

Photo by Noah Wetzel

Spring, 2015

Town of Alta Newsletter



The Talk of the Town

Alta Ski Area closed for the season on April 26. Despite recording only 324," the lowest total snowfall from November 1st through April 30th since current measurement standards have been in place, we enjoyed classic Alta storm cycles, and several businesses in the Town of Alta report successful seasons. Thanks to all of our residents, local skiers, employees, and businesses for another great winter.

The **2015 Alta Gala** took place at La Caille in Sandy, Utah on April 3rd. Over 300 attendees enjoyed fine cuisine and live music, and supported Alta's non-profit organizations—Friends of Alta, Alta Community Enrichment, and Alta Historical Society—with participation in a silent auction at the 9th annual installment of the Gala. This year's Stellar Award winner is

Elfriede Shane, Alta community member since 1948 and founder of the Goldminer's Daughter Lodge. The Town appreciates the work of these organizations in caring for our environment, providing events and opportunities for our community, and preserving the rich history of Alta.

Friends of Alta is hiring a **Bill Levitt Fellow** for the summer of 2015. The Bill Levitt Fellowship is a great opportunity to work outside in Alta and learn about conservation. Applications for this part-time, paid internship are due May 22nd; for more information, please visit friendsofalta.org/bill-levitt-fellowship/

The Alta Town Council passed a tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 at their May 2015 meeting. The tentative budget is available for review in the "breaking news" section of townofalta.com, and it will be finalized after a public hearing at the June 5th meeting.

The Town of Alta will be holding **municipal general elections in 2015**. There will be two 4-year term Town Council seats on the ballot, and the filing period is June 1-8. The Town has contracted with the Salt Lake County Election Division to manage this year's elections. The Town will still be responsible for receiving and processing Declaration of Candidacy forms or nomination petitions, campaign finance reporting and the certification of election results through the election canvass procedure.

This year's election will be held through the "vote by mail" process only – **there will be no polling location in Alta**. To ensure that you receive your ballot in the mail, or to register to vote, please visit slco.org/clerk/elections/ or call the Salt Lake County Election Division at 385-468-7400.

If a primary election is necessary, it will be held on Tuesday, August 11, 2015. The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2015. Please contact Town of Alta Clerk Kate Black with any questions about the upcoming elections.

The Talk of the Town, continued from pg. 1

The Utah State **Legislature** passed a comprehensive **transportation funding** bill at the 11th hour of the 2015 legislative session. The passage of HB 362 was the result of coordinated advocacy by officials from a statewide coalition of organizations and public officials, and it created two new mechanisms for funding transportation projects: a re-formulation of the state-wide motor fuel tax, which will now be calculated as a percentage of the statewide rack price per gallon; and a local-option, quarter-cent sales tax imposed by counties but subject to voter approval. These funds can be used for a wide range of transportation projects, including public transit and “active” transportation infrastructure such as trails and bike lanes. According to projections prepared by the Utah League of Cities and Towns, the Town of Alta could potentially receive over \$28,000 annually in new revenue for transportation projects.

Also from the 2015 legislative session, HB 351 authorizes Salt Lake County to create a “**mountainous planning district**” in unincorporated areas of the county used primarily for recreation and open space, and provides for the creation of a planning commission which will guide land-use and development policy in such areas. The bill exempts municipalities incorporated in or before 1970 entirely within such a district from the authority of the district’s planning commission, effectively

preserving the Town of Alta’s land-use authority within its current boundaries. However, if unincorporated areas within a mountainous planning district annex into adjacent municipalities, the planning and zoning authority for property within those areas will rest with the planning commission of the new district, rather than with the annexing municipality. Currently, the legislation will expire in June of 2016, and the Town will monitor its evolution.

In April 2015 the Town of Alta hosted a series of public meetings dedicated to understanding aspects of **Mountain Accord’s proposed Blueprint**, and on gathering input on the **values** that define the Alta community. Material related to these meetings can be found in the “breaking news” section of townofalta.com. The Mountain Accord events featured presentations on transportation proposals, and on the land exchange proposed between Alta Ski Lifts company and the US Forest Service.

The “**visioning**” meetings featured small group, facilitated round table discussions on a series of five questions: *What aspect of Alta makes you want to stay forever? What makes Alta different from other ski towns? What do you wish there was more of? What do you wish there could be less of? What is the most important part of the 2005 General Plan Vision Statement?* The comments collected in these discussions will be foundational to planning for the Town of Alta’s future.

The “**Town Center Concept Sketches and Massing Studies**” document produced by Logan Simpson Design was presented at the March 2nd, 2015 Alta Planning Commission meeting. This study is based on the 2005 Town of Alta General Plan, and it is intended to illustrate alternative concepts for the location

and layout of future development in the Town of Alta “commercial core.” Please view a low-resolution version of the document in “breaking news” at townofalta.com, and contact Town of Alta staff to learn about planning for the future of the Town of Alta.

Dave Abraham

was appointed to a seat on the Alta Planning Commission following the resignation of Jan Striefel, who served on the planning commission for 25 years. Dave lived and worked in Alta between 1995 and 2012 and he’s been a licensed professional architect in Salt Lake City since 2006. Dave’s appointment satisfies the informal requirement that the commission include a design professional, alongside experts in business, planning, and the environment.



The Town of Alta and Friends of Alta will host a public workshop focused on the National Environmental Policy Act, also known as **NEPA**, at 4 PM on June 1st at Our Lady of the Snows. The session will feature presentations by a lead technical consultant to Mountain Accord, and by environmental administrators with federal agencies that may take action pursuant to Mountain Accord proposals. NEPA is a complex framework of requirements for research, analysis, and disclosure of environmental impacts associated with possible federal actions, and the Alta community will benefit from learning more about how environmental impacts are analyzed under NEPA—and how our community members can be involved. **Please note that this presentation will take the place of the regular June meeting of the Alta Planning Commission.**



Thomas Basel Plofchan March 27, 1930 - March 20, 2015

Tom was born in Michigan on March 27, 1930, and he learned to ski at Boyne Mountain, where he took ski lessons from Stein Eriksen and worked briefly as a ski patroller. Tom served in the Navy from 1949 through 1953 as a Chief Petty Officer, where he honed photography skills inherited from his father.



Photo courtesy of Alta Powder News, issue no. 136

Tom first visited Alta in the mid 1950's, when he worked for Chic Morton operating the Wildcat Lift. Soon after, Tom took a position on Junior Bounous' ski school

at Sugar Bowl in California, but he returned to Little Cottonwood Canyon in the early 1960's. Tom wore many hats during the decades he spent in the Wasatch Mountains, as a ski instructor with the Alf Engen Ski School, assistant manager at Alta Lodge, street sweeper, Town Council member and even a Town of Alta deputy marshal, using his own 1971 suburban, a bright green street-side landmark that still sat outside the Photohaus until Tom's passing. Of course, the Photohaus is perhaps Tom's greatest Alta legacy, and Tom operated the retail business from 1968 until this winter.

At the Photohaus, Tom sold souvenirs and his iconic photography of Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon. Tom was an original Alta photographer, with images to his credit such as a photograph of Alf Engen jumping an old Chevrolet Corvair over a gap plowed through avalanche debris on highway 210. Many of Tom's pictures are now in the historical collection at the Marriott Library at the University of Utah. Tom's combination of skiing and photography skills allowed him opportunities to mingle with renowned celebrities, and he was particularly proud of having skied with Lowell Thomas and members of the Kennedy family.

In the recent past, Tom was asked about his time in Alta, and he replied:

"I would like to be remembered as a successful entrepreneur who completely loves Alta, and thanks God for being here."

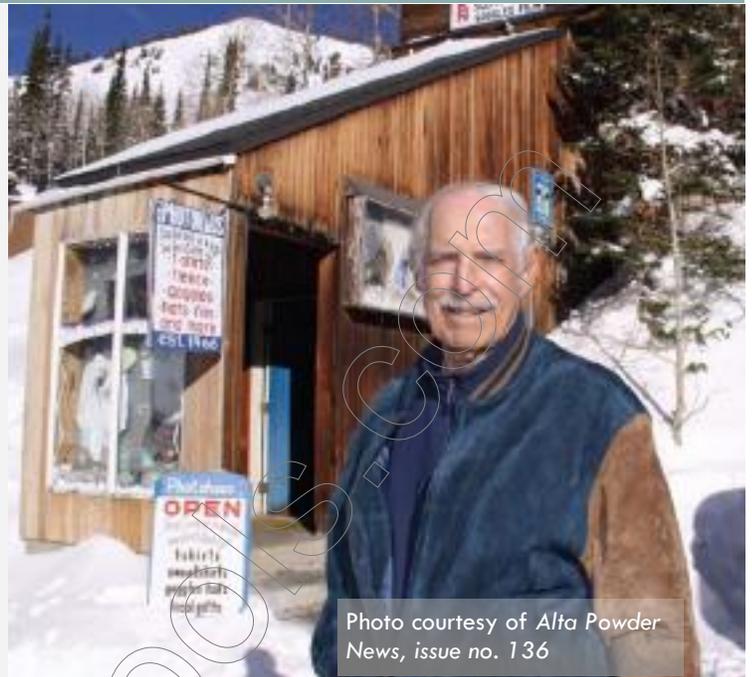
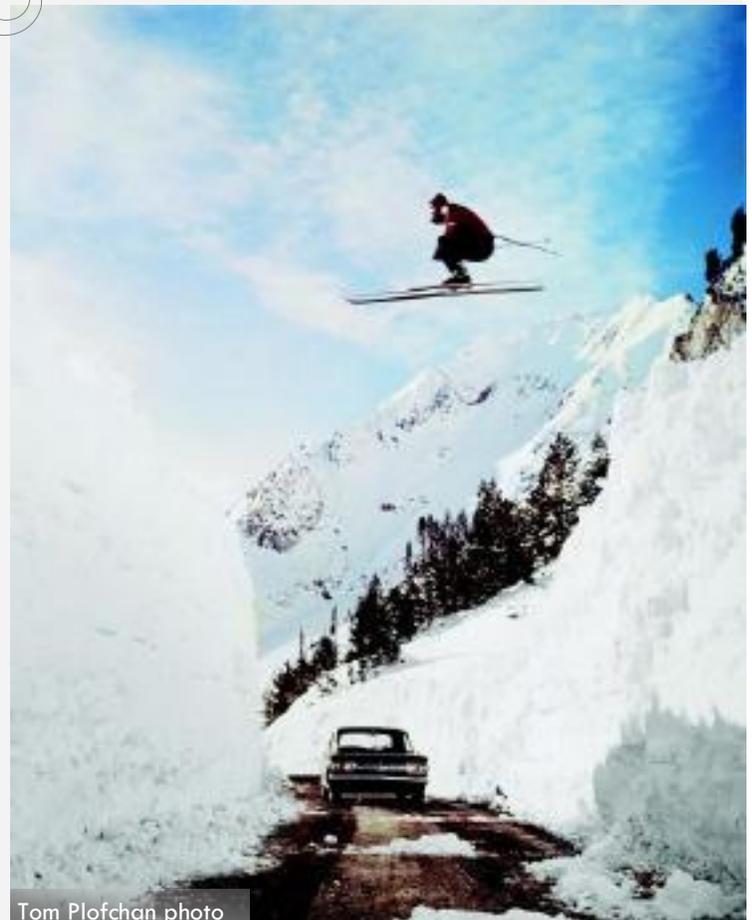


Photo courtesy of Alta Powder News, issue no. 136



Tom Plofchan photo

2015 Alta Summer Stewardship

June
25th Weed Pull - 6pm (CCF)

July
7th - 11th Trail Work - 8am (CCF)
11th Alta Ski Area Clean Up - 8am (CCF)
14th - 18th Trail Work - 8am (CCF)
16th Weed Pull - 6pm (CCF)
18th Alta Restoration Day - 8am (CCF)
25th Wildflower Festival - 8am (CCF)
Solitude-Brighton 24th & Snowbird 26th

August
(TU) TreeUtah Hike - 9am 8th
(CCF) Weed Pull - 6pm 20th
(FOA) Tracy Aviary Bird Walk - 8:30am 23rd
(USEE) SKE-COLOGY Workshop - 9am 29th

September
(TU) Alta Ski Area Tree Planting - 8am 5th
(FOA) Friends of Alta Tree Planting - 9:30am 11th
(FOA) Hawkwatch - 1pm 12th
(CCF) Weed Pull - 3pm 17th
& Stewardship Social 5pm

Registration & Information

(TU) TreeUtah
volunteer@treeutah.org
801.364.2122

(CCF) Cottonwood Canyons Foundation
volunteer@cottonwoodcanyons.org
801.466.6411

(FOA) Friends of Alta
info@friendsofalta.org - 801.742.9719

(USEE) Utah Society for Environmental Education
carolyn@usee.org - 801.328.1549

Please join our partners in stewardship of Alta's natural resources for a full schedule of volunteer opportunities during the summer of 2015. For information, please register with the organization listed in association with each event.

Message from the Mayor



I want to thank everyone who's taken the time to get involved with what's going on in the Town of Alta over the past several months. Whether you've submitted formal comments to Mountain Accord, written myself and the Town Council to state your views, attended a Town Council or Planning Commission meeting, partaken in one of our special meetings in April on the subject of the Town of Alta's vision and values, or simply engaged your fellow community members on the issues before us, I appreciate the level of commitment in the Alta community right now.

I have been writing about Mountain Accord in this newsletter column for more than two years, as it has grown from a transportation planning project of a different name into a broader effort to create a multi-faceted vision for the central Wasatch Mountains. I am proud the Town of Alta has been at the table for this monumental effort, and I'm confident that we're working toward a "blueprint" for the region that balances environment, economy, recreation, and transportation.

There is significant concern in our community about the effects that elements of the Mountain Accord Blueprint could have on the environment in Little Cottonwood Canyon, the aesthetics of the Town of Alta, the layout of our local infrastructure, and the character of our community. I share many of those concerns,

and over the following months I look forward to working with the Mountain Accord Executive Board to make sure our concerns are recognized.

Regardless of Mountain Accord, our priority in the Town of Alta must be to get serious about planning for our future. To that end, I am proud to announce that the Town of Alta won a \$60,000 award from the Wasatch Front Regional Council's Local Planning Resource Program. We'll

use this grant to build on recent studies and public input processes, the sum of which indicates strong consensus about what we want in Alta: things like better public facilities, reliable public transportation, and a stronger economy that benefits our local businesses and engages a wider range of Alta's visitors year-round, all in the context of a built environment that continues to respect our natural resources like open space, watershed health, and scenic integrity. We'll figure out what it will take to achieve our goals, and possibly create a master plan for placement of possible new facilities, increased pedestrian connectivity, and open space in our "commercial core."

So, thanks again for all that you've given Alta recently; I hope you will remain involved in the coming months, as we work to shape our community, our landscape, and our future.

—Mayor Tom Pollard



Interlodge in Alta is for Everyone



“**INTERLODGE**” is described in Town of Alta Ordinance 5-4-1, which allows the Town Marshal to prohibit outdoor travel during periods of high avalanche hazard or at times when Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) explosives work is scheduled, or in progress, to mitigate avalanche hazard affecting the town and highway 210.

In short, when Interlodge is in effect, it is a **Class B Misdemeanor** for any person to be outdoors within town limits without proper clearance from the Marshal's Office. Violators are subject to arrest, with a maximum penalty of a \$1000 fine and six months in jail. More importantly, death or serious injury can result from being in the wrong place during avalanche control.

The dramatic **increase in early morning backcountry user (“Dawn Patrol”) traffic** has had a profound impact on Avalanche Mitigation Procedures and has in a few unfortunate instances resulted in enforcement and delays in opening the canyon to the public.

Interlodge can be a confusing and frustrating event. All efforts are made to announce and minimize the duration of closures, which can vary from hours to days in extreme conditions. Interlodge may be enacted on very short notice if avalanche activity that could affect the Town or the roadway occurs prior to a noticed Interlodge restriction.

—When Interlodge is in effect, **ALL OUTDOOR TRAVEL IS PROHIBITED**. This applies to all areas in and around Alta, including residential areas, commercial properties, public ski area facilities, and all open space used for recreation.

—Alta Central Dispatch makes a variety of Interlodge notifications. Businesses and residents are notified by phone, email, and text message. Please follow us on Twitter [@AltaCentral](#), or check the Town of Alta website [townofalta.com](#) and clicking the road conditions/Interlodge status link in the upper right hand corner, or by calling our recorded information line [801-742-3403](#). UDOT and the Utah Avalanche Center also post notifications on their websites.

—“**Backcountry Closures**” for the north side of the highway the night before avalanche control are the same as Interlodge closures and subject to the same penalties.

—Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort has vastly different Interlodge procedures. Their Interlodge status has no bearing on the Town of Alta and vice versa.

—For those residing and staying in Alta, keeping critical medications, food, and personal comfort items in good supply is important.

—Don't assume that observing someone else outside means that Interlodge has been lifted. Certain snow removal and ski area preparations may be taking place under supervision during Interlodge. Release from Interlodge can only occur after official notification from Alta Central.

Thanks to all reading this! Please share this information and assist us with these efforts. It is our goal to continue to provide safe travel and timely access to Alta's many recreation opportunities.

-Alta Marshal Mike Morey



Avalanche safety operations in Little Cottonwood Canyon rely on public compliance with Interlodge travel restrictions and road closures. Please help these operations remain safe and successful by learning the rules and respecting closures.

Alta Events Calendar

For more information on ACE, Friends of Alta, Alta Environmental Center or Cottonwood Canyons Foundation community events, please visit altaarts.org/events, friendsofalta.org/support/volunteer, cottonwoodcanyons.org, or find Alta Environmental Center on facebook.com

June

1	4 PM	Town of Alta NEPA workshop (taking the place of regular June planning commission meeting)—Our Lady of the Snows
1-8		Filing period for municipal candidacy; please contact Town Clerk Kate Black for more information
5	10 AM	Alta Town Council Meeting—Alta Community Center Library— <i>please note change in date</i>
11	6 AM	ACE Event: Woodburning and String Art—Our Lady of the Snows
18	3-8 PM	ACE Event: Outdoor Yoga
23	530 PM	ACE Event: Acupuncture Community Clinic
25	6 PM	Invasive Weed Pull—Please register at cottonwoodcanyons.org

July

1	8 AM	Albion Basin Summer Road opens
6	4 PM	Alta Planning Commission Meeting-Alta Community Center/Library
9	10 AM	Alta Town Council Meeting—Alta Community Center Library
11	TBD	Alta Ski Area Cleanup—please register at cottonwoodcanyons.org
16	6 PM	Invasive Weed Pull—Please register at cottonwoodcanyons.org
18	8 AM	Alta Restoration Day
25	8 AM	Wasatch Wildflower Festival—Albion Base Area

August

3	4 PM	Alta Planning Commission Meeting-Alta Community Center/Library
8	9 AM	Tree Utah Hike
13	10 AM	Alta Town Council Meeting—Alta Community Center Library— <i>please note change in date</i>
20	6 PM	Invasive Weed Pull—Please register at cottonwoodcanyons.org
21	6 PM	ACE Event: Wasatch Art Soiree-Albion Grill
23	830 AM	Tracy Aviary Bird Walk—contact info@friendsofalta.org for more information

Staff Contact Information:

John Guldner, Town Administrator: jhg@townofalta.com
 Kate Black, Town Clerk: kswb@townofalta.com
 Piper Lever, Assistant Town Clerk, Justice Court Clerk,
 Business License Official: plrem@townofalta.com
 Mike Morey, Town Marshal: mmorey@townofalta.com
 Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator, Newsletter Editor:
chris@townofalta.com

Town Council Contact Information:

Mayor Tom Pollard: mayor@townofalta.com
 Cliff Curry: cliffcurryaltautah@gmail.com
 Elise Morgan: elisedmorgan@gmail.com
 Paul Moxley: pmoxley@diplaw.com
 Harris Sondak: harisssondak@gmail.com

General Town Information:

www.townofalta.com
 Town of Alta Phone: (801) 742-3522 or (801) 363-5105
 Town of Alta Fax: (801) 742-1006
 Post Office Phone: (801) 742-2142
 Library/Community Center Phone: (801) 742-2068
 Justice Court Phone: (801) 742-2407
 Alta Central Info Line: (801) 742-3403

