

THE BIG PICTURE

Auden Schendler, Aspen's head of environmental affairs, doesn't care if you buy a Prius. He's thinking bigger.



JEFF MINTON

High-country heroes

ASKIER'S LIFE IS PRETTY CHARMED. Bluebird powder days, weekend trips with friends. But the people profiled in the pages ahead are making fresh tracks of a different sort: They are giving back more than they take. From freeskiers fighting global warming to heli guides building homes for AIDS orphans in Africa, ski town locals are making the world a better place.

By Michael Behar and Philip Higgs ▶

ALISO

ALISON GANNETT SAVING OUR SNOW

By Michael Behar
Photographs
by J.C. Leacock

▶ **Alison Gannett**, a 43-year-old world champion extreme freeskiier who lives in Crested Butte, Colo., was supposed to meet me at her place this morning. But last night, a fast-moving storm dropped nine inches of fluff. Gannett calls at 9, panting. “Let’s meet at the North Face T-bar at 11:30.” I get there five minutes late, and wait awhile before I realize that she has already split. North Face accesses Crested Butte’s double-black-diamond and extreme backcountry terrain, where Gannett has been doing laps since first chair. My cell phone rings again. “I’m headed to Third Bowl,” she says. “See you in an hour.” After taking a few runs myself, I arrive back at the lift just as Gannett comes tearing through and—without slowing down—plops herself onto the next T-bar just as it rounds the bullwheel. I scoot on beside her. “I’ve lived here 20 years and just skied two new lines I’ve never done before,” she announces. “Both of them scared the hell out of me.”

Gannett cannot sit still. She swings her skis, fiddles with her goggles and fires off text messages from her iPhone. During the two days we’ll spend riding the lifts together, she never removes the pole straps from her wrists, like she might leap off should the lift stop for more than 30 seconds. It wouldn’t be her first time hucking a 50-footer. Though retired from competitive freeskiing (“I stopped after knee surgery No. 7”), Gannett leads ski-mountaineering expeditions. In 2001 she was among the first group to ski the northwest face of Hanuman Tibba, a 19,500-foot Himalayan peak. In Crested Butte, she teaches avalanche-

safety clinics and runs a steeps camp for women.

But what keeps Gannett in motion these days is her crusade to save snow from extinction. In 2004, Gannett launched her Global Cooling Tour to deliver an urgent message: Rising temperatures are destroying snowpacks, and without a fierce assault on climate change, the future of skiing is in doubt. “The forecast is bleak,” she warns. “We’re heading for a perilous situation. The concern is not just that our grandkids won’t be able to ski. It’s that *we* won’t be able to ski. In Europe, which is warming much faster, about half the ski areas are going to be out of business in the next few years.”

A stop on the Global Cooling Tour consists of a one-hour presentation with charts and graphs and scary statistics, along with thrilling videos of her ripping giant sheets of snow off remote peaks. Think Warren Miller meets *An Inconvenient Truth*. To date, Gannett has presented it more than 2,000 times in the U.S., and in Pakistan, Bolivia, Nicaragua, India, Austria, Canada, Mexico, Switzerland, El Salvador, Bhutan and Poland (“with lots of potato vodka and disco dancing,” she recalls). Resort managers, elected officials, universities, city planners and corporate executives have invited Gannett to speak. She also does shows for the general

GOING BIG

Gannett, a world champion freeskiier, launched the Global Cooling Tour when she sustained a career-ending injury. She also works on former V.P. Al Gore’s Climate Project.





public at bars, community theaters and ski shops. “They’re not expecting to hear about global warming,” she says. “But I show them a crazy ski video of me in Alaska, and I’ve got their attention.”

Gannett’s foundation, Save Our Snow, educates schoolchildren about their carbon footprints. She is also on the board of the Equilibrium Fund, a nonprofit that fights deforestation and poverty by enabling communities in Central America and Mexico to cultivate Maya nut tree plantations. She researches and tracks the emissions improvements made by ski areas (e.g., Jackson Hole’s transportation footprint decreased 30 percent with the launch of a free public bus system). She works with the nonprofit Office for Resource Efficiency, which has partnered with Crested

Butte and Gunnison Valley municipalities to transform the region into a showcase of sustainability. In February, Gannett traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with Jon Wellinghoff, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. “One of my big goals is to influence policy change,” she says. And she was recruited by former Vice President Al Gore’s Climate Project, which trained 2,600 foot soldiers to present Gore’s now-legendary slideshow around the globe. “When I got there, I quickly realized I knew more than what they were doing,” says Gannett. “Now I’m training his trainers.”

Carbon dioxide is the greenhouse gas chiefly responsible for global warming—or global weirding, as Gannett prefers to call it, because our weather will

become increasingly extreme as the planet heats up. “We’ll have super big snowstorms and super big droughts.” She insists that slashing our collective carbon footprint begins with individuals. She packs her talks with tips on how we

vested locally from dead timber stands. The external walls, 21 inches thick, are made from Colorado-grown straw encased in a stucco-like concoction of clay, horse manure, sand, flour and water. “It’s an old-fashioned



‘THE CONCERN IS NOT JUST THAT OUR GRANDKIDS WON’T BE ABLE TO SKI. IT’S THAT WE WON’T BE ABLE TO SKI.’

can help (see sidebar on p. 150) and is relentless when it comes to ensuring that her own life is sustainable. “I don’t tell people how to be green, I show them,” says Gannett. “I try to inspire, not preach.”

I witness this when she invites me for dinner. Her house, built in 1997 in historic downtown Crested Butte, is a model of hyper efficiency. It’s framed with lumber har-

European method,” says Gannett. The structure is virtually airtight, which helps keep it warm in winter and cool in summer. The paint and stain are nontoxic. There are solar photovoltaic panels on the roof and south-facing windows that nourish an indoor garden of romaine, spinach, cilantro, sage, broccoli, parsley, oregano, thyme, basil and carrots. The lightbulbs are



A VERY GOOD

CAUSE Gannett, above, knows what's worth fighting for. Opposite: Gannett's straw bale house in downtown Crested Butte is virtually airtight and boasts an indoor garden.

LEDs, which consume 10 times less energy than conventional incandescents and last almost 15 years. Parked in her driveway is an SUV with a hybrid-electric engine that gets 100 miles per gallon.

Gannett greets me at the door wearing shoes made from recycled plastic rice bags. She leads me upstairs into an airy kitchen, where the countertops are piled high with fresh vegetables—a weekly shipment she gets from a nearby farm co-op. Dinner is pizza made from scratch. While I sip merlot

(a local vintage, of course, from Grand Junction) and watch her cook (a tornado of flour and ingredients), Gannett details her latest quest: a major overhaul of her diet to minimize its carbon impact. Whenever possible, she purchases food produced within 100 miles of Crested Butte. She makes cheese, renders lard and, for baking bread, buys whole-wheat and white flour in 50-pounds bags direct from a mill in Denver. Gannett lives with her boyfriend. The couple recently bought a pair of high-powered rifles. “We are going to build a log cabin in the backcountry and hunt elk for our meat,” she says.

Gannett grew up in Peterborough, N.H. Her father ran Crotched Mountain, a small ski hill about 30 minutes up the road from her house. When she was 18 months old,

barely able to toddle, she made her first turns on skis. That first pair, just 50 centimeters long, is mounted above the stairs in her house. Gannett skied every day after school and started racing at age 11. But, she says, “I was an average athlete, and racing was too structured for me, so I was never very good at it. I was a math whiz—a brainiac, overweight kid who didn’t fit in with racing or other sports like soccer or volleyball. I was a dork.”

During the summer that followed her second year at the University of New Hampshire, Gannett decamped to Wyoming to work on a cattle ranch. “That was my first time out West, and I had an epiphany. I’d been studying engineering and business, but realized I wanted to work closely with the land and do something to save the world.”

She switched majors and earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental science. Shortly before graduating in 1987, Gannett took a ski trip to Crested Butte and knew immediately she’d found her new hometown. “I discovered powder and freeskiing. And that’s when I really bloomed. I guess you could say I’m an adult-onset athlete.”

In 1995, her natural abilities got her noticed. While skiing with friends in Crested Butte on the Headwall (where organizers held the 2009 U.S. Extreme Freeskiing Championships), a scout asked Gannett to appear in a Warren Miller movie. Soon she was starring in films by Teton Gravity Research and Matchstick Productions—one of only a handful of women to do so. She also started entering freeskiing events. Over the next two years, she won



championships in Argentina, Japan, the World Cup in Whistler, B.C., and the Triple Crown (skiing, snowboarding and telemarking) in Crested Butte. “Suddenly I was making a living as a freeskiier.” Then in 1999, while competing at the Winter X Games in Crested Butte, Gannett overshot a landing from a 50-foot cliff. “I blew out both my knees,” she says. “When I heard my joints pop, I knew it was a season-ending injury—if not career-ending.”

Freeskiing had sidelined Gannett’s environmental

sweeping her hand past a picture window in her living room that overlooks the Paradise Divide, the cirque that surrounds Crested Butte. “But I’m not a hippy-dippy, oovy-groovy, granola-eating environmentalist. I’m all about having a plan to reduce our carbon footprint 20 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050. We have to get systematic about this. Methodical. We have to walk the talk.”

To that end, last year, instead of renting a car, Gannett completed a Global Cooling Tour of New England by

WEIGHT OF THE WORLD

“For Americans,” Gannett says, “the average carbon footprint is 20 tons. In Europe it’s 10 tons. To save our snow we need to get to two tons per person.”

University,” she says. “I told them I could come in 2011, because that’s when I’ll be there for another event.” Jeremy Richardson, science advisor to Al Gore, says, “Alison’s approach is unique because she provides concrete examples of how everyone can do something to help the planet.”

Twelve years ago, Gannett’s carbon footprint was 20 tons a year, the national average. Today, it’s eight. “My goal is to get it to two,” she says, pushing away her plate and looking out the window at the peaks she skis every day. Her nose and forehead are still dusted with flour. “Because if we really want to save our snow, it’s going to take more than just living in a straw bale house and recycling. It’s going to take a dramatic shift in our lives.” ▶▶ alisongannett.com

‘I WAS A MATH WHIZ—A BRAINIAC, OVERWEIGHT KID WHO DIDN’T FIT IN WITH RACING OR OTHER SPORTS, LIKE SOCCER OR VOLLEYBALL. I WAS A DORK.’

ambitions. But when she got hurt, lucrative sponsors dropped her overnight, and that led to another epiphany: She could tackle global warming with the same passion, persistence and confidence she’d channeled into competing. “I had to do something to save all this,” says Gannett,

bicycle. She did it again in April through several East Coast cities. She hitchhiked 100 miles to give her talk in Whistler and often turns down invitations if she can’t pair the air travel with other engagements. “I recently got a call from someone wanting me to speak at Cornell

WHAT YOU CAN (AND SHOULD) DO

ALISON GANNETT’S FOUR-STEP PROGRAM (C.R.O.P.) TO SAVE OUR SNOW—AND YOUR MONEY

C: CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT Go to carbonfootprint.com, a website that calculates your annual contribution. You can save the results and make updates as you get greener.

R: REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT Aim for a 10 percent annual reduction. Replace incandescent bulbs with CFLs or LEDs. Get a home energy audit, often free from your power company. Choose grass-fed beef and locally grown food without packaging. Eat organic, buy used goods, recycle and compost. Carpool, take public transportation, walk, bike. (Purchasing a fuel-efficient vehicle doesn’t improve your carbon footprint as much as you think; manufacturing a new car can emit up to 100 tons of carbon dioxide. Air travel is another big offender: One roundtrip flight can add two tons to your yearly total.)

O: OFFSET YOUR FOOTPRINT Whatever carbon you can’t eliminate can be offset. Purchase offsets at terrapass.com or carbonfootprint.com. Your donation helps fund carbon reduction projects, such as reforestation efforts and construction of wind and solar farms.

P: PRODUCE YOUR OWN POWER Buying wind credits or installing photovoltaic solar arrays is great, says Gannett, but don’t do it before reducing your carbon footprint: “These systems use a lot of carbon to manufacture.” Not to mention they’re expensive. Gannett suggests trying to cut your carbon footprint in half, which will lower the electricity demand of your home. Do this first and you’ll spend a whole lot less when it comes time to go solar.

AUDEN SCHENDLER FIXING THE SYSTEM

► Auden Schendler thinks many of

Aspen Skiing Company's environmental achievements—the largest solar array in the industry, a micro-hydro power plant on Fanny Hill—are meaningless. “To deal with climate change, we need to make all these decisions with big, 50-year implications in a 10-year window,” he argues. “If that's the case, then whether you drove a Prius today is meaningless.”

Strong words from the guy ASC chose to head up its environmental affairs: Schendler is the face and (often very loud) voice of its efforts to go green.

Aware of the doom-and-gloom nature of the climate crisis but evangelical about the potential to solve it, Schendler is an unapologetic realist. “We can't say, ‘Skiing's not sustainable, so no skiing.’ It's already out there. We have to fix the whole system.” Two years ago, he caused a hubbub when he pointed out to *Business-*



Week that most resorts' claims to greenness are essentially puffed-up PR.

Schendler sees Aspen's—and skiing's—role as a spur, provoking change on a much larger scale. Aspen's efforts, he says, give it enough cred to do things like file a friend-of-the-court brief in the biggest environmental lawsuit to go before the Supreme Court, *Massachusetts v. EPA*. The subsequent ruling allowed the EPA to regulate carbon emissions. Weeks later,

a review board denied the construction of a new coal-fired power plant in Kansas thanks to that ruling. “The idea is to pull the biggest lever,” Schendler says. “Putting solar panels on the Little Nell is a tiny contribution. But who stays at the Nell? George Soros. If you could get George Soros to get into climate action, and all the other massively wealthy and influential people, you've pulled a really big lever.” ► aspensnowmass.com



CHERYL JENSEN HEALING OUR VETS

► Ten years ago, Vail local Cheryl

Jensen learned the resort had been storing past years' uniforms in onsite trailers,

where they were gathering dust and keeping no one warm. She thought they deserved a better fate. “We found an organization called Samaritan's Purse and sent about 7,000 ski jackets to Kosovo, just after the war,” she says. Today her charity, Sharing

Warmth Around the Globe (SWAG), works with nongovernmental organizations, the National Ski Area Association and resorts across the country to get cold-weather gear to those in need. They've shipped 120,000 jackets to 21 countries, including to war refugees in Afghanistan and National Park Rangers in Mongolia. “We got a call from the Red Cross after the Pakistan earthquake in 2005 [which left more than 3 million people homeless];

we had jackets shipped and on people's backs in 10 days,” Jensen says. “In a place like that, they're wearing traditional clothing, but underneath it'll be Fila or Ralph Lauren RLX.”

Four years later, a SWAG colleague in the Pentagon spoke with Jensen about soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, young men and women suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, amputations, paralysis. “They need to come skiing,” Jensen remembers saying.

In 2004 she founded the Vail Veterans Program, which brings soldiers from the Walter Reed Army Medical Center to the mountain for four days of adaptive skiing or boarding, all expenses paid.

“We have one guy who's hoping to make the Paralympic ski team,” Jensen says. “Some of these people, when they first come out, they're barely even functioning. And to see them move from that to the Paralympics, that's powerful. That's the true power of the sport.” ► swagusa.org; vailveteransprogram.com

**SHEJUMPS
GIVING WOMEN
THEIR TURN**



Spears and Paris Hilton as role models," she says. "We want to be a part of changing that."

The group is pushing adventure-based empowerment for three grades of women: the never-evers, the backcountry pros and the active types in need of a little help from talented friends with extra gear. (Their slogan: "What would you dare to accomplish if you knew the only possible outcome was success?") This winter, SheJumps is hosting a campaign to get more women avvy-educated and into the backcountry, with classes, discounts and networks of similarly inclined ladies. Last fall, they offered a free two-day career conference for professional female athletes, with seminars on everything from finding an agent to exploiting the media. (Hey, wait a minute....) Salt Lake City contains a growing immigrant population, including a recent wave of Sudanese; SheJumps is working with local social services to gather women who might never otherwise set foot—or snowshoe—in Salt Lake's surrounding wilderness. "It's an incredible opportunity to educate people about these open spaces," says Smallwood, and hopefully instill a passion for preservation.

As a nonprofit, SheJumps is also creating a grant fund to finance women's adventures. "We're here to philosophically, logistically and physically support women's dreams," Smallwood says. "We want women to make that jump, to build their confidence, to do something they didn't think they could." ▶▶ shejumps.org

▶ **Big-mountain freeskier and ski-film star Lynsey Dyer** keeps a cover of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue tacked to a hallway wall in her house as a reminder of the way things are for women in sports: that is to say, largely ignored. "I want it to be a female athlete on the cover, not just models," she says. "That doesn't

seem to be too much to ask."

Dyer, with fellow skiers and friends Vanessa Pierce and Claire Smallwood (pictured, from top), founded SheJumps, a Salt Lake City-based nonprofit with an eye toward building a community of like-minded women: strong, active and sick of the status quo. "I'm tired of seeing Britney



ALPINE INITIATIVES REACHING OUT

▶ **The truly altruistic seek to do good outside of their own interests, to make the whole world better, not just their sliver.** Witness Alpine Initiatives, a foundation led by four guys who lead lives of pretty sweet privilege: freeskiing king and Armada Skis co-founder JP Auclair (pictured, right); Olympian Chad Fleischer; and heli guides Mikey Hovey (pictured, left) and Seth Koch. They hop continents to plow pow, test skis, shoot vids; it would be easy to look at that life, say you've made it, sit back and crack a Pabst.

But last year they traveled to Meru, Kenya, to help build the Amani Community Home for children orphaned by AIDS. There are more than a million AIDS orphans in Kenya; the home, a partner project with International Peace Initiatives, allows them to live in or near their hometowns, rather than being shunted to overcrowded orphanages.

From that experience, Alpine Initiatives was born. Before Meru, Auclair says, "we were kind of naïve. We thought we were going to just be shoveling for a couple of weeks, but the last thing these projects need is more shovelers." What they do need is resources, organization and expertise; and AI is a kind of clearinghouse for ski-world folk eager to offer it. "We're not focused just on one cause: humanitarian or environmental," Auclair says. "We want to keep stepping out of our comfort zone." ▶ alpineinitiatives.org

JO GARRUCIO HIGHER EDUCATION



▼ **If you grew up in Utah and you know how to ski, you should probably thank Jo Garruccio.** Sixteen years ago, Garruccio helped organize an outreach program aimed at getting the state's kids into ski boots—and, yes, snowboard boots. Every winter, fourth graders across the state pay roughly \$25 for a field trip including lessons, rentals and a lift ticket at resorts from Deer Valley to Beaver Mountain. Every school is eligible, and

kids in need ride free. But the trip's not just about promoting the industry. Garruccio created an eight-week curriculum based around the sport, including the history and geography of Utah, the mathematics and science of getting thousands of people to the top of a ski hill, even practical lessons in meteorology. "If kids can apply what they're learning to what's important to them, they'll understand the lesson

really, really quickly," she says. The same program offers fifth graders three passes to every Utah resort for \$10; sixth graders get one pass. (See p. 64 for more state programs.) "If you can get them hooked by junior high," says Garruccio, "that kid's going to ski the rest of his life." Last year, The Canyons, where Garruccio is the ski school training coordinator, hired a college student as a coach. His first skiing experience? A fourth grade field trip. ▶ skiutah.com/locals



▶ NAU CLOTHING STYLISH SUSTAINABILITY

There's always been something

slightly ironic about skimming down the mountains we love while wearing gear and clothing we wouldn't exactly call natural. But these are improving times we live in: At least two major bootmakers (Atomic and Scarpa) have released models that eschew petroleum-based plastics, while industry gold standard Patagonia offers up detailed environmental-impact profiles of many of its puffers and pants.

Into that context we introduce Nau Clothing Company. Founded four years ago by a passel of former Nike and Patagonia execs, Nau set out to design

and create sustainable clothing guided by an extensive list of "ideal garment criteria," from mandating renewable or recyclable raw materials to requiring a landfill-free future for its products.

You may have a Brand X jacket; its shell may be made from recycled polyester. That's good: That shell can be recycled. But what about its mesh liner? The pockets? In an ideal world, someone would go through every jacket on the recycling heap and cut out the nonrecyclable pockets and parts. We do not live in an ideal world; most of those jackets end up in a landfill. So Nau designs synthetic outerwear that uses only recyclables in every component (except metal zippers and snaps, which are more easily removed from the recycling process). They've partnered with a Japanese recycled polyester supplier, Teijin, that offers an "ecocircle" system for its raw materials: Any garments made from Teijin's polyester can be returned to the loop,

recycled into new polyester fabrics and incorporated into new Nau gear, like its Shroud of Purrin softshell pants or Asylum ski jacket. (Nau employees stuff used items into a big drawer; when the drawer is full, they send them to Japan.)

Another notch in Nau's belt: Two percent of all sales is donated to one of Nau's "Partners for Change." (That's one more than most green-minded companies' "One Percent for the Planet" pledge.) Buy something from nau.com, and before you hit submit, they ask to which partner you'd like to donate—perhaps Kiva, which microfinances developing-world entrepreneurship, or Mercy Corps, which delivers emergency disaster relief to people far from the ski world.

But just because it's so darn wholesome doesn't make it frumpy. Nau's breed of sustainability is sharp and stylish—their ski gear offers some of the most modish après around. It's also, we hope, a sign of things to come. ▶ nau.com



**SILVERTON
LESS IS MORE**

► **Last year's financial meltdown did little to mitigate the continuing** glamification of our beloved sport. Which is why, when we've had enough of the fur-lined boots, we head to Silverton, Colo. Not just because it's one of the sickest mountains in skidom, but because Silverton has *soul*. Because its 1,800 acres of snowy bowls are accessed via a single rickety lift and some upward-bound boot-packing. Because an extra \$150—a pittance in heliskiing dollars—will fly you to the farthest steps in the resort's rented six-seat A-Star. Because the place regularly gets swarmed with snowstorms well into April. And because last year the resort offered a season pass in exchange for "a nice UPS or FedEx delivery van" to use as a skier shuttle.

And while some resorts hype recycling programs and carpool initiatives, Silverton's green policy is based on something groovier: reincarnation. That lone double got its start at Mammoth Mountain in the 1970s. The base lodge—a yurt with a keg of beer and a fireplace—was a hand-me-down from neighboring Kendall Mountain. The yurt's furniture was rescued from the dump. Even the patrollers' radios and vests were donated from other areas. "The only thing truly new at Silverton is our demo ski collection," says Jenny Brill, who co-owns the resort with her husband, Aaron (both pictured). "We give everything nine lives." ► silvertonmountain.com

**JIMINY PEAK
WINDS OF CHANGE**



▼ **Little Jiminy Peak, tucked** up in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, might not offer much in the way of vert, but high to looker's right stands something few other resorts can match: a wind turbine spinning out a small town's worth of emission-free electricity.

Jiminy's main demand for electricity comes from snowmaking. As climate change kicks in—or kicks harder—snow will be in shorter supply. But bigger

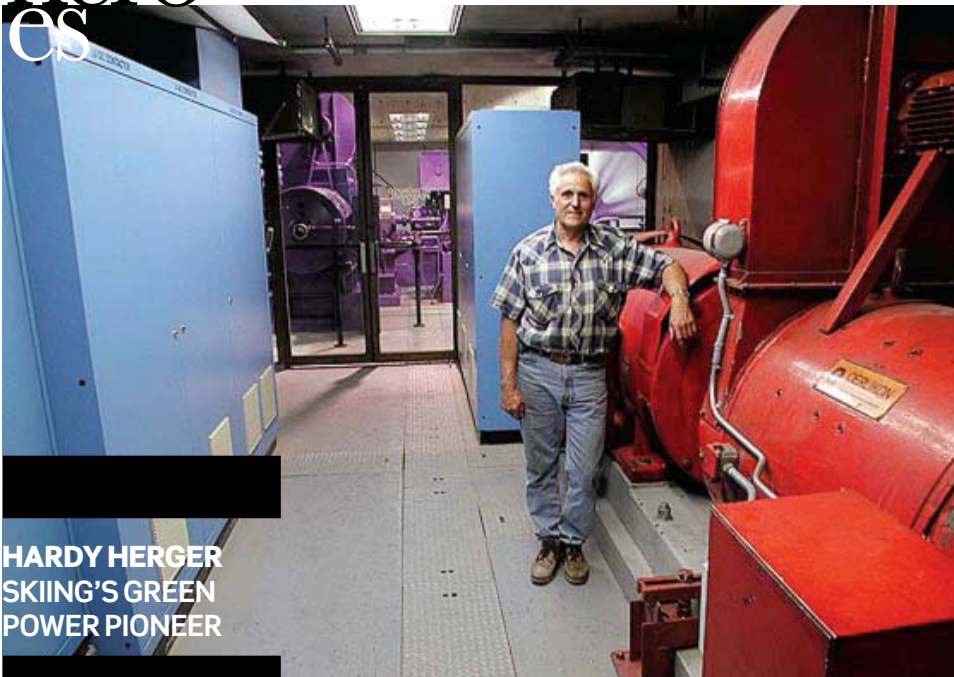
demand for snowmaking means more emissions to power snowmaking equipment—an environmental

Catch-22 that Jiminy hopes to soothe.

But the green thing wasn't Jiminy's primary reason for going wind-power. "I don't want to come across like, 'Oh look how wonderful we are,'" says Jiminy CEO Brian Fairbank. Jiminy's electricity bills were "through the roof"; the turbine allowed them to stabilize those costs for

the next decade. That stability stretches further than the base area's boundaries, too: Surplus power produced by the turbine is fed back into the local grid, enabling nearby townships to get green power without paying a green premium. And Jiminy provides most of the nearby town of Hancock's tax revenue. "They depend on us to send their kids to public school," says Fairbank. "The turbine has enabled us to be sustainable as a business for the long haul." ► jiminypeak.com

OPPOSITE: MARY JOHNSON. THIS PAGE, FROM TOP: SCOTT DW SMITH; TATE MICHAEL DAVIDSON/GETTY IMAGES



**HARDY HERGER
SKIING'S GREEN
POWER PIONEER**

the States.” When he’s not skiing (“I only go for two hours”), Herger, 74, works on engineering projects at Squaw, most of which focus on energy conservation and environmental sustainability. In 1992, he built a 40-ton geothermal pump—the biggest in California at the time—to heat Squaw’s 15,000-square-foot children’s center. “Everyone was against me. They said it was too expensive,” he says. “But then they found out it works—and it costs 40 percent less than propane or diesel. That was a very big moment.”

Herger has had a lot of big moments, from getting efficient lighting up for

When it comes to getting things done, sometimes what’s needed is less preaching and more old-fashioned ingenuity—particularly of the Swiss sort. Back in the 1980s, when climate change was a mere wrinkle in the ozone layer, Hardy Herger was pushing energy efficiency on the ski industry. Herger, an engineer brought

over from Switzerland in 1968 to help Squaw Valley, Calif., erect a new aerial tram, thought Squaw’s lifts were inefficient and proposed special power-saving filters; the resort has saved millions of dollars as a result. “In Switzerland, we are efficient,” he says in a thick accent. “I thought, ‘I want to do the same thing in

nightskiing to installing heat-exchange systems whereby, for instance, energy used to heat the spa is recycled to cool the ice rink. Next up for Herger: a wind turbine on the mountain, enough to power two lifts for a whole season. “I cannot retire,” he says. “As long as I work, I cannot think about retiring.” [▶▶ squaw.com](http://squaw.com)



**OLD BILL'S FUN RUN
A COMMUNITY
COFFER**

Running a charity isn’t just a matter of raising a dollar from Paul and handing it over to Peter. Too often, overhead bleeds out the most important resources—time and money—that could be going to those in need. Which is where the Old Bill’s Fun Run, held in Jackson Hole, Wyo., every September, comes in. Instead of your average run/jog/walk for money—I run X miles, you give me Y dollars—imagine Old Bill’s as a charity for charities. Donors and runners pay an entry fee of however much they choose, check their preferred recipients off a list—everything from women’s shelters to

veterans’ groups to the Teton County Library—and hand over a single check. The Community Foundation of Jackson Hole matches a percentage of the first \$25,000 of each charity’s total take, drawing from a pool of super donors: An anonymous couple known as Mr. and Mrs. Old Bill have ponied up \$500,000

every year since 1997, while individual “co-challengers” give anywhere from \$25,000 to \$100,000. But the giving’s not limited to Jackson’s big cheeses. “Last year the smallest donation was \$1.50,” says Community Foundation’s Nicki Rasch. “We’ve got 5-year-olds saving up all summer to donate.” [▶▶ oldbills.org](http://oldbills.org)



FROM TOP: COURTESY OF SQUAW VALLEY USA; DEREK DILUZZIO