the bottom of the lower and the top of the upper lip [Figure 2]. Purchasing a longer pole and having it cut down to exactly the right length is an excellent strategy for getting the perfect fit. Suffice it to say that improperly sized poles adversely affect timing and thrust for the same reasons discussed above.

Today, pole straps come in two types: the strap and the harness [Figure 3]. Simple nylon straps are perfectly adequate for casual classic skiing or backcountry touring. They are quickly adjusted, work when frozen and easily fit over heavier gloves and mittens. The strap is properly adjusted if it will support body weight when the pole is engaged with the snow [Figure 4]. I find that a multi-tool is an essential part of my teaching kit. The pliers feature is often the only way to disengage the strap from the grip and make the necessary adjustments. The pole grip often is designed with a dogleg angle at the top. When the strap is properly shortened, a reasonably dynamic skier will be able to balance the pole on the hand when the poling arm is fully extended back. All the skier has to do then is slightly squeeze the thumb and forefinger at their base and the grip rests neatly in the space between the two. An added benefit is that the pole grip will come right to the skier's hand when the arm is swung forward in the next stride [Figure 5].

The harness type is more difficult to adjust and does not always work well with very heavy hand wear. It is, however, a much more efficient tool. It is also the only system that works for skate skiing. The grip does not fall away from the hand and the broad strap allows the skier’s power to more efficiently transfer to the pole. When combined with a stiff pole, the body becomes a more efficient machine in the same way that a clipless pedal and proper shoe transfers energy to a bicycle. The harness is attached to the grip by a short length of nylon webbing and secured by a cam or wedge set into the top of the grip. It is important that this strap is short enough that when the fingers release at the back of the pole swing, the pole stays right in the flesh webbing between the thumb and forefinger [Figure 6]. This is easily verified by having the skier lift the pole off of the ground and release the hand. The pole should not drop out of the hand.
A properly adjusted harness obviates the need to actually grip the pole with the fingers. The skier relaxes his/her hands in the harness which saves energy [Figure 7]. A skier should be able to wiggle their fingers without losing control of the pole. The properly adjusted harness also makes it easy for a skier to quickly return the pole to a functional position by snapping the wrist up. This is especially useful when using a short pole stroke in a fast turnover stride.

Clients and athletes really appreciate the extra time taken to make sure their equipment fits efficiently. It reinforces the idea that the instructor/coach truly cares about the client/athlete's success. This attention to detail removes important barriers to learning and makes for a more efficient session. For any instructor or coach dealing with beginners, extra time taken to verify pole length and strap fit before the lesson or first on-snow session will be well worth it.

*Thomas Shaw is a Central Division Educational Staff member.*

**LOOK WHAT’S NEW THIS SEASON...**

**ORDER YOURS NOW AT WWW.SKI-RING.COM**
Thanks to all the Administrators and Education/Certification Committees in all disciplines for their efforts this summer, we are looking forward to a great season of snow fun with you--our members. Here are the highlights.

**GENERAL**

**Ron Shepard’s Report**

Ron Shepard’s report from the Midwest Ski Areas Assn (MSAA) Conference:

For my MSAA presentation, I was asked to present the “Keys to Conversion”. Using data from the RRC Associates study, I stated that new skiers report an 8.3/10 rating on their beginner experience, an 8.9/10 on their likelihood to ski again, and an 8.5/10 on their expectation to become lifelong skiers. With these sort of numbers, it is evident that the NSAA Roadmap has had the necessary effect upon our guest service delivery - the customers love us. But still, only 17% of new skiers convert, up from 15% in 1998, when the Roadmap was first introduced. At this rate, it will take 40 years to get to our 25% conversion target, and that takes too long.

I asked the group to consider the reasons why people try skiing, and I presented them on the screen. I then asked them to consider the events and circumstances that interfere with their intent to continue skiing - what we refer to as “Leisure Constraint”. I showed the process by which a person negotiates these constraints, and the tools which we have to work with. Ultimately, however, I explained that it all comes down to communication - that the key for ski schools is having the means by which to connect with the guest, to tell them about specials, or invite them back.

We should remind our students about their positive experience, and the reasons they chose to ski in the first place. Vail is amazing at this - but you don’t need to be Vail to succeed at the initiative. As an example, I showed how the average person in Michigan is less than 30 miles away from a ski area. That’s a pretty amazing statistic. I said that despite this, Crystal Mountain’s average customer travels 150 miles to get to us, passing a number of other resorts along the way. Even with such close proximity to a ski area, “Distance/Access” is the number one constraint listed by consumers in the RRC study. I asked the representatives of the resorts in the room if they would be willing to participate in a program through which I could send an email to new participants saying “Thanks for skiing at Crystal Mountain- we hope you had a fantastic time. Did you know that there are 3 places you can ski within 50 miles of you? If you bring your Crystal Lift ticket to any of the following resorts, they’ll offer you a 15% discount off of your next ticket, or lift/rental package.”

I have an excel tool that can easily compute these things, and I offered it to the participants for free. All the resort representatives who were present agreed that this would be a worthwhile promotion - at least one way to address the most often cited leisure constraint. My intent was not to say that this alone will make all the difference; Leisure Constraint presents itself in many ways. Because “Cost of Equipment” is another reason cited, I asked Richard Wren to present Boyne Resorts “First Class First Class,” in which customers earn their way to a pair of boots. This initiative is just one example of earn-your-way-to-equipment initiatives offered across the country. Participants were also asked if they had other promotions that they had utilized to overcome leisure constraint, and I heard some good responses, mostly related to low cost promotion to get people started in the sport.

**PSIA-AASI C Turns 60!**

This season we are having several “Party Central” functions to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of PSIA-AASI C, which initially started as the Central Ski Instructors Association. These functions will be held in conjunction with events at Boyne Highlands Resort, MI, in December (contact Richard Wren), at Mad River Mountain, OH, in January (contact Scott Hartley), and at Afton Alps, MN, in March (contact Susan Boyle or Peggy Erickson).
Create Your Own Event
“Create your own event” - Unscheduled Events Procedure

Procedures for UE (Unscheduled Events) (Available ONLY to Central Division Member Ski Schools)

1. Determining the date:
   - An unscheduled event may NOT take place within two weeks of another scheduled event that takes place within 50 miles of the UE hosting Ski Area.
   - The type of event is based on the needs of the host ski school.
   - NOTE: Level 2 or 3 Exams and Mock Exams may NOT be held as unscheduled events.

2. Unscheduled Event Fees: Participant fee is based upon the event type.

3. Finding an Education Staff member:
   - Contact our Central Division office to obtain the names and phone numbers of Ed Staff members in your area.
   - Call Education Staff Members from the list to see who can work your event and to obtain a firm commitment.

4. Application for UE (once you have commitment from Ed Staff member):
   - Fill out the UE application.
   - Include the name of the staff member who has agreed to work your UE. (The UE form can be found on the PSIA-C website.)
   - Include the names of the UE participants.
   - Collect the event fee from minimum 7 to a maximum of 10 participants.
   - Submit full payment along with UE application to the Central Division office.
   - Application is due in the Central Division office 10 days before UE.

New By-Laws Amendment of Re-Instatement Policy for Lapsed Membership

- Tell your friends we welcome back our former members.

ALPINE

- Recent Education Staff new hires, by their own initiative, have created an interactive e-learning course on Movement Analysis to be rolled out in November, 2016. It will offer 6 CEU credits and cost the same as a 1-day on-snow event.
- There will be a new Level-1 workbook on the Central Division website soon.

- The schedule for the October PDS’s featuring “The Learning Connection” is on the Central Division website.
- There is a new update clinic for former members who are seeking re-instatement.

SNOWBOARD

- John Roberts and Doug Radefeld (Freestyle) attended and participated in the National Fall Conference.
- We are looking forward to the new National Freestyle Standards resulting from this event.
- The schedule for the October PDS’s featuring Certification information and technical updates is on the Central Division website.

TELE/XC

- Central Division has developed a new Children’s CS-1 workbook for XC instructors.
- There are new written exams for Level-2 and Level-3 Telemark.
- Brad Miller attended and participated in the National Fall Conference for both Tele and XC and he returned with some great information to share with us.

ADAPTIVE

- Linda Tomsevics (LT) and Tara Gordman attended and participated in the National Fall Conference.
- Some exciting news is that we have rolled out an interactive e-learning Movement Analysis offering for Adaptive that has a wait list, so we may provide a second offering. The 6-hour course will provide 6 CEU credits.

Thank you for all that you do for the participants in our Snowsports. Our Education Staff are looking forward to sliding with you this season. Think Snow!!

Sherry McCabe is a Level 3 Alpine certified ski instructor and a member of the Central Division Education Staff. Her favorite activity while off the snow is horseback riding in Northern Wisconsin, and traveling.
F is for “Fun”

(“Fun” refers to enjoyment, amusement or light-hearted pleasure. Oxford Dictionaries.)

By Brad Miller

Speaking at the MSAA convention this past August, on behalf of our Central Division Children’s Specialist programs was an honor. After a brief introduction of our products, including our theme CRAVE (Collaboration, Relevancy, A culture of learning, Video/internet learning, Exploration), members were invited to take part in our forum. Although there were a range of topics, the general consensus concerned customer retention and PSIA-AASI’s role. A couple of weeks after the convention, I was able to jot down a few ways in which instructors can help retain riders for our industry. Ironically, one word was not mentioned much or at all: “Fun.” The word “Fun” does not appear in the MSAA mission statement and is a word we as instructors all too often forget when applying our trade.

Let fun be the main artery of the following writing, and as always, may it add more than what you take away.

“SNOWSPORTS INSTRUCTORS: A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE INDEED.”

“A person without a smiling face must not open Shop.” Chinese Proverb.

At the ski resort where you teach, the COUNTDOWN to facilitate return Snowsports visits begins the minute you meet your new student(s), a fact at which many area management teams and owners are taking a deeper look. Although many factors play a part into retaining customers, snowsports instructors as area ambassadors are putting a human face on the Snowsports product. This aspect is playing a huge role in the preservation of our sport, our respective areas and our paychecks.

[ FIVE ]

“I think the teaching profession contributes more to the future of our society than any single profession.” John Wooden.

I ask one simple question to my peers. “Why did you continue to ride after your first snowsports area visit?” I skied for a week before my first two half-hour lessons. My instructors were Mark Rupert and Dick Lake. Unfortunately, being ADD, I didn’t absorb very much. My continued return to the slopes was based on two reasons, speed and the desire to be a skier/instructor. From day one, I observed instructors “skiing like the wind” on the best gear of the time. In those days, instructors also worked in rental installing and adjusting Cubco bindings on Sun Valley customer rental skis. At my young age of eleven years, instructors like Mark Rupert and Dick Lake made a huge impact on my decision to continue to ski.

[ FOUR ]

“Spend a lot of time talking to customers face to face. You’d be surprised how many companies don’t listen to their customers.” Ross Perot

Let’s do a quick analysis by way of a Darwinian type outline on snow sports areas.

A: An investor has a passion for snowsports
B: The investor invests, or finds investors, to buy a snowsports area.
C: Investor(s) layout large sums of cash, or incur significant debt, to run a snowsports area including hiring snowsports instructors.
D: Investor(s) rely on customers and returning customers to keep the areas lights on and to pay employee wages; example: Snowsports Instructors.
E: PSIA offers educational clinics for professional ski instructors to keep our lights on.
F: Only the strongest survive.

Although all areas are run differently, customer satisfaction is and always should be priority number one. On my first visit to a snowsports area the equipment I brought didn’t work.
Instead of having to go back home or pay an all-day rental fee, Earl Damon, the owner of Mott Mountain at the time, talked to my Mom and had the rental department set up a pair of skis for me to use for an hour. Earl Damon had recognized a dire situation, the loss of a potential return customer and, more importantly, listened. As snowsports instructors, specifically at areas that do mass volume, it’s easy to forget that our students are our customers. By identifying potential issues, asking questions and listening to the answers we play a very important role in retaining customers.

[ THREE ]

“Never break your putter and your driver in the same round or you’re dead.” Tommy Bolt

Many years ago my wife put me on a 50 year old pair of skates that were four sizes too big, she told me if I was good I could make them work. After taking a beating, I took them home and pitched them in the dumpster swearing I would never skate again. Fortunately, a good friend traded me a pair of new hockey skates for a pair of skis—and what a difference. Proper fitting gear is key to customer success and safety. Although our rental departments do outstanding work, occasionally improper sized gear slips through the cracks. Other customers may show up with borrowed or used equipment (like my first experience). As frustrating as these situations may seem, if you handle them in a professional manner you may foster a return customer and or a long-time friendship with your student and rental department. “Keep your areas dumpster snowsports equipment free.”

[ TWO ]

“Life is like a movie, since there aren’t any commercial breaks you have to get up and go to the bathroom in the middle of it.” Garry Trudeau

Although it sounds funny, knowing where your areas restrooms are located is very important in customer satisfaction. As a High School Ski Coach, I would let athletes know where the rest rooms were at each area we visited. This small detail made life easier for the athletes and myself by saving time and aggravation. Knowing the location of your cafeterias and restaurants, including the best food on the menu, makes life less complex for your customer and also helps your areas food service department.

If your student has an equipment need or could use hand warmers make sure to send them to your area’s snowsports shop. It doesn’t hurt to know your area’s history and being able to point out special landmarks from the top of your area either.

[ ONE ]

“Pins and certificates are no replacement for passion in teaching snowsports.” Brad Miller

The world is full of accredited and certified individuals who may or may not bring passion to their work. Being passionate about teaching individuals a subject which you like is more important to your students than wearing a shiny pin. As part of the aforementioned “Darwinian” outline, PSIA-AASI C offers educational events such as Nordic Work Shops, Children’s Specialist Events and Level One exams in all disciplines that are education based. These events allow all participants to share their knowledge with others. Your local snowsports areas may also offer a training set up for your local needs. More often than not, snowsports areas now pay instructors based on customer feed-back, and their performance—all of which can be traced to your passion.

[ LIFT OFF ]

The countdown has begun concerning Snowsports customer return visits. Being the Rider others would like to be, listening to your students, being aware of equipment issues, knowing your areas facilities and being passionate about your work are just a few of many ways to bring customers back. Although you may be only one person, remember that you are a key ambassador for your area, our sport and more importantly future snowsports participants. As a full time snowsports instructor/coach for 38 seasons, I can also attest to the value PSIA-AASI C can bring to you and your area by sharing knowledge gained through hands-on experiences.

Remember we’re all in this together.

Brad Miller, Level 3 Alpine (Alpine Education Staff), Level 3 Telly (Nordic Education Staff), PSIA Level 2 Nordic Track. Children’s Specialist 2. Instructor and Coach since 1979. Always an adventurer.

Acknowledgements:

Dedicated to Mid-Michigan Snowsports, The late Earl Damon, the Brockway family (SnowSnake) and Scott Stillings & Charlie Zieter, who always have an acute sense of the obvious. You helped foster many lifetime snowsports enthusiasm.
The PSIA-AASI Fall 2016 National Conference

“Everything that you would hope for, and like nothing you would imagine.”

Just like you, when I’ve read the reports that come from national events, I envision on-snow clinics, inspiring images from team members, and a communication of what’s new — on what the National Team and PSIA-AASI organization have been working. In my mind, rapt participants listen, maybe share their experiences, and then trail behind crisply attired demo team member as they make their way to the next pause point.

Best case scenarios

As a member driven and member funded organization, we want our representatives to bring our concerns to light before the national organization. We want to trust that the information we are held accountable to, and which we have supported the development of through the payment of our dues, is current and complete. We wish to be integral in the development of our content, and involved when it comes to the direction of the association.

I am pleased to report that the 2016 PSIA-AASI Fall Conference may serve to be the most regenerative event possible, when considering our faith in the capacity and commitment of our education staff and board members.

Reflecting upon the conference we all just experienced, and on behalf of all of us who had the fortune to attend as your representatives, I wish to express our gratitude. I now understand and appreciate so much more about how PSIA-AASI content evolves — how information and experiences that arise within divisions become issues and initiatives, and ultimately, deliverables. Other attendees have shared the same thoughts — Brad Miller said most aptly “For decades I thought Technical Manuals, National Standards and theories, with their respective applications, were created by folks behind a curtain. Instead, I found these creations to be collaborative efforts by representatives from each division.”

At this event, we learned of Central Divisions perceived and real strengths, and areas in which we can grow — and we are committed to a pathway in which we can both aid in the national effort and also rise to meet the standard that we have played a part in establishing.

You will be proud to know that we represented our division very well. The voices of Central Division representatives were involved and informed — even vital to the effort, and we have had a significant hand in crafting some exciting new materials.

A message from Horst Abraham

In perhaps the most compelling element of the event, speaker Horst Abraham- the author of Skiing Right, and a renowned expert in learning theory, helped to set the tone in respect to the challenges we face as educators. Horst’s message is too broad for this wrap-up, but it will serve as the basis for several of our upcoming educational articles and clinics.

Grounded in success

From the start, we learned that the Five Fundamentals of alpine skiing have been successful — overwhelmingly so, and to the extent that all disciplines have sought to identify their own fundamental concepts, to create a clear and concise tool for execution and assessment of that disciplines performance.

Groups took to the hill to discuss how the fundamentals have affected outcomes, and to better understand how we can apply them to our education and certification processes.
This is where the reality of the event differed so dramatically from the perception. Rather than a clinic along the lines of the National Academy, this event was a national consultation, involving idea sharing with process clarification.

**A model for teaching**

Building upon the success of the Five Fundamentals approach to skiing, the Alpine group was tasked to identify similar fundamentals that might be applied to teaching. Two divisions, Central and Pacific Northwest, arrived at this conversation well prepared. Both divisions have been hard at work along this path, with many Central Division PDS (Professional Development Series) events having already approached the exercise. Both divisions had arrived at the consensus that no fundamentals could be established without first identifying the principle skills of an instructor, and together we made this case before the group. The resulting model, which will be presented and tested divisionally this winter, served to vet the fundamental elements of snowsports lessons-- qualities that when absent, require an excessive level of compensation by the instructor.

**Disciplinary fundamentals**

Similarly, progress was made by the committees for each discipline. The Children's Specialist program focused upon how we evaluate teaching at the CS1 and CS2 levels. We shared and explored teaching examples that we use in our divisional exams. Importantly for our members, we spent considerable time discussing how to better provide training to advanced children's educators desiring to advance to education staffs. We reflected upon ways in which we can provide trainers with the tools to deliver improved training to children's supervisors and children's directors. We believe that through this initiative, directors who only have CS1 may still provide advanced training to new staff, and ultimately a better lesson experience to the future of our industry.

The snowboard crew established a framework of snowboard fundamentals, while also reviewing the alignment of certification standards across disciplines. The new freestyle manual has been released, with a message of the applicability of the freestyle concepts to all disciplines. Adaptive challenged themselves with considering and responding to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance for events, a subject of increasing concern for resorts.

Great strides were made by the Nordic group, with the development of clearer Nordic fundamentals, and the streamlining of the Nordic content. Again, Central Division has demonstrated leadership in program evolution. The Nords were very excited about Central's new program and are giving thought to having the Central Cross Country staff demonstrate it at a potential national education gathering in our division. The Telemark group tackled both the identification of their framework of fundamentals, and a study guide question bank.

**Coming to terms**

In addition to the evolution of the teaching fundamental project, divisional representatives got together to understand how each division's certification process is similar and different, how each approaches specialist designations, and the adherence to and support of the National Standards. This dialogue cannot begin and end at this event alone, however, as many lessons and opportunities were opened for discussion by this hard working group.

**Coming to a clinic near you**

It’s exciting, and energizing to discover that we, your Central Division Education Staff members and representatives, and all of the membership, through interaction and feedback, have so strong and evident a voice in the design and development of our core materials, standards, and processes. It has been our honor to attend, and I know I speak for everyone when I say we cannot wait to share what we have learned and developed when we ski and ride together.

Respectfully submitted by Ron Shepard, and on behalf of John Hamaker, Brad Miller, Marylu Cianciolo, Doug Radefeld, Jennifer Simpson, Doug Carter, Richard Wren, and Ned Pinske.
Ski and Snowboard School
Follow your dream, live your dream, be part of the team.

Are you a passionate, motivated and professional individual looking to join a progressive Ski and Snowboard School in the southwest? We have opportunities in our youth and adult programs. Join a small school where everyone is friendly. Take your ability and passion to a new level.

We offer:
• In house training
• Competitive wages
• Reasonable employee housing
• Friendly and helpful staff
• Small town atmosphere
• Plus much more

For more information or to apply for a position, contact:
Larry Simpson
Ski School Director
Red River, New Mexico 87556
Larrysimpson@redriverskiarea.com
Cascade-fest IV will be hosted by Central Division and Cascade Mountain on January 20, 21, and 22, 2017. Cascade Mountain is located 30 miles north of Madison Wisconsin. Our Mountain sits right on I-90, I-94, and I-39 at the Junction of Highway 33. We are really easy to get to! And, we are only fifteen minutes from the “Water Park Capitol of the World”, Wisconsin Dells!

Cascade Mountain is in the middle of a $9 Million Dollar Expansion. We are opening two new lifts and six new intermediate runs this season!

The Level II Certification Events are three day events while all other PSIA-AASI C events this weekend will be two day events, Saturday and Sunday.

Go to the PSIA-C.org web site for a complete listing of events in which you can participate. This year for the first time there will be a “Free Style” event! There is something for everyone! Pick the event that best meets your needs and come join in the fun and learning. And this year, we are having Heidi Ettlinger from the US Alpine Demo team with us for the weekend. A two day mini academy with Heidi is only $310.

Plan on arriving early Friday and ski/ride with some of Cascade Mountain’s Certified Instructors and Coaches. They can give you a tour of our mountain, help you with teaching progressions, and give you and your family some pointers that will enhance your personal skiing or riding skills.

On Friday from 3 pm to 5 pm you can ski/ride with an Education Staff member of your choosing. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity.

A block of rooms has been set aside, for your convenience, at the Best Western Hotel, in Portage (10 minutes from Cascade Mountain). The price is $92.53/night Tax included.

Cascade Mountain is offering a Discounted Two-Day Lift package for $51.00 plus tax, and Three-Day Lift Ticket packages for $64.50, plus tax for you and your family. Remember, at Cascade Mountain Kids 12 and under ski/ride for FREE! To utilize the Cascade Mountain Discounts, you and your family members must all be present at the same time to make the purchase. If you arrive one day, and your family does not arrive until the next day, there will be NO discount for the family.

Cascade Mountain has a state of the art “Montana” Tuning machine. Cascade Mountain will be offering a tuning special of 30% off for all of our PSIA friends and their families.

Each day will begin with “DOOR PRIZES”. In the past we have had some very cool door prizes. (Water park tickets, Goggles, Mittens, Snowboards, Dinner packages, Wood Workings, to name a few.)

On Saturday evening there will be a gala, dinner, and fun evening. This event is for all of our Central Division members and their families. The food and beverage will be outstanding and we have some fun things to make the evening special for everyone (Last year we had over 75 members take part in the Saturday evening event.)

PSIA-AASI C Education Events are for everyone. You can join in the fun and learning even if you do not need a Continuing Education Credit. SO, mark your calendar now and come join in the FUN and LEARNING!

P.S.: Cascade Mountain hosts “Training Clinics” every Wednesday from 1 pm to 8:30 pm beginning the first Wednesday we are open. Call Erika Meier (1-608-963-1360) for details. This is a great learning experience!
Paul Bowman cruising down Coronet Peak in New Zealand. Photo credit to Brandon Stanley.
Come join the 60 year celebration!

By Forrest Gibson

Hello PSIA-AASI Central Division Members.

Welcome to another wonderful Winter season. Ok, maybe that’s a bit premature, but snowfall is just around the corner and several Rocky Mountain resorts are already blowing snow. With Winter rapidly approaching, your Central Division Board of directors want to give you some quick updates on some of our plans for the upcoming season.

Keep your eyes on your e-mail. Very shortly, every member of PSIA-AASI C will receive a link to take a quick survey. This survey will help your Board of Directors tailor the services, events and leadership necessary to be your world-class organization. We need your input! Please take the time to help us help you, as members of this great association.

2017 is the 60-year anniversary of PSIA-AASI C (originally CSIA). In celebration of this historic event, the Board of Directors will be providing a solid metal Zipper Pull to each member in the Central Division. This is one of our ways to thank you for your membership and continued support. Each member in good standing will receive a zipper pull which will be mailed to your address of record as listed with our Central Division Office. All you have to do is open the package and place the Zipper Pull on your favorite piece of outerwear. Recognizing that most of us have more than a single jacket, some additional commemorative Zipper Pulls will be available for purchase at an event near you.

As another way of celebrating the 60 years of PSIA-AASI C, throughout the 2016-2017 season, we will hold special gatherings at three event locations across the Central Division. These special events will become “Party Central,” and will be held at Afton Alps, Boyne Highlands Resort and Mad River Mountain. In future years, these events may grow into a more family focused event designed to accommodate your entire family. For this year, come join the party and help us recognize and celebrate the tenured members within our organization.

The gatherings will include special member recognitions. These events will highlight the FUN, in “Safety, Fun and Learning”.

This is a great opportunity to socialize with snowsports friends, both old and new. Whether or not you are taking an event, come join the party! You are welcome to attend the Saturday evening dinner even if you are not participation in an on-snow event.

There is much to celebrate. We are looking forward to a great season. We invite you to come out, take an event, and be an active part of our great organization. Your Board of Directors and Administrators look forward to seeing everyone on the slopes this season!

Forrest Gibson is a Level III certified Alpine Ski Instructor and Level 200 USSA certified Race Coach at Mad River Mountain in Bellefontaine, Ohio. He is the Section 6 Alpine Co-Representative to the PSIA- AASI C Board of Directors and Marketing Committee Chair.
In memory of

Don Phelan

Don Phelan was an inspirational member of the professional ski instructor organizations from the early years when it operated as part of Central United States Ski Association (CUSSA). He was a leader of that organization when it solidified into Central Ski Instructors of America and finally into Professional Ski Instructors of America Central Division, where Don was Executive Secretary for many years.

All communication for the organization came from his office in Slinger, Wisconsin where he performed his duties for the membership along with his wife Eileen. There they tracked membership dues, organized education events and maintained registration files and attendance records for the 2,200 members.

Don was a respected member of the Central Division Examiner Staff and attended several of the annual education events and exams. Those whom he examined and taught through “Pre-courses” will remember Don as a compassionate educator and evaluator.

His leadership throughout the growth of the organization was profound and Don was awarded an Honorary Lifetime Membership.

While manning the day-to-day operations of Central Division, Don was also very active at his local ski areas. As a founding member of “Skipros,” he and his partners ran the Little Switzerland Ski School in Wisconsin for many years, until Don left and joined the ski school at Heiliger Heigel Ski Club, in Richfield, Wisconsin, where he directed the lesson programs for members.

In 1984 Don joined the leadership team at the Sunburst Ski School in Kewaskum. He was an active teacher, trainer and leader for Sunburst until he retired from teaching in 2013. Sunburst’s Education Team grew and matured both corporately as a team and as individuals as Don shared with the team his wisdom, humor and his faith as members faced the trials and joys of the ever-changing ski industry.

Don Phelan will be remembered by those in which he came in contact throughout the industry as a leader of excellence. His organizational skills and commitment to details helped Central Division become the professional organization it is today.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Engel, a long-time friend and co-worker in the ski industry with Don.

ADDITIONAL MEMBER OBITUARIES

Donald Bartos, from Maple Grove, Minnesota, was certified as a Level 2 snowboarder and a Level 1 in Alpine Skiing. He taught at Mt. Brighton Ski Area and for the Thunderbird Ski Club.

Adi Binder, of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, was a longtime member and a Central Division Education Staff member. He taught and was the director at the Little Switzerland Ski Area.

Colton James King was certified as Alpine Level 1 and Snowboard Level 1. He had a CSI credential. He was a member of both Central Division and Northern Rocky Mountain Divisions. He was an avid water skier, bike ride and rock climber. He was involved in “Engineers without borders.”

Bill Stanczak, of Waukegan, Illinois, was a 30 year plus member of Central Division. He taught at Wilmot Mountain Snowsports School.
EDITORIAL INFORMATION
The Central Line is published four times per year by the Professional Ski Instructors of America-American Association of Snowboard Instructors Central Division (PSIA-AASI Central Division). Permission is hereby given to all PSIA-AASI divisions to copy original material from this newsletter providing credit is given to PSIA-AASI Central Division and the material is not altered. Articles that contain specific copyright notices may not be reprinted unless written permission is obtained from the author. Please mail a copy of any publication containing reprinted material from The Central Line to the PSIA-AASI Central office at 15490 101st Ave. N., Suite #100, Maple Grove, MN 55369.

SUBMISSIONS
Submissions, including articles and photos, are welcome. Articles should be emailed to garyski3@att.net in MS Word format with the following header: article name, date and author. Photos and graphics should be high resolution (300 dpi or greater and at least 2 inches in the smallest dimension) and submitted in JPEG or TIF format. A photo release must be obtained from any person(s) included in the submitted photo. Articles are accepted on the condition that they are released for use in all PSIA-AASI Central publications. PSIA-AASI Central reserves the right to edit all articles.

ADVERTISING INFORMATION & Specs
Advertising rates and submission form are available at psia-c.org. Please contact the PSIA-AASI Central office with questions. Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement or approval of product or service advertised. The PSIA-AASI Central Division Board of Directors reserves the right to refuse an ad that they consider inappropriate or does not hold to the standard and principles of the association. Advertisements should be submitted to the PSIA-AASI Central office at info@psia-c.org in high resolution PDF, TIF or EPS format. Trim size is 8.5 inches by 11 inches. Live copy should be at least one-half inch from trim edge. Bleeds may be included on full page ads and must extend one-quarter inch beyond trim size on all four sides.

PUBLICATION CALENDAR
ISSUE | ARTICLE & AD SUBMISSION DEADLINE
2017 Issue 1 | January 5, 2017
2017 Issue 2 | May 5, 2017
2017 Issue 3 | July 10, 2017
2017 Issue 4 | October 7, 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION
To ensure the most effective representation, PSIA-AASI Central Division members should contact their Section Representative to share concerns or opinions on the policies, procedures or content of The Central Line. Materials that have been provided by persons not writing as PSIA-AASI Central officials are the responsibility of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by PSIA-AASI Central Division.

THE CENTRAL LINE STAFF
EDITOR | PUBLISHER
Gary Evans | Robert Wendt, Cultivate Communications
garyski3@att.net | bob@cultivate-communications.com

All articles and photographs intended for publication in The Central Line should be submitted to the Editor.

PHOTO CREDITS
Cover photograph: Education Staff Member Ron Shepard Launching into Nosebleed, at Crystal Mountain, in the Northwestern part of Michigan. Photo credit to Keirsun Scott. Photograph of some of our Central Division members at the National Conference. Photographic credit and thanks to Jennifer Simpson.
LEARN TO TEACH.
NOVEMBER 15, 22, 29 & DECEMBER 3, 4

Learn to teach skiing and snowboarding lessons at Crystal Mountain! This five-day classroom and on-snow course is led by PSIA Educational Staff* and costs only $75 per person – or score a job with Crystal Mountain and the course is free! Indoor sessions will be held November 15, 22, 29 and on-snow sessions will be held December 3 & 4. To register, contact Joanna, Crystal Mountain’s Snowsports Operations Manager at 888.968.7686, ext. 7501.

*Course does not receive PSIA education credit.