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To The Slope Raker
A poem of Honor and Humility
By Laurie Zimmerman

Tonight I give thanks for the man
alongside the 38-meter jump my girl flies off
in her red suit, tipped skis so high up she looks like
the blot of a cardinal spread-eagled in air, then descending,
precisely alighting on the once-ruffed path the man has smoothed
with his rake, gently settling on her skis instead of bouncing toward the trees.

I breathe thanks for the man, bundled in down vest and hood, who
trundles out after each jumper to work without fanfare, so I
ring my cowbell for him and hope he can hear it. I wish
to say that though he never looks up, there's moonlight
hung like silk over his January slope, another new
year begun in muted blue fire. I give him
thanks for safe landings, for the way she
and I have just glided downhill.

Tim Norris Retires After 35 Years Of Coaching

By Chuck Will
Proctor Academy

Tim Norris has retired from coaching ski jumping for both Proctor and Andover Outing Club and has been honored with the John W. McCrillis Award by the Sunapee Area Ski Club.

Tim, who came to Proctor as a teacher in 1966, began coaching ski jumping in 1976 when his son, Matthew, expressed interest in the sport. He established Andover Outing Club to introduce younger kids to jumping and Nordic skiing, and soon gained the support of parent volunteers who helped both with fundraising and the actual construction of jumps at Proctor's Blackwater Ski Area.

Over the years, the Town of Andover became the center of ski jumping in the Northeast, as Tim attracted more – and better – athletes, including six who competed at the international and Olympic levels.

Tim received the John W. McCrillis Award (to an “unsung volunteer who advances the sport of skiing”) at a dinner celebration held at Mount Sunapee on March 19. Hundreds of ski enthusiasts, coaches, friends, and former jumpers from across New England enjoyed testimonials to this legendary coach.

In a letter, former US Ski Team Olympian Jed Hinkley observed, “During the Nordic World Championships in 2003, the Andover Outing Club was the



On his final day as coach, Tim Norris offers advice to Jake Hubbard. Photo: Chuck Will

best-represented organization on the US Ski Team: not Steamboat Springs, not Lake Placid, not Park City, but the little town of Andover, New Hampshire. This is because of Tim.”

Past Olympian Carl Van Loan writes, “The thousands of hours Tim spent caring for and guiding young individuals – not only on the ski jump hill, but also in life – have been more valuable than words can express. It is not a coincidence that four Olympians and six National Team members came out of a tiny little place like Andover Outing Club. Tim has played an integral role in every one of our lives.”

Congratulations to Tim Norris on this award and for a career of accomplishment and inspiration!

BEACON DEADLINE: THE 15th!

Please have your ad, article, photo, letter, etc. to the Beacon by the 15th of each month! Or at least let us know by then the date it's coming.

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