

National Poetry Month

# THE MOUNTAIN EAR

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## Gilpin soccer reaches new heights



PHOTO BY DAVE GIBSON

### Eagles vs. Goldiggers

Jiselle Osteboe works her way around a defender in a one-sided affair. See story page 8.

## DoJoe Memorial Uphill/Downhill Race

DAVE GIBSON  
ELDORA MOUNTAIN RESORT

Joe Despres was a young man in his early twenties when he moved from Massachusetts to Colorado. Like many before him and since, he was in search of a simpler life – one with wide open spaces in beautiful surroundings where it

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PHOTO BY DAVE GIBSON

### Raising money for avalanche awareness

In remembrance of Joe Despres, the DoJoe is traditionally a costumed event.

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### “QUOTE OF THE WEEK”

“You see things; and you say – Why? But I dream things that never were; and I say – Why not?” – George Bernard Shaw



# DoJoe Memorial Uphill/Downhill Race

*Continued from page 1*

was still possible to connect with the natural world on a daily basis.

Incredibly intelligent and a gifted artist, it seemed that he was always reading. His work as a tree trimmer facilitated his relocation, but it was time off spent recreating outdoors that became his passion.

An amazing athlete, he stood six feet, four inches tall, with muscles that come from being blessed with good genes and always pushing one's physical limits, his endurance never ebbed. Skiing, hiking and mountain biking were favorite pastimes.

On one occasion while hiking, Despres and his best friends Chris and Catherine Camp summited three 13,000 ft. peaks (James, Bancroft, and Parry) in a single outing.

November 28, 2001, was a day like countless others Despres had spent enjoying the outdoors. Beacons, probes, and shovels were



PHOTOS BY DAVE GIBSON

### Testing one's limits

Top: Participants prepare to run to their skies at the start of the race. Bottom: The DoJoe coincided with Retro Weekend.

among their gear as he and friend Peter Vaughn went telemark skiing above Yankee Doodle Lake on Rollins Pass Road. For the third

consecutive day, they gleefully carved turns systematically working their way down the

*Continued on page 21*

## 22nd Annual DoJoe Memorial Uphill/Downhill Race Final Results

### Alpine Touring (M)

- 1st – David Giardini 27:14.4
- 2nd – Daniel Feeney 31:25.9
- 3rd – Patrick Ryan 35:04.2

### Alpine Touring (W)

- 1st – Megan Cooke 34:45.5
- 2nd – Meredith Powlison 37:45.5
- 3rd – Mari Gobitz 37:56.7

### Telemark (M)

- 1st – Matt Tomasko 38:47.2
- 2nd – Murray Smith 42:09.9
- 3rd – Jack Kerby-Miller 45:07.5

### Splitboard (M)

- 1st – Justin Daerr 37:03.2
- 2nd – Austin Messaros 41:47.9
- 3rd – Michael Fields 45:55.1

### Splitboard (W)

- 1st – McKenzie Schrank 1:00:32.5
- 2nd – Karyn Stockdale 2:13:37.4

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PHOTOS BY DAVE GIBSON

# DoJoe

Continued from page 20

mountain one at a time. Early season conditions were good and the snowpack seemed stable until tragedy struck.

In an instant, without warning, the deep snow that brought so much pleasure broke loose and enveloped the two skiers. Impossible to ski out or stay on top of the fray, all of Despres' physical attributes and experience were no match for the overwhelming force of the 400-foot-wide avalanche that took his life at just 29 years of age.

Vaughn was also buried, but somehow managed to cover his face to form a small air pocket from which to breathe. The ice on Yankee Doodle Lake shattered when the slide carrying the unfortunate skiers hit its surface.

Soaked in ice-cold water, Vaughn was able to free one of his arms and partially work his way out of the compressed snow to daylight. There was no signal from Despres

on Vaughn's radio beacon and his wet cell phone was dead. It took a half hour swimming in slush and clawing through giant chunks of ice and snow to reach the shore.

Unable to locate his friend, with no good options and his own life in immediate peril, Vaughn began running down Jenny Creek Trail to reach help. Two and a half hours later, in an epic account of self-rescue and survival, suffering from severe hypothermia and frostbite to his hands and feet, he was found stumbling his way down Jolly Jug Trail at Eldora. Despres' lifeless body was recovered from the lake as the water began to refreeze late that evening.

After Joe Despres' passing, those who were closest to him created the annual DoJoe Memorial Uphill/Downhill Race in his honor. Held at Eldora Mountain Resort on April 14, 2024, it now marks twenty-two years that they've kept his spirit alive. A course that would challenge even Joe, entrants headed uphill on Bonanza and Jolly Jug Trails to the Pipeline traverse. From there they skied down the double black diamond West Ridge Trail to the finish line. Trophies were awarded

### On a challenging course

Top, left: The early leader looks back on the competition. Top, right: The uphill portion was grueling. Bottom: It was Bruce Edgerly's third time competing in the race.

for the fastest participants in the different classes, slowest finisher, and best costume. \$7,000 was raised and donated to the Friends

of Colorado Avalanche Information Center that supports avalanche education and awareness efforts as well as forecasting and operations.



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