



**NORTHERN INTERMOUNTAIN DIVISION**  
 Professional Ski Instructors of America  
 American Association of Snowboard Instructors

# WINTER NEWSLETTER, FEBRUARY 2021

## President's Message

Newsletter Winter 2020/21

Greetings fellow PSIA-AASI members and snowsports educators!

I hope this newsletter finds you and your families safe after the holidays and into the full swing of a season of smiling and gliding.

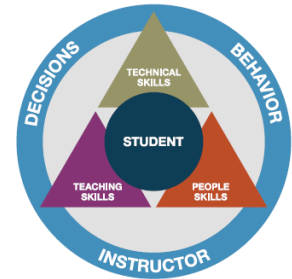
The Northern Intermountain Board of Directors and our operational staff continue to respond to current challenges and opportunities to ensure that we are delivering meaningful, relevant and valuable educational content as well as engaging membership in a community.

In the fall, I shared my commitment to facilitate the pursuit of gaining knowledge, skills and abilities that not only help people slide more accurately, adaptably and skillfully, but that also help them communicate and facilitate those abilities in others. I challenged you this season to take what you know about skiing, riding, gliding and sliding, and ask yourself why you believe what you do. How is that going? What are some lessons you have learned, and even shared with friends and mentors? Have you changed your mind on anything, either slightly or significantly?

The Learning Connection Model (the People Skills, Teaching Skills and Technical Skills) empowers us with fundamental truths about our profession. We carry what we know--those fundamentals--into a

dynamic environment, challenge ourselves through exploration and experimentation and adapt our responses based on what we perceive.

One fundamental of our Teaching Skills is managing both physical and emotional risk, so that we may help to facilitate our student's strong connection to the learning environment. This is such an integral part of what we do: to understand how sliding on slippery surfaces can present real physical dangers, but also to understand empathetically that perception and reality sometimes aren't in alignment or even that at times our perceptions form our reality. We use our People Skills in being aware of and managing responses of both ourselves and our student's when they either over- or under-estimate their abilities, and the dangers/opportunities they face. And in this time of great public health concern, we have an added layer of physical and emotional risks that we need to navigate. Be empathetic, be kind, and be stoked. We are sliding and sharing the slide with others. Let's count ourselves lucky. If



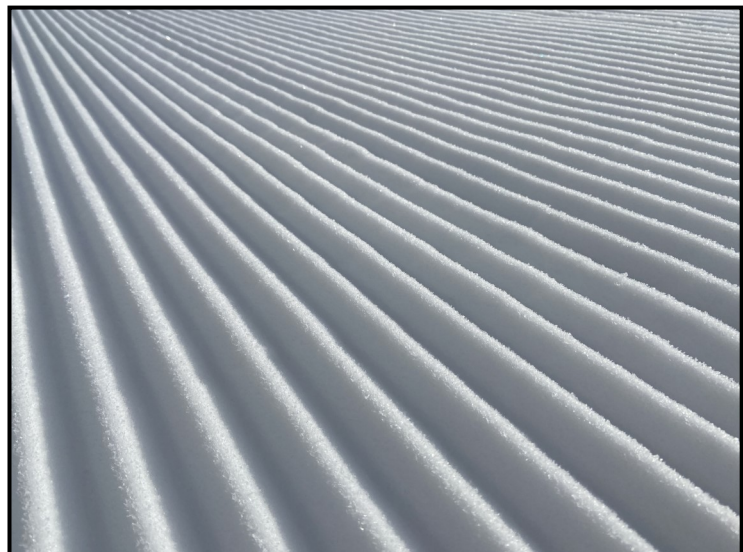
you are unable to be sliding on snow this season, I'm hopeful you will be able to return to those beloved surfaces expeditiously!

If you have questions for me or any member of the NI leadership please reach out to Ben or to me via [broberts@psia-ni.org](mailto:broberts@psia-ni.org) and [president@psia-ni.org](mailto:president@psia-ni.org) respectively. Continue to have a super, and safe season.

**Warm regards and chilly mornings,  
 Christian Luening, PSIA-AASI-NI  
 President, Bogus Basin**

### Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
NI News	2-4
NI Articles	4-8



**PSIA-AASI NI**

P.O. Box 2587  
Ketchum, ID 83340

**Officers**

Christian Luening, President  
(208) 841-2581  
president@psia-ni.org

Colleen Morishita, Vice President  
(208) 859-9583  
vp@psia-ni.org

Deann Miller, Secretary  
(25) 442-5584  
deanntamarack@gmail.com

Fernando Veloz, Treasurer  
(208) 891-9568  
fernando@msadmin.com

Ben Roberts, Executive Director  
(208) 861-4383  
broberts@psia-ni.org

Walt Coiner, National Board of Directors  
(208) 539-2253  
wc@hollyberrynursery.com

Nick Treat, Business Manager  
(949) 241-6402  
admin@psia-ni.org

**Directors**

Angela Bovee  
Mason Frederickson  
Cortney Bayuk  
Jim Stevens

**NI News**

**Executive Director Update**

Greetings PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Members!

I hope you are well. This challenging season has clearly shown us what many of us have known, that skiing and snowboarding are special. These sports deliver the opportunity for meaningful social connection with friends, family, and community while also allowing for the satisfaction of individual expression and solitude. These are all things the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has left our society seeking outlets for.

Our area operators and member schools have worked hard to find ways to meet public health guidelines and align with industry standards while also offering these outlets for outdoor activity. Each of you has worked hard to keep yourselves and your families safe while also sharing these sports that we love with the community members visiting our areas.

In many ways, nothing has changed and in other ways the magic of what we do has been amplified. This is what we do and yet so much is different. Random conversations with other single lift riders are fewer and farther between. It is hard to see the smiles under the masks. Locker room debates, tech talk, and games of scrabble are limited as most of us begin and end our days in our cars and trucks. Wellness checks, quarantine protocols, and mask reminders have replaced safety-meeting talks about ACL awareness and Your Responsibility Code. So it goes. But the magic is still there.

Here in PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division, we are working hard to offer meaningful education, professional development, and certification opportunities. In some ways we have been limited by how busy the demand for outdoor recreation has been this season. Instructors are busy and our area operators have a lot going on. We continue to work to add in-person education to the calendar and this will be an ongoing process until the season is over. Because this is an ongoing process we have added an event request process that you can use to request and help coordinate an event that fits your schedule. This can be found by visiting the [www.psia-ni.org](http://www.psia-ni.org) website and selecting "Event Request Form" from the "Events" drop down menu. Or by following this link: <https://www.psia-ni.org/events-exams/event-request-form/>

Our PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division culture has been one of putting every dollar of dues and event income back into service to our membership. This has put us in an enviable financial position and made it possible for us to maintain our existing clinic and exam price structure while limiting group size to no more than five attendees. We are also able to hold events with lower enrollment rather than cancel them.

We will continue to strive to do more and to do better. There is much more to be done. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of each of our members, the partnerships with our area operators and member schools and the ability to connect with our students. Keep up the good work!

**Thanks for being you,  
Ben Roberts, NI Executive Director, Bogus Basin**

**VIRTUAL  
Women's Summit**

**CEU opportunity for the Ladies!**

**Event:** Women's Virtual Summit 2021

**Dates:** Sunday, Feb. 28 (5:30 – 7 p.m. MST) and Monday, March 1, 2021 (9 a.m. – 4 p.m. MST)

**Location:** Online

**Rate:** \$80 with discount (originally \$160 – 50 percent discount sponsored by the Nancy Oakes Hall Women's Scholarship)

**Details:** [www.thesnowpros.org/events/womens-summit/](http://www.thesnowpros.org/events/womens-summit/)



## NI News Cont'd

### NI Awards

It's that time in our season to start thinking of deserving peers for nomination to receive division awards!

Help recognize those Northern Intermountain members who have made a positive impact on you, your school, our organization and snowsports industry! If you know someone with an infectious enthusiasm for instructing, an individual who has committed hours to a NI project or a role model, please take time to nominate them to receive an award.

Division awards include the following:

*Instructor of the Season*

*Rookie of the Season*

*Northern Intermountain Hall of Fame: Lex Kunau Legends Award*

*Walt Coiner Distinguished Service Award*

Complete descriptions and eligibility criteria are on our website:

<https://www.psia-ni.org/info/division-awards>



Please submit nomination forms by March 15, 2021 to the Division Secretary, Deann Miller by email ([deanntamarack@gmail.com](mailto:deanntamarack@gmail.com)) or snail mail: 138 Brookdale Dr, McCall, ID 83638

### Scholarship Opportunities 2020-21

In order to promote and support the educational goals of PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain members and member schools PSIA-AASI-NI Education Foundation has scholarships available with the following guidelines:

PSIA-AASI-NI Members in good standing may apply for a scholarship to assist with funds for scheduled continuing education, exams, prep clinics, accreditations, and symposiums hosted by PSIA-AASI-NI or national events.

The education foundation also offers a Member School Scholarship. Member schools may apply for a scholarship to cover the cost of an event at their school using the Member School Scholarship Application Form. Any eligible member that joins the event would qualify for CEU credits for the event.

For more information and the online application, please visit our website: [www.psia-ni.org/membership/scholarships/](http://www.psia-ni.org/membership/scholarships/).

### 2021 Spring Symposium and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Postponed to 2022

PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division together with our event partner, Pomerelle, has made the decision to postpone this spring's symposium and anniversary event. We are committed to "being one year older" when we do celebrate our 50th anniversary. We will continue to offer education and certification events through the spring; however it became increasingly clear since the new year that holding an anniversary celebration in the current environment is not the right thing to do.

Pomerelle has committed to hosting our 2022 Spring Symposium and 50/5 Anniversary Celebration in late March or early April of 2022. We are excited to do this and look forward to bringing people together in 2022 to celebrate our anniversary and if all goes well, the end of Covid-19's ongoing impact on our lives and livelihoods. In the meantime, we would like to thank Jim Stevens for his hard work in developing and promoting the event, Barry Whiting for his support of NI, and the entire Pomerelle team for flying the PSIA-AASI and Northern Intermountain Division flag proudly.

### PSIA-AASI NI

P.O. Box 2587  
Ketchum, ID 83340

#### Committee Chairs

##### **Professional Development:**

Weylin Barrett  
(208) 720-7060  
[prodevelopment@psia-ni.org](mailto:prodevelopment@psia-ni.org)

##### **Alpine Certification:**

Ben Roberts  
(208) 861-4383  
[broberts@psia-ni.org](mailto:broberts@psia-ni.org)

##### **Alpine Education:**

Eric Zimmerman  
(208) 830-3557  
[erzimmer13@gmail.com](mailto:erzimmer13@gmail.com)

##### **Snowboard Education:**

Matt Larson  
(406) 570-7930  
[captnhobie@hobie.com](mailto:captnhobie@hobie.com)

##### **Snowboard Certification/ Freestyle:**

Jake Bolin  
(208) 901-2250  
[jakebolin@cablone.net](mailto:jakebolin@cablone.net)

##### **Nordic:**

Position open

##### **Children's Education:**

Jani Sutherland  
(208) 788-0089  
[janiski@aol.com](mailto:janiski@aol.com)

##### **Adaptive:**

Chuck Chiu  
[chuckchiu@hotmail.com](mailto:chuckchiu@hotmail.com)  
Jeff Burley  
[jeff@highergroundsv.org](mailto:jeff@highergroundsv.org)

##### **Senior:**

Mike Erlebach  
(208) 634-9846  
[erlebachmike@gmail.com](mailto:erlebachmike@gmail.com)

##### **Website:**

Colleen Morishita  
(208) 859-4563  
[ssmanager@brundage.com](mailto:ssmanager@brundage.com)

##### **Newsletter:**

Martina Vala  
(208) 720-6104  
[media@psia-ni.org](mailto:media@psia-ni.org)

## NI News Cont'd

### Education and Certification Opportunities Online and In-Person

#### E-learning and Webinars:

The ongoing partnership and collaboration across the nine organizations that constitute PSIA-AASI continues to bear fruit. The organization has a more robust "Learning Management System" (LMS) which is able to host e-learning, webinars, and other electronic content from around the country. PSIA-AASI members can take part in education offered by any division and earn CEU's from the comfort of home. Check out [www.lms.thesnowpros.org](http://www.lms.thesnowpros.org) to see what is available. On the back end of the system the Member Service team in Lakewood, Colorado has worked tirelessly to connect the logins and information of the LMS with the member login system already in place.

#### In person clinics and certification:

The Covid-19 pandemic has slowed our progress in scheduling events and the calendar is less full than any of us would like it to be. We are working to ensure that all PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division members will be able to pursue their certification goals in March and early April, with plans in place for Levels 1, 2, and 3 exams for snowboard and Alpine, CS1 and 2 credentials for Children's, Adaptive education and certification, Freestyle and Seniors credentials in the works as well as opportunities for in-person continuing education. Many of you have reached out to ask about what is planned for when, and please continue to do so. We will work hard to offer as much as possible and ensure that each of you is supported in your pursuit of your certification and professional development goals.

## NI Articles



### FLEX at Edge Change FIRST

It's always good to rethink how we do things. As instructors, we get into patterns in our teaching. Consider what and when you might introduce movement up and down within a turn. Here is some perspective on how and why we would change it up.

Close your eyes and imagine this scenario. In your snowboarding stance, imagine yourself as a snowboarder about to attempt their first turn from heel edge to toe edge. You're standing on the hill barely keeping your balance as you put your plan together for how you're going to get your board to point downhill. You think back to what you were told by your instructor to create some twist in your board to make this all magically happen. Then, you go.

As you read this you have that feeling of excitement/anxiety for the guest as you coach them through this first turn hoping they will be successful. You are well aware of the things that can go wrong and hope they will follow your guidance exactly. How about taking some chance out of the situation by connecting early movements to the first turn?

Down the road, once the rider is more consistent with linking turns together, we as instructors begin to introduce addition-

al movements. We have the rider play with being taller and shorter. Commonly we introduce being tall during the short window of time when the rider changes from one edge to the other. This is where we can coach our guests in a different direction.

Instead of moving into a taller stance to begin a turn, we can encourage being shorter. You may be in the habit of introducing this movement pattern later down the road instead of in a rider's first turn or even in a garland. No rules though! Increased flexion of the lead ankle and/or knee as the rider moves from one edge to the other is relatable to the first movements of learning to twist the snowboard.

Using flexion in the joints of the forward leg promotes the rider to lower their center of mass, shift their center of mass towards the new edge, have more weight on their forward leg compared to their rear leg, and be more effective at creating twist. The greatest part is that this is all encouraged through communicating a single focus to the rider. That focus is to flex their legs more as they transition from one edge to the other.

The overall goal is to give the best experience we can to the first-time snowboarder. The motion of flexing to lower the center of mass when the board pivots into the fall line will improve success and build a more solid foundation for our riders.

Written by, Matt Larson, NI Snowboard Chair, Big Sky



## NI Articles Cont'd

### Teaching in the world of Covid-19

The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought on many challenges to our profession of snowsports instruction. Social distancing is challenging when we have traditionally been in close proximity to our students. Masks collect moisture through the day adding to the challenges of compliance for our guests. An added challenge with masks is the loss of nonverbal expression that we have been able to rely on as we assess our guests for understanding and build rapport. Though it may seem scary to dive into, we can improve our guest experience with the use of video and virtual learning in addition to on-snow strategies in working through challenges of the pandemic.

Most of our challenges are related to our efforts in providing an engaging experience for our first time snowsports guests. As instructors, we take steps to help them with their boots, teach them how to dress for winter weather and create a safe learning environment with minimal risk. The pandemic has created additional challenges; our ability to implement these actions and be in compliance with safety guidelines are contradictory. In getting the participants booted up, I've found it helpful to use myself as a visual demonstration to show how much effort I exert in clamping boot buckles or pulling lacing tight. Poles and PVC pipe has proven to create distance and also provide a "hands-on" experience in guiding my guests through activities on snow. My favorite has been the hula-hoop when teaching children and provide them security while giving me a tool to assist in direction change and speed control.

I'm not going to claim being any kind of YouTuber, or professional in video production, though I have found that having brief video clips available for my guests to view to be an extremely valuable tool. I encourage you to record some brief clips of introductory activities to set your guests up for success. For example, take a video of putting your boots on and pulling the snow cuff down over the outside of your boot instead of it stuffed inside. Post the video on YouTube and print the link on

a piece of paper that also has your picture on it. Title: Your Instructor's Tips in Booting Up! My next move will be to establishing a QR code for these short clips. Your guests can scan and see your content before even meeting you.

Here is a short intro video I put together introducing myself and laying down a foundation for my guests and me to work with once we finally meet, whether it's in 15 minutes, an hour, or weeks later. This was recorded on my phone and easier to edit than you may think: <https://youtu.be/2V0H1iw63dg>

The real benefit to having these short informational clips available for your guests is that when you see them on snow, you can get straight to business.

### Have a safe season!

**Matthew Larson, NI Snowboard Education Chair, Big Sky**



### Watch Those Hands!

There is a lot of great World Cup skiing happening these days and hopefully you've seen some of it. Have you ever noticed racers before they put their skis on just standing there, eyes closed, "hands skiing" the course? Maybe you've wondered why.

Learning and development goes from the head down, center out so the hands will learn things before the feet do. We've all had students in our beginner classes who struggle to make those first wedges with their arms (and poles) in strange positions out from their sides, mostly with their hands turning away from their bodies. And maybe you've seen kids in a class skiing with their hands in front in an "A" or wedge position.

I always teach my first time kids' classes to make the wedge with their hands (and they can call the shape whatever they want so they own it). And when I get kids struggling to keep that shape I have them put their hands in the "A" shape. It is amazing how quickly the feet will then learn.

Watch your student's hands. Do they go funny directions when on new terrain or when trying new skills? The hands are telling you your student is trying to process the new information so the feet can learn the new skill. Maybe you need to review the new skill and include the hands so they can learn the movement pattern first.

There is a lot of information in the hands, so watch them as well as watching your students' feet and skis. It just might make your teaching easier.

Written by,  
**Jani Sutherland, NI Children's Chair, Sun Valley**

## NI Articles Cont'd

### Comfort Zones

Have you heard the saying “Hold my beer?” Or maybe you recorded a buddy? It is usually followed by “Watch this.” As last season was cut short due to Covid-19 and skiing was put to a stop in March, it left many spring events cancelled, as well as all season training and continuing our education pathways. Covid-19 restrictions stopped us in our tracks.

Moving on as the snow melted left many of us longing to be outside. We patiently waited in our homes for a change in scenery and weather. Leaves changed and temperatures dropped. Sweaters quickly became jackets and finally it snowed. Delayed openings and major restrictions along with limited rehire capacity. At last, we were sliding on snow. Wahooo! Feeling the crisp cold air on..... Nope we have a mask on.

Now in the 2021 season, things are different. Yes, work maybe slim, however we are sliding on snow. In many schools the student/guest numbers are lower than previous seasons. I always try to see the positive in scenarios...I have finally had time to ski for myself. This has been a great. I would like more snow and terrain to open. I've washed my car, put a map in the freezer. Nothing yet!

Lack of terrain and work has inspired me to get out of my *comfort zone*. I am currently working on one-ski skiing, attempting to do pivot slips and round skidded turns, with and without poles. A few years ago, I had the privilege to attend a seminar with Horst Abrams. He is a ski instructor guru. In the seminar he discussed in-depth training outside of your comfort zone, however always coming back to it. He used Ted Ligety and Bode Miller as examples. We will use a scale of 1-10 with 5 being perfect.

#### Ted Ligety:

Mr. GS. He trains in 5 all the time. All the drills and practice he did was always perfect in 5. If he skied and stayed in 5, he won. If he got out of 5, he would struggle to finish.

#### Bode Miller:

The somewhat wild card on the team. He trained 4, 5, 6 as often as he could. He would perform drills and just be slightly off. It's how he trained. He trained around perfect but it wasn't a driving force. He either won by a lot, or DNF'd.

Who do you train like?

In a similar study they took 20 people and divided them into 2 groups of 10. They had a contest. Each person was given 20 balls to throw from a line into a bucket 10 feet away. They were given practice. One group stood at the 10 ft line and threw all 20 balls from the same spot. The other group threw 5 balls from each distance 8 ft, 9 ft, 10 ft and 11 ft. The group that threw from the varied distances won the contest easily.

In skiing, we often practice perfect. However, if we want to expand our *comfort zones*, we need to step out of them briefly before returning to them. No, I am not saying ski bad to ski better. I am saying that if we want to expand our *comfort zone*, we need to get out of it and return to it.

Back to sliding on snow...

Try another discipline; I suggest adaptive! However, you can also snowboard, ski or even try a specialty. Use the terrain wisely. We spend most of the day waiting in lift lines or on the chair lift. Utilize every pitch make the most of the whole run. Increase the task on easier terrain. We try to be guest centered. Teach what the guest wants to learn not what you want to teach. If our student is not understanding what we are trying to teach them change the way you present it. For example, let's look the task and movements to jump off of a box and landing:

- Imagine standing on a box and jumping to ground flex your knees and ankles when you land.
- When you jump off the box try to land softly.
- When you jump off the box pretend there's a puddle and try to make a ripple not a splash.

All of these are the same movements but with different cues. Create cues that your student understands. Play with presenting the information in various ways. Outside of your *comfort zone*.

The more we explore outside of what we know or are comfortable with, the greater our *comfort zone* will be. I am biased, however, in my experience. Adaptive is a fun and challenging way to expand your zone. I encourage you to get out of your *comfort zone* this season.

Written by,

Charley Phelan, NI Adaptive Educator, Steamboat Springs



## NI Articles Cont'd

### 10 Tips for Taking your Exam

You invest a lot of time, energy and money into preparing for your certification exam. The high-stakes nature of an exam adds a layer of stress to the event. Whether you are totally Zen or quaking in your boots at the thought of exams, the following tips can help you prepare and show up in your best form on the day of your exam:

1. **Choose your gear early.**  
A month or two before your exam, choose the gear you will use. You should be comfortable performing all the exam tasks on this equipment. Buy new gear and get your boots fitted well in advance of the exam so you have time to get used to the changes.
2. **Tune your gear, then test it out.**  
Get your gear tuned about a week before the exam. Then make sure your gear is performing the way you want it to before you arrive at your exam. Equipment issues the day of the exam can at best, interrupt your day, and at worst, lead to injury.
3. **Train like crazy, but with focus.**  
It's great to get tons of training from a variety of sources, but hone in early on trainers who help you the most. As your exam approaches, focus your training to one or two essential changes. The last week, practice the changes you've made so the shine through on exam day.
4. **Make an arrival plan.**  
Getting sleep the night before an exam and arriving on time is essential to keeping a clear head. Know where you need to meet in the morning and give yourself extra time to drive and park. If you can, travel the day before your exam and stay somewhere close to the base area.
5. **Don't overdo it the day before the exam.**  
Take it easy the day before your exam so you aren't tired and sore on the big day. Some people like to ski or ride the day before the exam to check out the terrain and snow conditions. If you do, just practice one or two things that will help you the next day. I personally like to take a rest day before the exam.
6. **Hydrate the night before the exam (i.e., don't party).**  
Don't let exam pressure lead to over-imbibing the night before the exam. You've worked too hard to arrive at your exam out-of-sorts.
7. **Pack your bag the night before.**  
Pack your bag, double check that you have all the essentials, and pack extra layers, socks, gloves, goggles, handwarmers, etc., just in case things don't go according to plan. Check the forecast for the next day, but expect the unexpected.
8. **Plan your meals.**  
Plan how you will get breakfast the morning of the exam, and don't skip it. Pack some extra food in case the lunch line is gigantic, and conversely, bring your credit card in case getting back to your bag at lunchtime isn't convenient. Put an easy-to-eat snack in your pocket for chair ride munchies.
9. **Don't forget your meds.**  
The pressure of an exam and the interruption of routine can make you forget essential things, like taking medication. Pack these things the day before and set a reminder on your phone if it'll help you remember to take them.
10. **Bring your lucky penny.**  
Ask yourself, what will help me stay calm and focused during the exam? Plan to do or bring something unrelated to the exam that will help you; just make sure it doesn't interrupt the actual exam. It could be meditating in your car when you arrive, listening to your favorite song as you put on your boots, calling your mom at lunch, rubbing your lucky penny on the chairlift, doing burpees when you're nervous, or whatever else gets you through the day.



Written by,  
Amy Post, NI Alpine DCL, Bogus Basin

# Carve' Diem

Please e-mail articles, photos, ads, etc. for publication to:

[media@psia-ni.org](mailto:media@psia-ni.org)

Subject: Newsletter submission

**PSIA-AASI NI**

P.O. Box 2587

Ketchum, ID 83340

[www.psia-ni.org](http://www.psia-ni.org)

---