



'Honor the History, Secure the Future'

Help fund Nordic Center trails, snow-making expansion program

Dear friend,

In 1521, cross country skiing played a critical role in 24-year-old Gustav Ericksson's successful revolt that led to the independence of Sweden. Nearly 500 years later, Nordic skiing remains a vital and cherished aspect not only in Mora Sweden, but the community of Mora, Minnesota.

For the past 45 years, a small group of dedicated volunteers has run and largely funded the work of Vasaloppet USA, a 501c3 nonprofit. But as we stand at the crossroads of pride in our history and excitement for future growth, it is imperative for Vasaloppet USA to reach out and respectfully seek your financial support.



Over four decades, Vasaloppet USA has drawn thousands of skiers and their families to participate in Nordic ski races and beloved community events. Each February, the race is a source of enormous pride and local economic revenue – except in the increasingly common years where lack of snowfall forces a cancellation or subpar rerouting of the race from the usual forested trails to a repetitive and often icy loop around Lake Mora.

“When a race is cancelled, revenue that supports local youth programs, community ski trails and next year’s race is irretrievably lost,” said board member Wade Weber. “It’s tough to maintain and grow our participants when they never know the fate of the race from year to year.”

We are excited to report that in 2015, Vasaloppet USA voted to free Mora from the whims of Mother Nature, raising funds from a handful of donors to purchase a \$50,000 state of the art snow making system. But this was only the first step.

In order to operate the equipment and ensure the race can be permanently guaranteed no matter the weather, Vasaloppet USA in 2016 is spending:

- \$7,000 for a generator, over \$10,000 to drill a well, \$5,000 for a pumphouse, as well as expense for bulldozing work to develop a new section of trail at the Nordic Center.
- The expense continues with tens of thousands of dollars needed to bury waterlines and install hydrants to make snowmaking and placement of snow on trails more efficient.
- Support to maintain and groom an extended trail system of local practice loops and keep the Nordic Center heated, lit and open to the hundreds of residents and visitors who use it annually.

While each February’s races receive much of the community’s focus, Vasaloppet USA’s work extends far beyond one weekend.

Sadie Petersen began skiing in the Mora Ski Club’s Fast Traks youth program in the seventh grade, joined the the high school team when a friend invited her. Over the next five years, Mora’s ski program gave Sadie an opportunity to develop her skills and discover a natural talent for the sport. When she graduated in 2015, she headed off to college with a full skiing scholarship.

“Skiing is a sport I can use my whole life, it taught me about perseverance and hard work and ultimately it made it possible for me to get a college education,” said Sadie. “I don’t know if I would have any of those things if I wasn’t a skier – and I couldn’t be a skier without all that Vasaloppet USA does for us.”

While uniforms and transportation to ski meets are funded by Mora Public Schools, Vasaloppet USA completely underwrites the greatest costs of the ski program free of charge to local students: keeping trails groomed and lit, and building and maintaining the Nordic Center where the team holds meets and practices in the winter and summer alike.



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Another top top Mora high school skier, Tom Woolhouse, appreciates the value of the Nordic Center and its trail system. "I have met so many skiers from other schools who have to drive an hour just to get to ski practice. I have been so fortunate to be able step right on to the ski trails, maintained by the Vasaloppet, right from the door of the Nordic Center."

Today, we members of the Vasaloppet USA board come to you to seek your partnership in this vital work. We are not content with the status quo – we are striving to:

- Be a return destination for skiers who visit to race and practice. As one of the few trails that does not currently charge entrance fees, we have the potential to become a regular attraction for skiers from across the state and Midwest – especially with guaranteed snow thanks to new equipment
- Support the next generation of skiers with ample snow production and well-groomed trails – ensuring that they can practice regularly and compete with the best skiers in Minnesota
- Improve the quality of life with consistent

access to outdoor winter fitness

- Boost economic development for local shops, restaurants and gas stations
- Offer another less crowded alternative to ski when there is a shortage of natural snow.

This year marks the start of an exciting new era for Vasaloppet USA and all the local programs and citizens it supports. But it can only happen with your support.

Today, we ask for your generous commitment: If you have seen firsthand how our youth ski teams develop great leaders and athletes; If you take pride in Vasaloppet events that fill our town with tourists and volunteers; If you have ever enjoyed a single kilometer of the ski trails we work hard to maintain, we need you today!

Would you consider making a gift of \$50, \$100, \$500 – or any amount you can afford to invest in a program that has given so much to our community? Your donation before December 31 is fully tax-deductible and we vow that we will manage your investments carefully.

