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Richard Kohnstamm

Born: 1926, ^{April 17}
Died: 2006, ^{April 21}

Information submitted by Graham S. Anderson in a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame

Richard Kohnstamm leased Timberline Lodge, in Oregon from the U.S. Forest Service on May 28, 1955, after a chronic history of neglect and mismanagement, and has been a leader in the development of Northwest skiing since that time. An ambitious entrepreneur, Kohnstamm established R.L.K. & Company and renovated Timberline Lodge to be one of the nation's most visited ski lodges. In 1956 he made available the new \$100,00 Pucci Chairlift, named after Emilio Pucci, an Italian designer and ski instructor.

Kohnstamm has dedicated his life to the renaissance and stewardship of this national treasure, tirelessly persuading both Congress and the U.S. Forest Service to make an investment in Timberline Lodge, which they had ignored for many years. Much-needed facilities were added to this magnificent structure following 17 years of three-way cooperation initiated by Kohnstamm. A tireless advocate of social outreach programs for children and handicapped individuals, Kohnstamm continuously promoted the Lodge by developing special activities centered around skiing. This extensive personal commitment to the humanities has been furthered through Timberline's practice of hiring handicapped employees. In 1969, Kohnstamm was awarded the Richard Lang Memorial Award for Amputee Skiing and in 1970 was given the Governor Tom McCall Award for Employment of the Handicapped. The Lodge regularly hosts Kiwanis Camp children's groups, scouts, community action children's groups, blind and deaf children's organizations, and several others. Kohnstamm is also a founding member of Friends of Timberline, an organization devoted to restoration and maintenance of the Lodge and its grounds. With the Friends of Timberline, Kohnstamm was a catalyst in the printing of the first depiction of a ski area on U.S. postal stationery. The stamp release was timed to commemorate Timberline's 50th anniversary.

Kohnstamm pioneered the nation's first ski facilities in 1956; and then in 1978, after extensive planning and development, built the first ski lift in the U.S. to serve both winter and summer skiers. Because of the Palmer Chairlift, Timberline has the longest skiing season in the country, starting about mid November and continuing through Labor Day every year.

A first in American skiing, the ability to train during non-winter months high in the Cascades of the Pacific Northwest has drawn national and international racing schools. Both the United States and Canadian National Ski Teams use the Palmer Snowfield as an official training site as well as Japanese, Swedish, and Korean National Ski Teams. Timberline's notable summer skis school and race camp program is the oldest in the United States.

Kohnstamm has served on the boards of the National Ski Area Association, and on the state of Oregon's Winter Recreational Advisory Committee, where he helped devise and extremely successful statewide Sno-park program.

In 1982, Kohnstamm was awarded the prestigious Aubrey Watzek award for "the vision, love and energy he has devoted to preserving Timberline Lodge; and for his foresight in developing ski facilities that are truly unique to the North American continent."

Richard L. Kohnstamm was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1992.

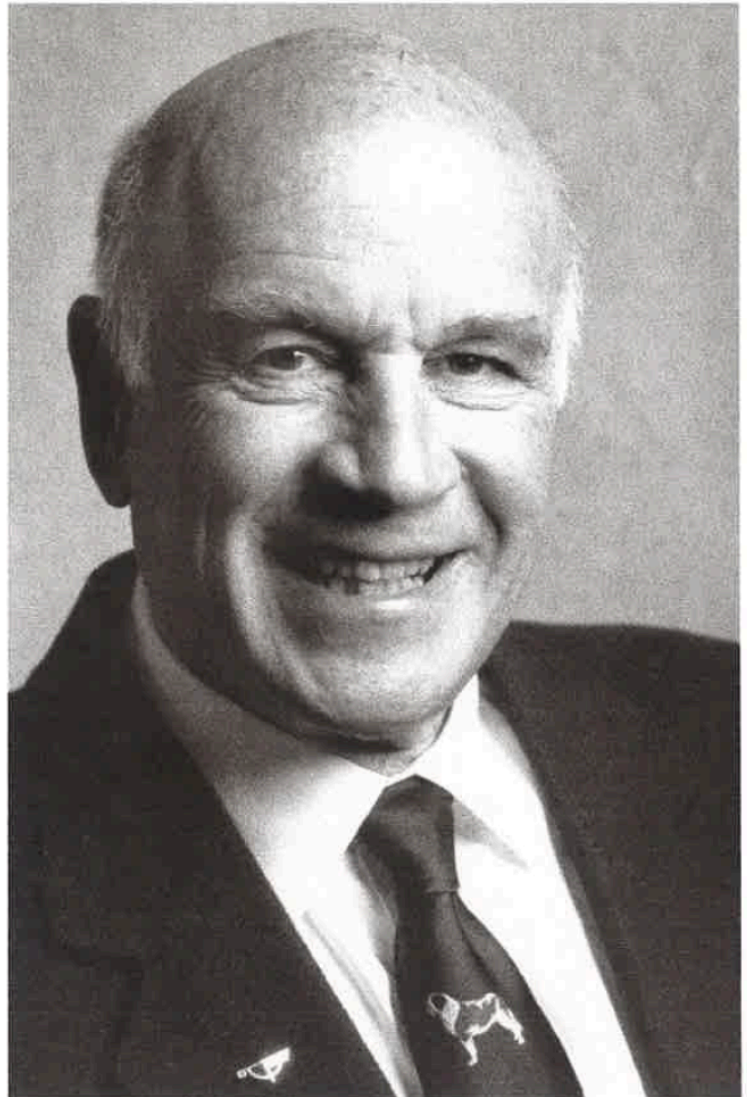


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