

# Central Oregon Avalanche Association

## 2017-2018 Annual Report



## Table of Contents

Background.....	3
Website.....	4
Media.....	4
Education.....	5
Weather Station.....	6
Fundraising and Events.....	6
Volunteers.....	9
Future.....	9

## **New as of 2017/2018**

- Recognized by the American Avalanche Association and National Avalanche Center as a Type 2 Center.
- Hired a Development Director (Zoe Roy) to run day to day activities of COAA, plan and execute events, and fundraise.

## **2017/2018 Season in Review in Numbers**

Pro Observations: 84

Public Observations: 44

Bi-Weekly Snowpack Summary: 49

Gross Fundraising dollars: \$44,859.81

Expenditures: \$38,776.24

Net Revenue: \$6,083.57

Members: 179

Volunteers: 15

## **Background**

The Central Oregon Avalanche Association (COAA), an Oregon 501c3 non-profit, was founded in 2009 as a result of an identified need to promote increased avalanche awareness and bolster local forecasting opportunities in the Central Oregon region. Our present focus is to organize and support avalanche educational opportunities and provide information about snow conditions in the Central Oregon area.

The Central Oregon region addressed by COAA encompasses the Cascade Range from south of Mt. Hood to Klamath Falls/Pelican Butte, and is centered on the Three Sisters Wilderness.

COAA is run by a volunteer Board of Directors. The current board is made up of the following individuals: Trevor Miller, Kevin Grove, Aaron Hartz, Adam Stroup, Alli Miles, and Jon Tapper. The COAA Board seats run on a 2-year term, with a possible total of 7 Board Member seats.

COAA is presently involved in:

- Community avalanche education events,
- Web-based distribution of relevant mountain snow and weather data via the COAA Pro Observer Network,
- Physical “Are You Beeping?” signage at high use backcountry entry points,
- Coordination with entities such as National Weather Service, U.S. Forest Service, the National Avalanche Center and other professional avalanche organizations to identify potential future partnerships, coverage gaps and equipment needed to bolster and improve forecasting,
- Provide funding to support the Pro Observer Network, maintain the COAA website, and to assist in the purchase of equipment identified as the best benefit to the general public (i.e. backcountry weather stations),

- Community events that promote backcountry travel, safety, and gear and raise funds for COAA-identified needs.

With the implementation of the Pro Observer Network, four/weekly snow observations and two/weekly snowpack summaries, COAA has effectively transitioned to a Type 2 avalanche center (meaning it employs part-time avalanche forecasters who work for the avalanche association in addition to other non-COAA related duties). Type 1 and 2 avalanche centers have a minimum level of funding necessary to meet personnel and equipment requirements, issue daily advisories, and provide ample avalanche education throughout the season. In their inaugural season as a Type 2 forecast center, COAA Pro Observers collected snowpack and weather data from various locations within the advisory area.

Pro Observers are contracted by COAA for the season for a predetermined number of observations during the winter months. Avalanche information 2017-2018 season totals:

Total 2017-2018 Observations: 128 (7% increase over 2016-2017 season)

- COAA Pro Observer observations: 84 (12% increase over 2016-2017 season)
- COAA Public observations: 44 (2% decrease over 2016-2017 season)
- COAA Snowpack summaries: 49 (same as 2016-2017 season)

Pro Observers were compensated for their time at approximately \$108 per observation. Our two forecasting pro observers were compensated at a flat rate of \$5000 for the season. Total cost of the Pro Observer program for the 2017-2018 season was \$13,472.

## **Website – [www.coavalanche.org](http://www.coavalanche.org)**

COAA continues to contract with an outside agency on the design and maintenance of the COAA website. Two years ago the COAA Board of Directors approved the further updating of the website to make it more intuitive, user friendly, and consistent with other avalanche centers in terms of iconography and graphics, as well as providing promotional space for organization sponsors; this update continues to have significant impact on the website statistics.

Site visits and use increased substantially between the 2013-2014 and the 2014-2015 seasons, dipped 2015-2016, increased in the 2016-2017 season and dipped again this past season. COAA believes that this year’s below average snowpack impacted the overall visits to the website, and that an average or above-average snowfall year will increase the numbers significantly. Of note is our bounce rate continues to decrease and page views per session has increased indicating visitors to our page are spending time and interacting with information provided.

37% of the page views were associated with entry to the COAA Home page and 10% were to the Observations landing page. 29% of site traffic was tied to individual observations (2.5% uptick from prior year) with surprisingly only 8% to the newly formatted bi-weekly Snowpack Summaries. The COAA weather station interface saw a 1000% increase in usage suggesting its usefulness to the backcountry community.

Website analytics for the COAA website for 2017-2018:

<b>Total Visits</b>	<b>Total Unique Visitors</b>	<b>Page Views</b>	<b>Pages/Visit</b>
25,628 visits (18% decrease over prior year)	8,246 unique visitors (16% decrease over prior year)	77,741 page views (11% decrease over prior year)	Average of 3.03 pages (8% increase over prior year)

## **Social and Traditional Media Exposure**

COAA social media presence continues to grow significantly. This growth is organic and is not a result of paid promotions.

**INSTAGRAM:** The COAA Instagram page (<https://www.instagram.com/coavy/>) currently has 1448 followers (33% increase) and made 66 posts (similar to 2016-2017) during the 2017-2018 season.

**FACEBOOK:** The COAA Facebook page (<https://www.instagram.com/coavy/>) has 1,515 page likes (13% increase).

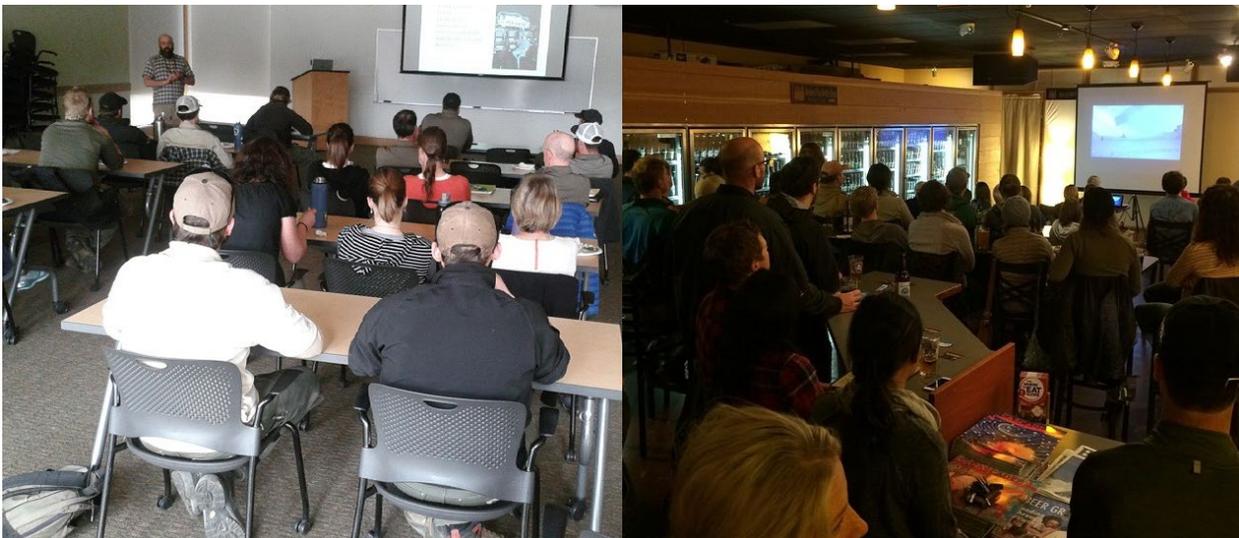
**TWITTER:** The COAA Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/coavy>) has 151 followers (15% increase) and 479 tweets (138% increase).

**MAILING LIST:** COAA collects emails at events as well as via its website. The mailing list grew to 993 subscribers (24% increase) during the 2017-2018 season. Twelve email campaigns were sent for the 2016-2017 season and open rates averaged around 33%.

**TV/RADIO/NEWSPAPER:** COAA staff conducted several interviews throughout the season with television and print outlets. COAA was featured on KTVZ TV, KTVZ.com, MyWindow, The Bend Bulletin newspaper, The Source newspaper. Most of these interviews focused on avalanche awareness and education opportunities in Central Oregon.

## **Education**

COAA presented nine “Know Before You Go” avalanche awareness classes during the 2017-2018 season, six in Bend and three in Salem.



The target audience for these clinics was either motorized or non-motorized winter backcountry enthusiasts. Attendee experience with backcountry travel and avalanche education spanned the spectrum from novice to Avy Level 2-3.

The primary focus at the Know Before You Go presentation was to introduce attendees to what avalanches are, the dangers associated with avalanches, basics in avoiding avalanches, and an overview of avalanche rescue. The secondary focus was to inform those attending to what COAA is about and how COAA can assist them with

finding additional avalanche education opportunities, avalanche advisories, and web-based avalanche information products. It was also stressed that the success of COAA is dependent on community involvement and financial support.

To the casual observer, these clinics may appear to not have much of an impact, as they are short in duration and only provide a basic overview of avalanche safety and the avalanche center. But these avalanche awareness clinics are a vital part of the avalanche safety loop. Clinics provide the foundation to attendees who may have never considered hazards associated with avalanches, where and how to obtain avalanche-related information, and perhaps advancing their avalanche safety skills by taking a more in-depth avalanche course. These clinics are critical to improving avalanche safety in our region and for our family and friends.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>City</b>	<b># of Attendees</b>
12/6/2017	Know Before You Go	Broken Top Bottle Shop	SheJumps	Bend	75-85
12/7/2017	Know Before You Go	Salem Summit	COAA	Salem	14
12/13/2017	Know Before You Go	Broken Top Bottle Shop	COAA	Bend	70-80
1/9/2018	Know Before You Go	Pringle Hall	Oregon Nordic Club	Salem	18
1/10/2018	Know Before You Go	Broken Top Bottle Shop	COAA	Bend	20-30
1/17/2018	Know Before You Go	Pietro's Pizza	COAA	Salem	29
2/7/2018	Know Before You Go	Broken Top Bottle Shop	COAA	Bend	15-20
2/19/2018	Know Before You Go	Elk Lodge	Central Oregon Snowbusters	Bend	40
3/1/2018	Know Before You Go	Western Oregon University	Western Oregon University Outdoor Recreation		48
3/13/2018	Know Before You Go	Broken Top Bottle Shop	COAA	Bend	20

## **Weather Station**

One of the major fundraising goals of the 2015-2016 season was the purchase of a Campbell Scientific GRWS100 weather station, to be installed on Moon Mountain, just outside the Three Sisters Wilderness. The goal was accomplished and the weather station was installed in the fall of 2016. The Campbell Scientific GRWS100 weather station monitors wind speed, wind direction, air temperature, relative humidity, and barometric pressure, and the data is uploaded to the COAA website for the public's benefit. This past winter took its toll on the equipment and it was down for several weeks in the middle of the season. Maintenance on the weather station is performed by COAA Pro Observers and volunteers. COAA has received feedback that the link on the COAA website to the weather station data needs to be made more obvious. This will be improved for next season.

## **Fundraising and Events**

COAA had a successful year of fundraising efforts allowing us to continue to support our programs and contracted observers and development director. We saw a 21% increase in fundraising/sponsorship revenue but at the same time a 82% increase in expenditures as we bring more programs and particularly paid forecasters online to support bolstered information exchange for the Central Oregon user base.

### **Memberships:**

COAA continues fostering community engagement through the membership drive. One hundred and seventy nine memberships were sold throughout the year, raising approximately \$7000. Each individual received a tax-donation acknowledgement letter as well as a unique 2018 member sticker along with a hat or t-shirt depending on the level of membership purchased. Members were entered into a drawing for a free Avy Level 1 class purchased by COAA.

### **TGR:**

Continuing a partnership that began in 2009, COAA was again able to leverage a relationship with Teton Gravity Research to host two showings of their film "Rogue Elements" at the Tower Theater on September 28th. Tickets were sold at Skjersaas Ski Shop, Crow's Feet Commons, Pine Mountain Sports, The Tower Theater, and online at tetongravity.com. Attendance exceeded expectations with both showings selling out the 480-seat Tower Theater. Teton Gravity Research generously provided the rental and insurance fees for both events and sent sponsor product to be used as a fundraiser for a COAA raffle. Other raffle items were provided by outdoor and local companies at COAA's request, with over \$3000 in items available between the two events. Proceeds totaled \$4000.

### **Movie Nights:**

Pine Mountain Sports generously donated their shop and man power to host two movie nights with all proceeds benefiting COAA. Between the two nights approximately \$750 was raised on COAA's behalf.

### **Fresh Tracks:**

A new fundraising initiative as of this season was the planning and implementation of the **Fresh Tracks Fall Fundraiser**. 10 Barrel generously provided their event space, food and drinks at a reduced cost and 200 people attended to mingle with fellow backcountry enthusiasts, bid on silent auction items, enjoy music provided by Strive Roots and immortalize the night with a photo booth sponsored by Mountain Supply. COAA raised almost \$9000 and considered it a very successful first fundraiser of its kind. The second annual Fresh Tracks is scheduled for fall 2018.

### **VertFest:**

For the sixth year in a row, COAA partnered with Mt. Bachelor to host Vertfest on April 7th, 2018. Vertfest is a multi-stop mountain festival dedicated to raising the level of snow safety education and stoke for backcountry enthusiasts, and supporting the efforts of avalanche centers everywhere.



Registration at Vertfest decreased somewhat (115 racers in 2017 vs. 85 in 2018), which may have been due to inclement conditions the day of the race. Racers received awesome swag with gear from Hydro Flask, Picky Bars and Voile. The clinics offered by Oregon Ski Guides (Introduction to Backcountry Skiing/Snowboarding and Companion Rescue) were well attended and generated a lot of enthusiasm. The Vendor Village was located at the base of Red Chair and was a huge success, with a dozen vendor tents, fire pit, 10 Barrel beer tastings, Humm kombucha samples, Picky Bars and Oats samples, and ski and snowboard demos provided by Crow's Feet Commons, Mountain Supply, Snoplanks, Jones Snowboards, DynaFit and Spark R&D. Product donations totaled over \$3000. Between racer registration and sponsor support, the total funds raised by the 2018 Vertfest were approximately \$5000 (a decrease from the prior year's \$6800).



Since its inception, COAA has seen phenomenal product support from outdoor recreation and local companies for its raffles and prizes. COAA would like to acknowledge the product and cash donations of the following companies over the past year:

Hydro Flask | Outdoor Research | Picky Bars | Spark R&D | Mt. Bachelor | Cheetah Factory Racing | Patagonia | Snoplanks | Ortovox | Voile | Giant Loop | Patagonia | Oregon Ski Guides | Three Sisters Backcountry | Pine Mountain Sports | Crow's Feet Commons | Mountain Supply of Oregon | Sunnyside Sports | Skjersaa's | New York City Sub Shop | 10 Barrel | Teton Gravity Research | The Ski Journal | Frequency – The Snowboarder's Journal | BCA | Pizza Mondo | Kebaba | Strictly Organic | Ruffwear | Blackstrap | BendBroadband | Patagonia of Bend | Progressive Screen Printing | BendBroadBand | Skjersaa Group | New Sun Energy | Wild Oregon Foods | Free Range Equipment | Petzl | Wildish | Ruffwear | Bunk & Brew | Rebound Physical Therapy | Tailgate Industries | NW Alpine | Dirksen Derby | Pro Caliber | Central Oregon Adventures | Black Diamond | Trew | Bend Rock Gym | North Drinkware | Cairn | Hoodoo | AquaGlide | The North Face | Jones Snowboards | DynaFit | Osprey | Rumble | Ben & Jerry's Bend

## **Volunteers and Valued Supporters**

The many events put on by COAA would not be possible without the help of a great group of people, including: Bruce Moffatt, Mt. Bachelor, Pete Keane and Oregon Ski Guides, Dan McGarigle and Pine Mountain Sports staff, David Marchi and Crow's Feet Commons staff, Mountain Supply and many others.

## **The Future of COAA**

COAA is currently a bare bones Type 2 avalanche center and is exploring the possibility of becoming a Type 1 and what is required for this to happen. Being a Type 1 center means that COAA would have the means to support two full time forecasters and provide daily avalanche bulletins. This has been a goal since the inception of COAA and is in the three to five year plan.

Potential future collaborations and partnerships with NWAC and the Deschutes National Forest Service are still being explored.

The newest addition to the event calendar is a Bend Snow & Avalanche Workshop that will take place on November 10th 2018 at a space donated by the Central Oregon Community College. The goal is to increase avalanche awareness and raise funds for COAA. The Bend SAW will be a one day event with 10-15 speakers brought in from around the country. Tickets to the event will cost \$40 and COAA is looking forward to providing this educational opportunity to the Central Oregon community.

2017/2018 Members: We apologize for any missed names, some members writing can be hard to decipher when pulled from various event lists.

Adam Drummer	Dani Reese	Judy Lear	Peter Sedivec
Adam Zagorsky	David Peckham	Justin Penfield	Phil Pga
AK Leave	Devon Alvarez	Kaylie Harrison	RD Cleary
Amy Therien	Em Micho	Keith Kessarais	Rick Delth
Andrew Adamski	Eric Willis	Kierston Sorensen	Rick Dethman
Andrew Traylor	Erika Kearn	KM Kleavland	Rollston Frangopoulos
Annie Fast	Erin Butler	Kyle Schaefer	Ruth Williamson
Ari Dawn	Frank Groundwater	Lev Stryker	Ryan Trout
Ashley Ryan	Fred Roy	Lisa Perazzoli	Samantha Studin
BC Regan	George Craig	Mara Burnell	Sarah Fuller
Ben Brewer	Gillian Salton	Mark Simila	Scot Kellar
Bobby Treadell	Glen Haupt	Marsh Chamerlain	Scott Rowles
Brad Fly	Gregory Miller	Matt Bacigalupi	Seth McGovern
Brady Sherwood	Heather Johnson	Matt Garner	Spencer Dahl
Brendan M	Jack Klarr	Matt Whiteley	Staci Arney
Brendan Mclver	James Moro	Maurice Dojowich	Stan Clare
Brent Edens	James Scott	Mc Kibben	Stan Hohm
Brian Bollwitt	Jaron Ellis	Micah Rushing	Steve Aliberti
Brian Ladd	Jason Albert	Michael Hodge	Talon Burkett
Carli Gaines	Jay Dicherry	Michael Mallin	Taylor Bacci
Chad Ornberg	Jeff Johnson	Michelle Williford	Tia Rooney
Cheryl Czapla	Jeff Johnston	Mike Allen	Tony Cosby
Chris Henderson	Jennie Alvarez	Mike Johnson	Tosch Roy
Chris Luzier	Jill Perry	Monica Welcker	Trevor Christianson
Christoper Minson	Jim Mead	Muffy Roy	Tyler Swan
Claire Powell	John Collins	Natalie Kunz	Tyson Adams
Cory Poulin	John Jackson	Neal Muldoon	Zach Hill
Curtis Cizek	Jonathon May	Pat Donah	
Dan Serpico	Josh Suran	Pete Caligiuri	