



For Immediate Release

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PRESIDENT AND MRS. GERALD R. FORD AND THE FORD FAMILY TO BE HONORED AS LEGENDS OF HONOR FOR THEIR SKIING LEGACY DURING 2007 COUNTRYWIDE AMERICAN SKI CLASSIC

VAIL, Colorado-- Since first vacationing and skiing in the Vail Valley with his family in 1968, the late former President Gerald R. Ford has been the valley's foremost ambassador, both on and off the slopes, as well as for the sport itself.

During Ford's tenure as the 38th President of the United States, the slopes of Vail Mountain became known as the "Western White House" as legions of "inconspicuous" Secret Service agents and the national media corps attempted to keep up with the Ford family. His high profile presence in a ski setting helped to promote both the resort and the sport.

With the Jerry Ford Invitational Golf tournament already a fixture on Vail's summer calendar, Ford suggested that a winter version of the JFI might well be in order. This idea ultimately resulted in the creation of what is now known as the American Ski Classic, which celebrates its 25th anniversary in March of 2007.

The seeds of the Ski Classic were sown in 1981 with Beaver Creek's hosting of the Jerry Ford Celebrity Cup ski race, an event that also marked the inaugural event for the newly opened resort. Not only did Ford serve as the official host for the event, but he also participated in the Ford Cup race until his knees would no longer allow him to compete.

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Ford Family Selected As 2007 Legends Of Honor

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President Ford also played an integral role in bringing the 1989 and 1999 World Alpine Ski Championships to Vail and Beaver Creek, serving as Honorary Chairman of the Organizing Committee for both events, while also working behind the scenes to help secure funding and support for these Championships.

President and Mrs. Ford and the Ford family will join previous Legend of Honor recipients including:

1984	Emile Allais	1996	Barney McLean
1985	Birger Ruud	1997	Anderl Molterer
1986	Dick Durrance & Gretchen Fraser	1998	Nancy Greene-Raine
1987	Toni Seelos	1999	Pepi Gramshammer
1988	Stein Eriksen	2000	Marielle & Christine Goitschel
1989	Freidl Pfeifer	2001	Toni Sailer
1990	Karl Molitor	2002	Billy Kidd & Jimmie Heuga
1991	The Werner Family	2003	Gustavo Thoeni
1992	Andrea Mead Lawrence	2004	Bob Beattie
1993	Christl Cranz	2005	Bernhard Russi
1994	Christian Pravda	2006	Rosi Mittermaier-Neureuther
1995	Tom Corcoran	2007	President Gerald Ford & Family

The 2007 Countrywide American Ski Classic is a project of the Vail Valley Foundation. For additional information on the Countrywide American Ski Classic or the Vail Valley Foundation, visit www.vvf.org.