

# It's been 25 Years!

Far West Skier's Guide 25th Annual Issue

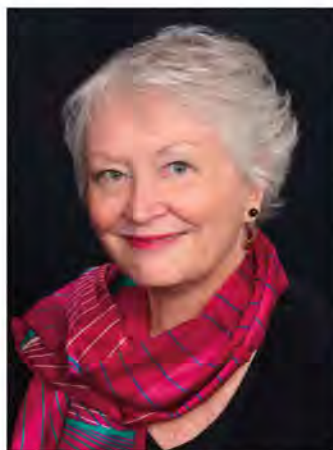
by Jane Wyckoff

The 2012-2013 edition of the *Far West Skier's Guide* is our 25th Anniversary issue. It hardly seems possible that we have been producing this publication for a quarter of a century!

It all began one day back in 1988, when I walked into Leigh Gieringer's office in Los Angeles, and we began to discuss the necessity for the newly restructured Far West Ski Association to have its own annual magazine publication. Leigh Gieringer was a graphic artist and owner of Leigh Gieringer Graphic Services and I was a Past President of FWSA, and FWSA Ski Industry Liaison / Convention Silent Auction Chairman.

The Far West Ski Association had been a division of the United States Ski Association until May of 1985 when the FWSA was reactivated into an independent all volunteer entity. The Far West Division, USSA had a full paid staff to conduct programs including publications, such as the *Skiers' Almanac*,

**LEFT:** Leigh Gieringer, Publisher; Editor and Advertising Manager;  
**RIGHT:** Jane Wyckoff, Assistant Editor and Advertising Sales, Far West Skier's Guide.



an annual publication featuring stories from prominent western ski journalists, information about major destination resorts, and ski club listings. It also had a newspaper, the *Far West Ski News*. The newly formed United States Recreational Ski Association began a publication called *The Recreational Skier*, with features similar to the *Skiers' Almanac*.

Leigh and I had a number of meetings to discuss the project - our goals and budget. Our intent was to market the Association's programs, provide club information to skiers and be a ski industry news source in the western states. Leigh would be the Publisher and handle all the production, graphic de-

sign, printing and distribution, and I would be the FWSA Editor and Advertising Director for this issue. Mike Favia, President, supported the project for the new "Official Publication of the Far West Ski Association," and the FWSA Board of Directors approved it. Thus began our new venture, the *Far West Skier's Guide*, and we have worked together on the publication for the past 25 years in varying roles.

The first issue was our 1988-1989 edition, with 40 pages and 25 display ads, plus a Resort Lodging Directory. We originally had a section called Ski Resort Information, a complex chart of important ski resort statistics and a Skier's Calendar listing FWSA



The first issue of the *Far West Skier's Guide* was produced for the 1988-1989 ski season. It's the first one pictured above. The others are placed in order over these two pages including #25 - the current issue - located on the bottom right. Twenty-five years: it brings back many wonderful memories of all those who made it possible. We thank everyone who contributed and supported us for the last 25 years; and look forward to many more!



and major ski resort events, but disbanded both a number of years ago. With modern technology, all this information is easily available online and is constantly updated by the resorts. We even had a column for Recipes for the Slopes and a Glossary of Snow and Weather Terms. Leigh and I did most of the writing, with a feature article on "The Value of Ski Lessons" by Mary F. Wendt, a freelance writer, past president of the Southern California Ski Writers Association and recipient of the 1988 FWSA Bill Berry Media Award.

The *Far West Skier's Guide* was well received by the ski industry, ski community and Far West members. We continued to expand the publication, as advertising sales increased. The council coverage has expanded over the years, as well. The first issue included only 2/3rds of a page summary about the seven existing councils (in 1988) - Bay Area Council, Central Council, Inland Council, Los Angeles Council, Orange Council, San Diego Council and Sierra Council. All the ski clubs were listed in the back of the publication, in order by council. Beginning with the 1996-1997 issue, we began to devote a section to each of our councils. And, we added new councils, with the addition of the Arizona Ski Council in the 1991-1992 issue, Northwest Ski Club Council in the 1992-1993 issue, New Mexico Ski Club Council in the 2001-2002 issue and Intermountain Ski Council in the 2008-2009 issue. Each council section now includes an article by the council president, pictures and their club list.

Also included in the first edition was a one

industry updates. We still highlight all our FWSA programs in the publication, with the Vice Presidents or Chairperson of each program submitting an article. News coverage of our industry partners has grown over the years, in recognition of their high-level of participation in the FWSA industry programs, such as the annual Silent Auction/Travel Expo, Convention sponsorships and advertising support.

The millennium brought new and expanded FWSA programs, and with it a challenge to fit coverage of everything into the publication. The 2005-2006 issue was the largest ever, with 100 pages. The Far West Ski Association celebrated a milestone anniversary in 2005.

The National Ski Council Federation was founded as we entered the new millennium, bringing a dynamic dimension to council programs. The Athletic Scholarship Fund was established in 2004 for the purpose of providing financial assistance to junior alpine ski racers and the program has expanded to be one of the Far West Ski Association's most notable efforts. The Annual FWSA Convention had a relatively brief coverage in each issue of the *Far West Skier's Guide* until the 2004-2005 issue, celebrating FWSA's 75th Anniversary of its founding in 1930. This issue featured an eight-page center fold with "The History of Skiing in the Far West" by Catherine Ohl. Modern FWSA Conventions have multiple snowsports personalities and additional programs, such as the Snowsports Leadership Academy, the multi-media presentation, Snowsports Builder Award and an expanded list of Convention sponsors. Travel

programs. The Far West Ski Foundation was reactivated under John Watson as a fundraising arm to the Association for specified charitable programs.

Each year, Leigh and I would brainstorm potential feature articles. Leigh was traveling more internationally and taking photographs for future articles. We reviewed current trends in the snowsports industry and possible ski resorts we had not yet featured. Our early editions had feature articles, such as "Skiing in Japan", "Yellowstone: A Nordic Skier's Paradise", "Turn on the Snowmaking Machines", and "Skiing is a Life Long Sport". And, as a sign of the times, recent issues have included "Capital Improvements Continue Despite Economically Challenging Times", "After the Lifts Close" - featuring summer programs at ski resorts, and "Use Social Media to Communicate & Increase Club Membership". In recognition of her outstanding efforts in the production of the *Far West Skier's Guide*, Leigh was the recipient of the Bill Berry Featured News Award in 2000 and 2004. She is also a member of NASJA, the North American Snowsports Journalists' Association.

Getting colorful action pictures was always a fun part of working on the publication. The majority of pictures are submitted by our volunteers, and professional pictures submitted by the snowsports industry, as well as the FWSA Annual Convention photographer. Ken Calkins, from Los Angeles Council of Ski Clubs, and Emilio Trampuz, NWSCC, have done a superb job of recording FWSA Ski Weeks and other FWSA activities for the past several years.

Selecting a cover for the annual issue was never an easy task. The picture had to be exciting, and eye-catching, and have enough of a clear background to support the publication masthead and a list of feature articles and sections. There was always lots of snow flying, trees and sky, and perhaps a gorgeous lake in the background.

For the cover of our 2nd Annual edition for 1989-1990, we ran a fabulous picture of an upside down acrobatic skier at the Santa Fe Ski Area in New Mexico. The photographer who took the cover photo entered that issue of the *Far West Skier's Guide* into a New Mexico photo competition. The cover won! For our 12th Annual publication for 1999-2000, we studied a picture of a snowboarder, submitted by the Delaney Snowboard Camp. Was the Association ready for a picture of a boarder only - with no skiers on the cover? There was a growing popularity of snowboarding among the younger crowd. Monoskis and other innovative snowsports equipment could be found in the stores. It was such an awesome picture. We thought it was time. The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive.

With e-publishing becoming more popular, we felt that an electronic version was an important extension to our communication outreach. The premiere digital edition of the *Far West Skier's Guide* was



page summary article highlighting the major programs of the FWSA: Public Affairs, Ski Sense & Safety, Community Service, Support of Regional and National Skisport Museums, Athletic Programs, Travel Programs, Publications, Awards Programs, Annual Convention and Membership. Selected programs also had additional coverage in the publication. A Resort and Travel News section featured ski

coverage increased due to the addition of adventure trips such as the annual Dive Trip, and beginning last year, the mini-FWSA Ski Week to Big White / Silver Star and summer adventure to Mammoth Mountain. FWSA affiliated with additional industry organizations, and expanded its public affairs programs, especially in the ski safety and history recognition

the 2010-2011 issue. The digital edition can be accessed from the [www.fwsa.org](http://www.fwsa.org) website, council websites, and most of the FWSA club websites. It is also linked from the National Ski Council Federation website, and more. The direct link for this issue can be found at <http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/farwestskiersguide/2012-13/>. The dates at the end represent the year, thus put in 2010-12/, 2011-12/, or 2012-13/ to view each year's issue. We were thrilled that in addition to the 13 western states served by the *Far West Skier's Guide*, readers viewed the digital edition in over 30 additional states throughout the country, plus numerous Canadian provinces. The publication was also accessed in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. We are definitely expanding our reach globally. The majority of views came from conventional computers, but the publication has also been accessed on smartphones, iPads and tablets. We have a QR Code you can scan to enter directly into our website at [www.fwsa.org](http://www.fwsa.org) and link into the Digital Edition.

In the beginning, the publication was distributed solely by volunteers to ski clubs, ski shows, ski resorts, ski shops. . .wherever they would be picked up by interested readers. We still distribute through the councils to clubs and events, but for numerous years, the publication has also been distributed through Certified Folder for a wider distribution to the ski shops throughout the west.

We have covered a wide variety of programs and events over the past quarter century and had numerous contributing writers helping to inform the western skiing public. We deeply appreciate their time and effort in their contributions to the *Far West Skier's Guide*. We also extend our appreciation to the snowsports industry, for their articles, pictures and advertising support to make the publication possible. We are looking forward to what lies ahead for the next 25 years for the *Far West Skier's Guide*. ▲▲

**The Far West Skier's Guide  
can be sent directly to you.**

*The FWSG is available at no cost to members through your ski club, however, if you wish to have the magazine sent to you directly, please xerox form, fill out and return with a check for US\$3.50 to cover postage and handling. Send to:*



**FAR WEST SKIER'S GUIDE**

3115 South Price Road  
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- 2013-2014

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<http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/farwestskiersguide/2012-13/>