

# SKY TAVERN



**2020-2021  
Annual Report**

## Two new beginner lifts installed

The original Rocco lift was built in 1967 by the Fleischmann Foundation. The Pony lift was installed in 2004 as a used handle tow donated by NorthStar Ski Area. Each had an uphill capacity of under 300 per hour but because a skier was drug up the hill the real-world capacity was much less. More kids fell than made to the top.

Both lifts were replaced by a pair of new Team Service carpet lifts, new Rocco at 400 ft in length and Webster at 300. Because there is no skill needed to stand on a moving carpet, like a moving sidewalk in an airport, everyone rides to the top without falling off. Uphill capacity is huge meaning no waiting in line and more time on the slope letting kids progress faster. These are brand new lifts with the latest technology in safety and ease of maintenance. They are also portable so can be adjusted as times change. They will be assets for generations.

If you were part of the community that donated for this improvement,

THANK YOU!

Rocco: \$185,000

Webster: \$117,000

Both lifts are 100% paid off as of May 2021.



***These two lifts changed the way beginners learn and how fast they learn. This was something we needed to make happen for a while as a training facility. When fundraising began the response was overwhelming with support. Being manufactured in Italy, delivery was late in the fall. Both lifts were assembled by the manufacture with volunteer assistance, Rocco first. Webster was finished in an old-fashioned barn-raising way just as snow fell by over fifty Moms, Dads, Grandparents, and even kids. This is what sets Sky Tavern apart.***

***Rocco was the name of the original lift from 1967 named for Rocco Spina, the Reno Parks, and Rec director at the time. We could not consider changing the name. The current chair of the board is his grandson.***

# Sky Tavern wins the National Ski Areas Association Conversion Cup for 2021, the most prestigious award for any ski area.



What is conversion? Conversion is simply the process of turning beginner skiers and riders into repeat customers, and ultimately lifelong enthusiasts of the sport. With this, NSAA has developed the Conversion Cup Challenge, a competition among member ski areas that closely aligns with the industry's overall goals to grow the sport.

NSAA's Conversion Cup Challenge is designed as a way to pique competition among member ski areas and recognize those who make significant efforts to boost skier and snowboarder conversion rates. As part of the competition, applicants must provide a detailed overview of their program designed specifically to increase skier and rider conversion rates.

## Congratulations to the 2021 Conversion Cup Finalists

- Big SNOW American Dream, NH
  - For its dedication to improving accessibility and capitalizing on its unique location, Big SNOW American Dream was selected as a finalist for the Conversion Cup.
- Crystal Mountain, MI
  - For its focus on the community and commitment to every newcomer's current and future experience, Crystal Mountain was tapped as an NSAA Conversion Cup finalist.
- **Winner: Sky Tavern, NV**
  - For its devotion to teaching local youth the sport of skiing & riding, and resort mission to support those who would like to experience snowsports, this volunteer-run nonprofit ski hill was selected as the deserving winner of the 2020/21 Conversion Cup.

Some parameters judges look for when making their selections:

- Increase in Level 1 lesson volumes
- Level 1 lesson volumes in relation to total skier and snowboarder visits
- The quantifiable success of multi-lesson packages
- Season-to-date sales data on specific learn-to packages designed to drive repeat visitation
- Overall data collection capabilities and sophistication
- Marketing ingenuity, creativity, use of new media, etc.

**Sky Tavern is the only nonprofit, volunteer-staffed ski area to win the Cup. Previous finalists and winners include some of the largest and most famous resorts in the US and Canada. This is a huge honor that speaks to the quality of instruction and the passion of Sky Tavern volunteers. This belongs to all that have been part of the process of teaching snowsports for over 70 years at Sky Tavern. There is no bigger award!**



## **A message from the Chairman:**

**It is my honor to serve as the new Board Chair of the Board of Directors and I hope to help build a sustainable future for Sky Tavern.**

**This is a summary report of the 2020-2021 season and is intended to provide some highlights of what was accomplished, initiated, or in motion. Since obtaining the long-term lease, we have been building a team of experts to steer the future as it relates to the obligations of the new lease, which requires increased utilization of the property in the winter as well as the summer and to incorporate snowmaking and lights with the intent to increase programs and get the mountain open more often. We have started a plan that protects the Junior Ski Program and expands other programs that will support a larger full-time staff and offer other opportunities on a year-round basis. The list below represents some of the things that have been initiated towards our long-term plan to grow sustainably:**

- **Despite the pandemic, Sky Tavern had a very successful year with over 2800 members enrolled and very few injuries! Way to go Staff and Volunteers. No one does this better than you do!**
- **National Ski Areas Association announced Sky Tavern as the winner of the NSAA Conversion Cup!!! This is the most prestigious award in the Snowsports industry. This award recognizes the areas that have made significant efforts to boost skier and snowboarder conversion and retention rates!!!**
- **Thanks to Ranson Webster, Moffat Foundation, and others, we installed two new Team Service carpet lifts to replace the handle tow and the old Rocco Poma lift. These two lifts solve a myriad of issues as it relates to the small children, new snowboarders, and adaptive kids getting up the hill. The uphill success rate has tripled, giving each student more runs per day and everyone makes it to the top!!**
- **We merged with the Marce Herz Foundation creating a Parent/Subsidiary relationship, with Sky being the parent and Herz being the subsidiary and fund-raising arm for Sky. This is a natural partnership that has us working together towards a common goal to get more kids on the mountain and building a sustainable model for additional programs and offerings.**
- **We have started creating strategic alliances and partnerships with third parties to share the burden of growth, ensuring the highest and best use of all our resources.**
- **A new campaign called “Sky Code” has been established to highlight and explain what kids learn at Sky Tavern outside of snowsports.**
- **An amendment to our lease to allow third-party partners and other subletting opportunities has been drafted and goes before the City Council next month.**
- **We hosted the first Charter School program, with Doral Academy, this season on Wednesdays that included over 400 kids! This program was a pilot for future programs to come.**

- We have re-established a relationship with UNR, which has resulted in Sky Tavern being approved as an authorized workplace for interns, which we are proud to announce that our first intern started last week to assist in outreach. Other programs may include UNR student learn to ski programs, UNR Race team activities, and higher education courses.
- As it relates to Summer, we accomplished:
  - Building and providing events on the very first purpose-built adaptive mountain bike flow trail.
  - We overhauled some of the existing trails to allow more features and eliminated most of the bi-directional flow, making the mountain safer and more accessible.
  - Completed a new uphill route that eliminated many of the steep grades and allows for adaptive cyclists to ride up to the top of the mountain.
  - We partnered with Skiing is Believing, a local coaching group to provide our first bike, fitness, and yoga programs for the summer. This was a pilot program to learn and build the features needed for the future.
- A new Permitting and planning Committee has been established, chaired by Ann Carpenter and a group of professionals to study and obtain the permits and create the plan for snowmaking. Much work has been done and there is more to do. This has become one of our highest priorities going forward.
- A new Fundraising committee has been formed that is chaired by Tony Santo, which includes Alicia Herz and Auburn Harrison, with support from people such as Ferenc Szony, Franz Weber, Tamara McKinney, Wendy Damonte, and others. These efforts are starting to show signs of success, announcements will be forthcoming near year-end.
- KPS3 a local and very successful Marketing company has been engaged to study how to grow the future while protecting the existing programs to introduce more of the community to Sky Tavern. More on this in the coming months
- Thanks to Tamara McKinney, we have a Letter of Intent to hold a televised World Pro Tour race event at Sky Tavern that will be a fund-raising event and put us on the world stage! Details are being worked out and sponsors are being sought.
- Far-west Moguls intends to hold two mogul events at Sky. Dates are being determined now and logistics are being sorted.

As plans take shape and we see how Sky Tavern can grow and evolve, please feel free to email our office with ideas and guidance. While Sky Tavern has been operating for over 73 years, I believe the best is yet to come, while protecting what we know and love as the Junior Ski Program.

Enthusiastically,  
Yale Spina  
Board Chair

[yale.spina@skytavern.com](mailto:yale.spina@skytavern.com)

# The 2021 Junior Ski Program. The keystone of Sky Tavern.

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1900 kids and 900 adults had a great winter outside

Eleven weekends of Jr Ski lessons

Five weekends of preseason adult orientation and training

2106 group lessons given to children

Five weekdays of lessons in a pilot program with Doral Academy

Snow recreation including free sledding and backcountry access from December 15th until April 18th.

Greater than 30,000 skier visits and 40,000 volunteer hours

44% of our kids are girls, 56% boys.

58% are new to snowsports.

65.8% are City of Reno residents

Sky Tavern is arguably the most diverse snowsports program in the area and is committed to bringing even a more diverse group to the mountains. New programs started this past season will move the needle towards even greater inclusion.

African American	2.38%
Hispanic	8.31%
Asian	4.63%
Native American	0.88%
Pacific Islander	1.44%
Other	8.19%
Caucasian	75.25%

\$55,000 in individual scholarships from 30% to 100%.

125 full RHA Scholarships (75 included equipment from Sky Tavern the balance from Bobos Ski and Board)

17 full scholarships of Boys and Girls Club kids

26 full scholarships for a new program from Sparks High School to promote diversity in winter sports sponsored by SHARE WINTER FOUNDATION. This was part of a strong national effort to bring those to the mountains that are historically left in town.

\$72,000 in reduced-cost equipment rentals to help enter the sport.

\$15,000 in reduced cost bus transportation



## **Much more than just kid's lessons on snow.**

Keeping the family together in sport is a very important part of our goals. With Reno residents being from all parts of the world, many never had a chance to learn to ski as children. Adult lessons happen twice a day. Skiing is a sport you can do for a lifetime and sharing time with family is becoming increasingly difficult. Being part of a solution makes us who we are.

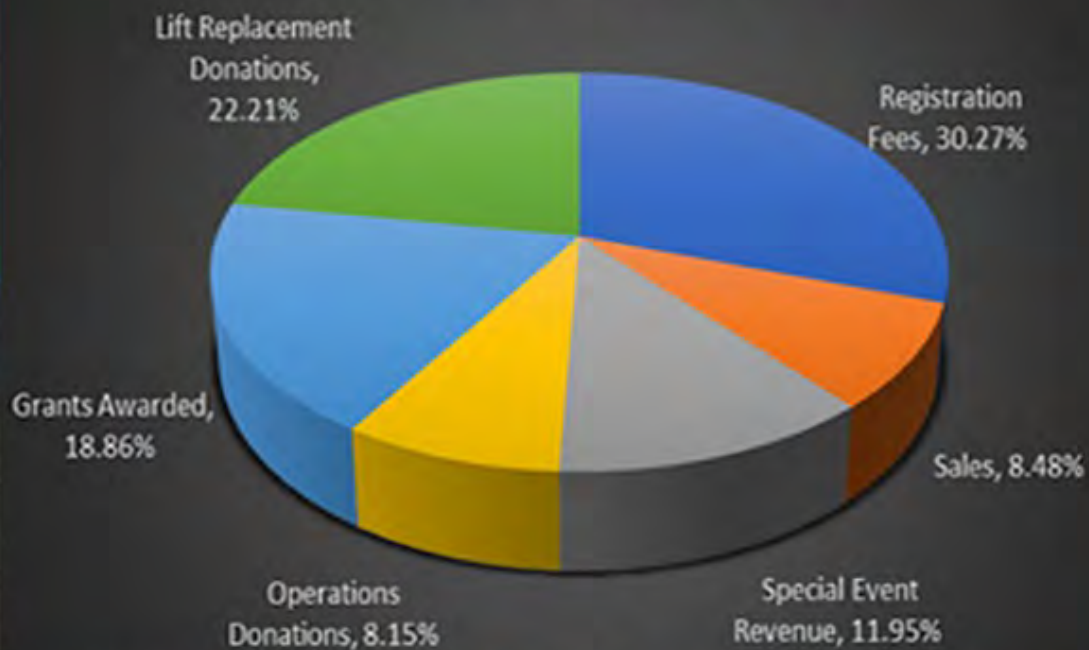
In 2021 fourteen new National Ski Patrol candidates began their training to being certified outdoor medical professionals. This is a minimum of a two-year process for the most committed. The National Ski Patrol is a vital part of the skiing world, and the average age of a Patroller is increasing. It is also a difficult group to break into as the industry has put up too many roadblocks. We encourage the training, and many are teenagers looking into the medical world as a career for the first time. We have two patrollers in med school now that Sky Tavern influenced.

Sixteen instructors completed level 1 or level 2 Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) or American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI) certifications. Many more added Adaptive, Freestyle, Race Coaching, or Child Specialty badges to their jackets.

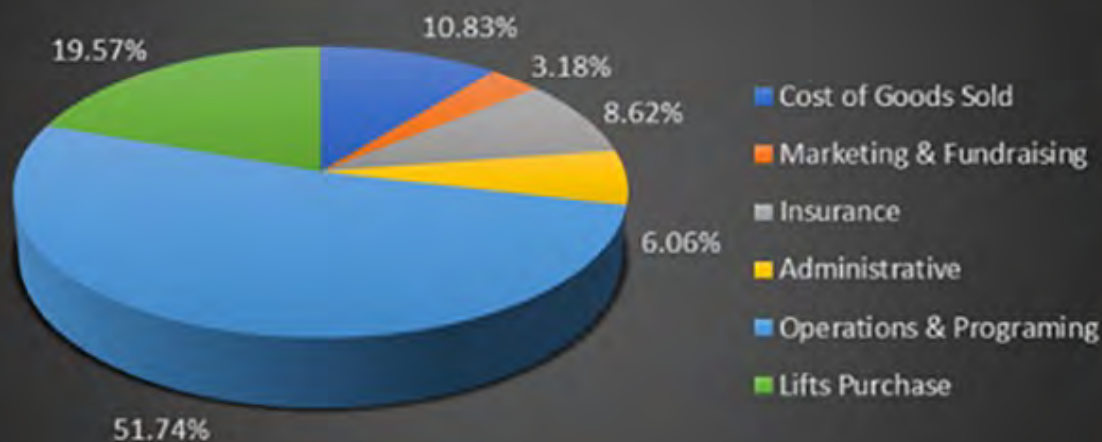
Jr instructors. These teenagers go through the same and often more training as the adults to teach snowsports. For some, this is the largest responsibility they have ever been dealt and they flourish. Kids instructing kids works. Our program and methods were copied by the national instructing association for this winter. We have built future teachers here.



## Income of \$1,124,000



## Expenses of \$1,072,000



Sky Tavern Fiscal Year  
9/1 to 10/31





**Mission: To be a nonprofit regional center providing exceptional summer & winter sports training, competitions recreation & events accessible to all.**

**Vision: To be a community asset that promotes a child's growth & success through exposure to outdoor sports and recreation, no matter the personal challenges.**

# SKY



## BE BOLD

"Never be afraid of dying, be afraid of not living."

- MARCE HERZ

SKY TAVERN



## COURAGE

"Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision."

- WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

SKY TAVERN

YALE SPINA  
BOARD CHAIRMAN  
FOUNDER SKY TV



## COMMITMENT

"Commitment is an act, not a word"

- JEAN PAUL SARTRE

SKY TAVERN



## FOCUS

"Stay focused. Your start does not determine how you're going to finish."

- HERM EDWARDS

SKY TAVERN



## VOLUNTEER

"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."

- LINCOLN

SKY TAVERN



## RESPECT

"I am considerate of others and treat others as I wish to be treated."

- BEN COSE VALLE

SKY TAVERN

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**CONFIDENCE**  
"Be you with so much bravery."  
-TITA

SKY TAVERN

**#KIDSOUTSIDE**


"All children should have the opportunity to ski."  
-MARCE HERZ



**DETERMINATION**  
I am determined to give my best effort each day and learn from my challenges.




**I AM OPTIMISTIC**  
"I show up each day with a positive attitude and a flexible mindset."  
-YALE BING



**MOTIVATION**  
"Joy is a state of mind. It's not a product of your circumstances."  
-DAVID NISE 2 X OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST

SKY TAVERN

**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
I am responsible for every choice I make. I show respect to others and my equipment.



SKY TAVERN

# Donors

## Because of you, this happens!

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Share Winter Foundation  
Lana Vento Charitable Trust  
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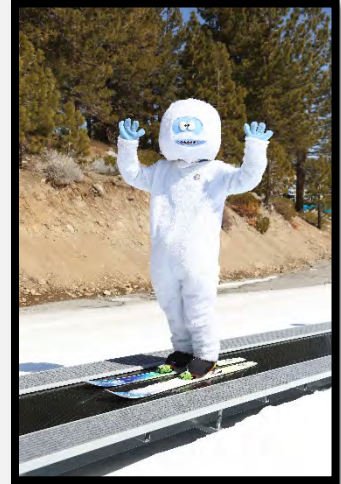
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Team Service Lifts  
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Bill Henderson  
Brent Klitzke**





After over 50 years of hauling kids up, the last remaining 1967 lift was removed. Because of donations pouring in and some help from the manufacture, Sky Tavern was able to replace both surface lifts with carpets. But the real story is that this was done by the community. From fundraising to assembly, it was the believers of Sky Tavern that made this, a 21<sup>st</sup> century Sky Tavern barn-raising. The final push was bolting Webster together on New Years Day by over 50 volunteers, in the snow. Kids worked with parents hauling and assembling parts that will change Sky Tavern for years.

Sky Tavern is community. It is not just a place for kid's to grow but a place and mindset where the Truckee Meadows comes together to make good happen. We are now the caretakers of this for the next 50 years. Lets make this special.





*I am one of the original six who rode up to Sky Tavern with Marcie Herz. At 80 years old, I consider myself very fortunate to have started skiing there. I applaud those of you who had the vision and who continued this program for the kids. They will, like me, have a lifetime of enjoyment from skiing.*

**Hank Philcox**

*This is our first year with Sky Tavern. I don't ski or snowboard, so I was completely out of my element, but you know suck it up for our kids. The Sky Tavern Team has been wonderful to work with and has been great about helping us figure things out. My son loves the program and has learned a ton from the instructors. Thank you for all you bring to our community.*

**Melissa Deitz**



*Sky Tavern is the best!! I wish more people donated their time and money to such a great cause! Kids learning to ski is such a great life skill.*

**Aimee Giller**

*Holy Cow!!! We are now a third-generation family at Sky Tavern. My mother learned to ski at Sky Tavern, my wife and I learned at Sky Tavern, now our children are SkyKids! This place is second to none when it comes to learning on the slopes. The smaller family environment provides for a pressure-free and SAFE place to get better. The improvements my kids make from year to year blows me away. Can't wait for many more seasons!*

**Porter Novich**



***Friendly and positive environment. Bill's staff is super helpful. Ski passes are easy on the wallet and it is a great place for the entire family to learn how to ski or snowboard, it is where I learned to ski as a kid and I had a blast. Now watching my four kids learn how to ski/snowboard is awesome!***

***Mike Cortez***

***The Sky Tavern Program has been and continues to be a wonderful family program for our community. Sending special thanks to all the volunteers who share their time & talent.***

***Nevada Key***

***Thank you SO MUCH TO THE ADAPTIVE PROGRAM!!! You have made a world of difference for one of my little ones!!! I love the Adaptive community at Sky Tavern!!***

***Janice Pruzensky***



***Wonderful program, thank you very much for partnering up with Doral Academy we had a great time.***

***Sebastien Morz***

***Great job Sky Tavern serving ALL of our community!***

***Eaton Dunkelberger***

***A fantastic program for everyone in the area wanting to learn to ski and or snowboard. Sky Tavern is very family...the real deal! A great place to meet new friends while the kiddos learn a sport they will love for a lifetime. Get up here!***

***Robert Burrows***

## Summer Programs & Moving Ahead

Summer use and programs are increasing. Some were stifled by smoke in late summer but our partnership with Mike Selby and Project Discovery could not be stronger. Project Discovery is incredibly busy, and all camps are full. Sky Tavern is assisting with logistics, transportation, and staffing. Mike runs an incredibly unique summer camp that mirrors the life lessons we provide at Sky Tavern during the winter. This is more than summer camp. This is a life camp that simply works for Reno. We are very proud to be a part of it.

Another set of activities are being produced through a second partnership with Skiing is Believing. These are more athletic focusing on strength, flexibility, and athletic skills. This is the first attempt, and they are still gaining traction and popularity. They will continue camps through October.

Rentals of the lodge for gatherings have returned after all being canceled or postponed in 2020. The wedding schedule is full since many were to take place a year ago. The National Guard is holding training here often along with other community groups. Pricing is in line with other properties, but we try to give a bit more to the groups as a community asset.

Mountain biking is the focus. There is much that has changed and been improved in a year. The Reno/Tahoe area's only adaptive scaled trails have been constructed from the top to the bottom of the mountain. Not only for adaptive but all, these amazing trails feature great terrain, views and are built to be here for many years. All are being built by Reno's most experienced trail builder, Steve Wentz, whose name on the construction carries huge weight in the biking community. Fundraising continues. High Fives Foundation is a major supported and user of the trails.





Snowmaking at Sky Tavern has been planned since the City of Reno purchased the area in 1967. We are gaining, in both fundraising and with real-world designs. This is a huge project that has been earnestly ongoing for seven years. The first hurdle was the long-term lease as Sky Tavern had to control the property long enough to make donations feasible and generational. That took five years and was signed in December of 2019. Then came the planning, designing, estimating, and permitting.

Since the 60's the plan has been to restore the lake between the parking lot and the highway to store water. It was a simple storage solution and everything about snowmaking revolves around storage. We hit a wall after two years of efforts with the Federal Government. The message back is that the meadow formed by years of runoff has more value than an open body of water. No permit was granted. The new plan is a water tank(s) in the backtrail area filled by pipes and pumps from collection sites in the base area. This is a slightly more complicated but reduces the permitting issues by a huge amount. It was a setback, but Robison Engineering is working on this today. The price tag is still over \$2,500,000 which is why Sky Tavern has joined with the Marce Herz Foundation to raise this money. Foundations are the focus currently and the idea has been well received.

A much simpler project is the work going on in the terrain park. We are racing the clock towards winter to get a handle tow installed. Like most things in the ski world, this seemed easy and has become difficult but still moving ahead with adding the power needed which will also run the Snack Shack.

Bike paths have been constructed and a few more are planned. These next trails will tie the adaptive trails together and eliminate uphill/downhill issues. Events are coming for both summer and winter as allowed and new programs starting with freestyle skiing are here.

As told in the chairman's message, there is a lot is going on and many balls in the air. Get involved! And with a bit of luck, and continued serious effort, construction of snowmaking will start in 2022.



**Sky Tavern is a community effort that fills a need of getting all kids and families outdoors. Get involved or donate today.**



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