

April 2010



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**Meet the candidates!!!**

The following candidates for the 2010/2011 RHSC Board of Directors were announced at the April 6 general meeting:

**Nominated from the Nominating Committee:** John Olshan/President, Mike Kellick/Vice President, Lou

Trovato/Treasurer, Anne Zaera/Secretary

**Nominated from the Floor:** Kyle

Eberts/Vice President, John

Swingler/Treasurer, Marli Pinochet/Secretary

Election ballots were mailed out last week to all members and will be accepted and tallied at the May 4 general meeting at Norwalk Boat Club.

Please read below for special messages from your new president and candidates for the remaining board positions.

**PRESIDENT**

## **John Olshan - President**

I've been a member of RHSC for six seasons. Anne (my wife) and I joined because the club offered an affordable way to introduce our children to skiing. But we quickly realized that there is much more to it. We found a diverse community united through love of skiing and grounded in 75 years of friendship, support and participation. We feel lucky to be members and I'm honored to give back by serving as club President.



As a club, the lodge is our most obvious asset and we are doing a good job of maintaining and improving the facility. But our community is our greatest asset and it is starting to show signs of wear. As President I will focus the board's efforts on renewing a sense of unity, trust and pride so the club is a welcoming place for current and prospective members.

I'm also committed to maintaining the tradition of fiscal responsibility and improvements to the lodge. This means ensuring that we have funds on hand to withstand a catastrophic hit to the lodge, keeping up with all necessary repairs, updating the lodge in meaningful and responsible ways and ensuring that the books are accurate, open and easy to understand so members are confident that the funds they pay in dues and fees are managed responsibly.

As a board, our guiding principal will be to respect the past and build for the future. All members should be encouraged to use the lodge and participate in events and club leadership. Aging members should be encouraged to maintain ties with the club when their skiing days are over. And we need to understand the needs of younger skiers to attract the next generation of members. Hopefully we will have some fun and make new friends along the way.

**VICE PRESIDENT CANDIDATES**



## **Michael Kellick - Vice President**

For those of us who are fortunate to be members, we have been bequeathed a great gift: River Hills Ski Club. There are two main components to this gift - the wonderful Lodge that we have in Vermont, and the people who fill it. Those who built the Lodge, and wrote our Handbook, had great insight. The handbook has not needed major revision, but only minor changes to keep us respectful of those that share the Club. Sharing is key! We share the assets, the joys and burdens of our common purpose: skiing. And ski we do! Over the mountains of Vermont, and other distant areas. The responsibility that Club members have, is to maintain the sharing of this great gift.

We all have fond memories of time spent at the Lodge, and skiing with friends. Skiing is a wonderful sport. It is as much social as it is actually skiing. Social is getting along with others, fulfilling the ideals set by the Club's founders, and those whose who fostered its greatness, such as Ken Vought.

My past experiences in the Club will be an asset to the position of Vice-President. Since joining the Club in 1986, my Board positions have included: Membership; Vice-President; President (3 terms); Past President; Assistant Treasurer; and, serving on the Operations Committee to maintain the Monthly & Weekend Coordinators books. Over the years, I have written changes to the By-Laws and Standing Rules. I am a Ken Vought Award recipient.

My goal as Vice-President is to keep us on an inclusive track - we need to be respectful and understanding of everyone's rights; and of the integrity of our Lodge and Club. We need to recruit new members who will carry on these ideals and who will participate and donate their time and efforts.

## **Kyle Eberts - Vice President**

Kyle is a life-long member of River Hills Ski Club and served as Vice President in the early 90s and more recently as Assistant Treasurer. Kyle and her daughters Abigail and Christine are passionate and dedicated RHSC members. As Vice President, Kyle is committed to ensuring that all RHSC members are represented by the Board and that everyone's opinion will be heard and considered.



## **TREASURER CANDIDATES**

### **Lou Trovato - Treasurer**

In 1989 my family and I became members of River Hills. My membership has been one of service to our Club. In 1996 I was elected Treasurer and served in that position until 2002. As Treasurer I personally prepared annual budgets and detailed financial statements on a month-to-month basis and ended every fiscal year within budget. In addition, financial statements were presented to the Board and membership at each monthly meeting. I believed then and continue to believe that it is very important for the Club membership to fully understand how much money they have and how their money is being spent.



Treasurer, I prepared and submitted all RHSC corporate tax returns to the IRS on a timely basis, including a detailed schedule of depreciation of the capital improvements. During my 6-year tenure as Treasurer, the financial statements were audited every year by an auditing committee using detailed auditing criteria. The Committee confirmed the accuracy of the financial statements and found the Club's financials were totally compliant to their criteria.

In addition to being Treasurer, I have been weekend coordinator at the lodge numerous times. Assistant Treasurers and Board members frequently praised me for the accuracy, clarity and details of the weekend coordinator reports. I pride myself on providing complete and thorough accountings.

I am now retired with more time to devote to the Club and would like to again serve as Treasurer. My past experience in preparing both budgets and financial statements will help stabilize expenses and thus help prevent increases in Club dues, lodge fees and possibly help avoid assessments. The Club should be self-supporting through member usage of the Lodge. I plan to again present the financial reports, audit results, and income tax filing to the membership and the Board on a timely basis.



### **John Swingler - Treasurer**

My family and I have been members of the club for 13 years. We embrace the core values of the club and have had and still plan to have, many fun times at the lodge with fellow members, young, old, family or single. After two very successful years as treasurer during which I made many improvements and enhancements to our financial records, I have decided to run again. I believe there is more work to be done. The situation regarding our taxes, which I inherited, is unfortunate, but the work I have done to date has been done on explicit advice from the IRS itself. Preparing budgets and managing the clubs finances is no different to my daily corporate responsibilities where I manage a large company that is part of an international corporation.

My decision to run for reelection was made easy with the nomination of fellow dedicated and concerned members who share the same core concerns and objectives that I do. These are: Unification, fiscal responsibility, transparency and membership growth and retention.

I support the generally accepted accounting principles used for most social and nonprofit clubs that the fixed and approved capital costs, be covered by membership dues and that other variable type costs be covered by lodge usage. This is not only equitable to all, but avoids financial uncertainty should usage drop as a result of a poor season of snow or economic trends. Covering the total costs of our club by lodge usage alone is impractical and uncertain. It would

require many more members and this would detract from our core values and mission statement. I support the notion that the calculation method of membership fees and usage rates be included in the clubs bylaws to provide transparency to all.

## SECRETARY CANDIDATES

### Anne Zaera - Secretary

My participation on the board during this past year has highlighted once again the valuable work it takes to maintain and improve our Club as a whole - this includes our two major assets which are our Members and our Lodge.

I firmly believe that our diverse membership is one of our key strengths. I would like to continue contributing my energy and skills to ensuring that our club embraces the needs of all our members - whether they joined 40 years ago or just this past season - whether they're in their 'family building' years or in their 'golden' years - all are welcome and each has a very special place at River Hills Ski Club, Inc. of Stamford.

More specifically to the Secretary's role, I view it as having 2 major components -

The short term goal is to accurately record discussions and decisions taken during board and general meetings, and to disseminate those records to the membership in a timely and effective manner. A well-informed membership contributes to greater participation and ultimately strengthens the Club.

There is also a long-term responsibility, which is to maintain and safeguard all the Club's official records. With our board members often changing on an annual basis, our official documents have not always stayed together during the transitions, and it's become very clear that we need to develop a better system. As Secretary, I will lead the effort to locate the missing documents, safeguard them all into digital formats, and develop a procedure to ensure their safekeeping going forward. My background as project manager for IT development should serve me well in that regard.



## **Marli Pinochet - Secretary**

I became a member of River Hills nearly 20 years ago when I "married into" the Club. Now, with two young children (ages 6 and 21 months), I think I have a good sense of history with the Club as well as an understanding of the needs of our younger members. There is nothing I would like more than to help make the Club a stronger organization for my children to inherit.



I am most interested in working with the rest of the Board to address the concerns and desires of our current members as well as helping identify fiscally sound improvements to lodge - our joint investment - and make River Hills more attractive to new members. In particular, as Secretary for the Club, I look forward to exceeding the expectations of our membership for timely distribution of Board meeting minutes and decisions as well as discussions which take place during General meetings. I see this responsibility as critical to helping all our members feel connected to the Board and, in the reverse, vital to ensuring that concerns and suggestions from members are appropriately addressed.

I am an HR professional and have experience as a former Treasurer and member of the "Land Committee" in my homeowners association. I think the combination of my history with River Hills, personal experiences, professional expertise and background of volunteerism will help me be an effective Secretary for the members of River Hills.

## **OTHER RHSC NEWS**

### **ACTIVITIES & EVENTS**

#### **River Hills Ski Club Spring Fling**

Come celebrate the end of the season at the RHSC Spring Fling on Saturday, May 22nd, 4:00 pm at the home of John and Kelly Swingler! The theme this year will be a Tailgate Cookout with scrumptious food that caters to all tastes.

All are welcome. Bring those prospective members and old ski friends.  
Celebrate the award nominations of your fellow RHSC members.

The cookout menu is BYOB. Soft-drinks, water and ice will be provided.

\$30 per adult and \$15 per child (16 years or younger).  
Money and/or club vouchers will be collected on the day.

Rain or shine. 264 East Hunting Ridge Rd., Stamford.

Please RSVP by the 14th of May to John Swingler at [john.swingler@sappi.com](mailto:john.swingler@sappi.com) or (914) 320-0257.

For more information, including a menu and directions, please see flyer posted on the RHSC website at <http://www.riverhillsskiclub.org/whats-new/river-hills-ski-club-spring-fling/>. Invites will also be distributed at the May 4 General Meeting.

## MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

### **General Meeting: Tuesday, May 4, 8pm, Norwalk Boat Club**

Election ballots accepted and tallied at this meeting. Election results announced at meeting. Bring any ballots you have not mailed earlier to elections committee. Last meeting with current board, final goodbyes and thank yous.

Contact Susan Byelick ([sbyelick@yahoo.com](mailto:sbyelick@yahoo.com)) with any questions or ideas on club meetings and programs.

## BULK TICKET RETURNS

Please note, the Connecticut Ski Counsel has not issued the CSC bulk ticket return paperwork yet. Stay tuned, they indicate we should have the paperwork by the end of the second week in April.

Bob Hener

## MEMBER NEWS

It is with great sorrow that we pass along an obit below for Charlie Taff, a life member of RHSC, who passed away last month.



CHARLES HENRY TAFF- Charles "Pop" Taff died peacefully at his son's home Saturday evening, Mar. 27, 2010, in Hinesburg, VT. Charlie was born Dec. 30, 1910, in Stamford, CT, the son of the late Henry and Elizabeth Taff. He studied and became a journeyman plumber. Weekends, in the winter, were devoted to skiing. In the 1930's he joined with friends to start the Riverhills Ski Club where he eventually became a life member. In 1941 he married and became the loving husband of the late Evelyn C. DeMille and five years later a son was born. In 1949, they purchased a lot on 7 Hunting Lane in Stamford, which would become their home for 55 years. He was an avid square dancer, gardener, jewelry and stained glass maker. In 2006 he moved to Vermont to live with his son Doug. In addition to Doug, he is survived by two grandchildren and three great grandchildren; Matthew Taff, his wife Marcie, and their daughter Lily and son Finnegan of Waterville, VT and Jennifer Obarski, her husband Tim, and their son Teagan of Fairfax, VT.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations may be sent to Hospice of Champlain Valley, 1110 Prim Rd, Colchester, VT 05446.

## TRIPS



### Chile: August 2010

This trip is a great opportunity for families to bring their young ones for a taste of South American culture. The cost is substantially reduced for those who take the duplex suite and fly direct to Chile out of Kennedy (JFK) - \$ 2314 vs \$2569. See flyer on the RHSC website for more details ([click](#)

[here](#)). Please call Gabe Cordova if you have any questions at 203-710-2530 (Cell).

## LODGE COORDINATORS

### April

Joe Grabiec-[jpdgrabiec@att.net](mailto:jpdgrabiec@att.net) or (203) 374-1158

Please no calls after 9pm!



If you have any news or article ideas for the Skizette, please contact me at [aolshan@optonline.net](mailto:aolshan@optonline.net)

**Happy trails!**  
**Anne Olshan**

**River Hills Ski Club**