

CORPORATE BACKGROUNDER

COMPANY DESCRIPTION - SAFETY FIRST - BIOGRAPHY OF MIKE WIEGELE

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Founded in 1970 by Mike Wiegele, Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing lies in the heart of the magnificent Cariboo and Monashee Mountains and plays host to a variety of summer and winter activities. Our skiing area terrain spans over 1.2 million acres (4,550 sq. km), encompassing over 1,000 peaks and runs. It is one of the world's most productive snow belts for high quality, reliable powder snow, where consistent accumulations of 30 feet or more is normal.

Located on the scenic shores of Eleanor Lake, the resort consists of beautiful spruce and pine log buildings. The Resort features 24 guest chalets, Lodge, Administration Building/Guest Lobby, Sports Shop, Laundry, and Guides Haus.

The 22,000-sq. ft. main lodge is home to our Powdermax Dining Room where under the direction of our Executive Chef Toni Spöri, fully trained chefs take pleasure in pleasing both the eye and the palate. The Silver Buckle Lounge, Boutique, Games Room, and Fitness Center are all also located in the main lodge. Newly renovated, the Fitness Center provides guests with access to 50 Nautilus machines, a stretch room with a 34'x45' suspended hardwood floor, seven massage rooms, whirlpool, and men's and ladies' change rooms complete with showers and sauna.

Accommodations at Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing range from standard rooms to luxury and private chalets. Our chalets range from two to six, double-occupancy bedrooms, each equipped with private bath and telephone. As well, all chalets feature a fully equipped kitchen and living room with large stone fireplace. In selected chalets, additional amenities include satellite TV, VCR/DVD, internet access, in-room safe, sundeck, Jacuzzi tub & steam shower.

The ultimate in luxury is The Bavarian House Estate built in 1990. It is a private self-contained residence across Eleanor Lake and 10 minutes walking distance from our main lodge. Ideal for small parties of two to ten people, the property is home to a six bedroom, 9,000-sq. ft. Bavarian House and a three bedroom 6,000-sq. ft. Cabana. Both homes embody the finest examples of log craftsmanship, customized to satisfy even the most discriminating taste. The meticulously manicured grounds boast a tennis court, pond, gazebo and outdoor fireplace.

Albreda Lodge opened December 2004. Located on the south side of Mount Albreda just 28 miles (45 km) north of Blue River, near the highest peak in the region, Albreda presents a matchless experience in exclusive luxury. Albreda Lodge was inspired from the old lodges of Europe, handcrafted from huge reused timbers and accommodates up to 20 guests. The Albreda Lodge is equipped with a fiber-optic link to the Blue River Heli-Village including a video link from the Guides Haus. Other features are high-end gourmet meals, full range of powder gear and other big mountain accessories. The lodge also boasts its own ski shop and boutique, fitness room, sauna, hot tub, climbing wall and massage therapists. All rooms have a telephone, wireless internet and TV.

MWHS has recently purchased property in Avola, B.C., approximately 39 kilometers from Blue River, to build a private lodge similar to the Albreda Lodge in both aesthetics and ambiance.

Convenient Location

Blue River is situated a comfortable 2.5hr drive north of Kamloops, BC, via Hwy #5, making the Resort easily accessible by car or bus. Air Canada offers non-stop daily flights from Vancouver, BC and Calgary, AB to Kamloops, where a host picks up guests on our courtesy shuttle bus. West Jet has also introduced a new daily flight from Calgary, AB.

Built to accommodate private aircraft, a 5,600-foot airstrip is located approximately 5km from the Blue River Heli-Village. Uniglobe Specialty Travel arranges bookings for the Powder Express which is a scheduled direct flight from Vancouver to Blue River that runs on Saturdays during our winter season. Local services include two grocery stores, two service stations, post office, elementary school, Red Cross Outpost, ambulance service, library, motels and two campgrounds.

The Guides

Our professionally trained guides, certified by the Canadian Ski Guides Association (CSGA) or equivalent organization, are also Certified Ski Instructors and are chosen for their ability to provide our guests with an exciting and memorable vacation, while caring for their safety and comfort at all times. In addition to their technical qualifications, they also possess strong interpersonal and communication skills. Most of our senior guides have been involved with our operation for more than ten years.

The Helicopters

Through our association with Vancouver Island Helicopters, who have been in operation since 1955, we are able to offer our guests the use of specially designed & equipped helicopters; three Bell 212 twin engine helicopters and seven of the smaller but powerful A-Star's. The pilots have extensive mountain flying training and experience. Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing has invested in a newly expanded, heated hangar in which all of the Helicopters are serviced to improve and more deliver more reliable service.

The Grizzly Hut

The Grizzly Hut, located high in the Monashee Mountain range, serves as an emergency shelter, educational and cultural center. The Grizzly Hut is also the perfect place to stop for a leisurely lunch-break or enjoy a Heli-picnic.

Our Summer Experience

Since 1992 we have been operating year-round. Summertime in Blue River is full of opportunities to be outside enjoying the awe-inspiring surroundings of the Cariboo and Monashee Mountains. The Resort offers a variety of Helicopter activities including sightseeing, picnics, hiking, walking, fly-fishing, mountain biking, and summer glacier skiing. Not all activities are limited to using a helicopter - through our Sports Shop we offer our guests the chance to explore the area on bike, foot, or water.

Our Winter Experience

Winter is the season that highlights the magnificence of the Cariboo and Monashee Mountains. Whether it is the sense of freedom from carving turns down a blanket of snow on one of the high alpine glaciers or experiencing the challenge of a steep tree run, our wide variety of terrain lets us find exciting Heli-skiing and Heli-snowboarding for any ability level. We offer three, five and seven day winter skiing packages available in Deluxe, Elite or Private Tours. All of our packages include accommodations, meals, and unlimited vertical. We also offer Snowcat and Heli-skiing/boarding packages, for those that seek an introduction to powder skiing and boarding.

While our Resort is located at a low elevation of 2,240-ft. (690m), skiing takes place from 3,400 – 11,600-ft. (1,046 – 3,569m) with an average landing of approximately 8,000-ft. (2,462m), alleviating any problems with acclimatization. Our skiers do approximately 130,000 vertical per week, and about 20,000 per day (an average of eight – ten runs) determined by snow conditions, weather, and the ability of the skiers.

Winter temperatures average around -7°C (20°F), but we have experienced temperatures as low as -30°C (-18°F).

Spring Skiing

The months of April and May are a special time of the season for us. Favored by Mike for the covered glacier crevasses and generally a more stable snow pack, this time of year allows us to set forth deeper into the mountains for steeper runs and chutes.

Snowcat Skiing

In 2007, Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing began commercially offering Snowcat skiing and boarding to our guests. Located on Saddle Mountain, we offer 3 or 4 day Snowcat skiing packages and Snowcat and heli-skiing combination packages. Snowcat skiing/boarding offers a relaxed introduction to back country skiing and mountain safety skills, helping to build confidence in all types of terrain and snow conditions – including powder. Guides work with guests to develop skiing and boarding techniques, creating the perfect opportunity to increase skills on Snowcat terrain or transition to heli-skiing/boarding. Less experienced skiers and riders are guided down gentle terrain at a relaxed pace, while more advanced skiers and riders can experience the challenge of descending 2,500-3,500 vertical feet on both powder and groomed terrain. By the start of the 2009/2010 season we will be expanding our Snowcat terrain to include Ptarmigan and Duffy's Mountain.

SAFETY FIRST

Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing (MWHS) is one of the first companies in North America to strive for international certification standards in the heli-ski industry.

It goes without saying that SAFETY and RELIABILITY are a high priority for skiing guests. MWHS's entire approach in building its operation has been predicated on these two fundamentals and they remain the central focus of the company today.

MWHS corporate organization includes an experienced management team, strong operational control, first-rate helicopter safety, flight dispatch, aircraft engineering and maintenance as well as aircraft ground handling and operational security.

MWHS offers a comprehensive ski guiding service comprised of a senior management team experienced in accident and risk management and a loss prevention system approach. All procedures and processes are built on an existing system of rigorous safety policies and guidelines. MWHS also monitors performances and progress with continuous communication and safety briefings/debriefings in the field throughout the day.

The most up-to-date international safety standards are the foundation for the quality, reliability, comfort and confidence found in MWHS's ski guiding service. For these reasons, MWHS is a strong advocate for new safety programs and practices implemented by the Canadian Ski Guide association (CSGA). Responsible for the development of international safety standards as well as for operational safety audit programs, the CSGA is at the forefront for creating a safer, more reliable mechanized ski industry.

MWHS believes that research, education, training and certification are essential to backcountry safety. This is why, 20 years ago, the company initiated and sponsored a snow science workshop with the University of Calgary and continues to take active participation in various snow science and education programs throughout the world today. MWHS attends all International Snow Science Workshops (ISSW), Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA) annual meetings and CPD courses, CSGA training and programs, Canada West Ski Areas Association (CWSAA) training and programs and is an active participant in the International Commission of Alpine Rescue (IKAR) – a worldwide open platform for the exchange of mountain rescue research, science and knowledge.

Putting knowledge into practice, MWHS upholds a comprehensive emergency rescue plan for any type of mountain rescue. Continually up-dating equipment, re-evaluating means to transport injured, conducting first aid training, ensuring a trained emergency doctor is always on site and rehearsing communication practices and chain of command are just some of the tools MWHS uses to be at the forefront of mountain safety.

MWHS continuously strives to be a worldwide leader in safety and raise the bar in safety standards in the backcountry skiing industry. It is entirely appropriate that not only our operation but the entire ski industry provide guests with internationally recognized safety standards. MWHS looks forward to seeing more operators following suit in the drive for

Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing

safety. In the meantime, guests can rest assured that for Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing, safety has always been, and remains, the company's first priority.

BIOGRAPHY OF FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN MIKE WIEGELE

Mike Wiegele was born in Feistritz, Austria in 1938. While growing up on a farm in Lading Kärnten, Austria, Mike's passion was skiing and racing. Despite his family's resistance and his obligations on the farm, he succeeded in getting his training. He was a ski race competitor in both Europe and Canada during the 1960's.

As a man who loved the mountains, Mike left Austria, the birthplace of skiing, and immigrated to Canada in 1959 to work as a carpenter. During the post war years Austria was a difficult place to make a living and North America was seen as the promised land, a place where you could make your dreams come true.

In those days the ski industry was still in its infancy in Western Canada. Wiegele was told that if he wanted to make a living as a professional skier, he'd have to move to Quebec. He took a job at Mount Tremblant working for legendary ski-school director Ernie McCulloch.

In the early 1960's, after moving out West, Mike obtained Canadian Ski Instruction Association Level 4 certification. In 1965, Mike became the Director of the Lake Louise Ski School and a coach of a number of National Team racers including Ken Read.

Mike and Bonnie Wiegele got married after meeting in Lake Louise. Bonnie, a National Champion in gymnastics, swimming, synchronized swimming and water skiing is also a fully certified ski instructor and master racer.

In 1970 they had a daughter, Michelle.

In his spare time he would explore the nearby majestic mountains, searching to find the deepest, lightest powder snow possible. Up until the year 1968, Mike explored the surrounding mountain ranges of the Canadian Rockies, Bugaboos, Cariboos, and the Monashees with great attention.

In 1969, Mike Wiegele published his first advertisement for helicopter skiing in the Cariboo Mountains, outside of Valemount, BC. In the year 1970, Mike started taking guests out on daily ski trips into the Cariboo Mountains. During the early days of his business, Mike began sending out invitations to the media and to movie producers. In 1972, Warren Miller agreed to come and make the first film. As the word about Wiegele's new heliskiing haven started to trickle out guests from around the world started to sign up.

As great as the skiing was around Valemount, Mike Wiegele was not satisfied. He wondered why locals kept talking about Blue River, an hour's drive farther south.

Biography of Founder and chairman Mike Wiegele cont'd

Mike Wiegele refers to his encounter with “Grandma” Molly Nelson as one of the greatest turning points of his life. Molly Nelson, an amateur meteorologist, had kept meticulous records for the previous 34 years of the weather patterns around the Blue River region. When he read that annual snowfalls of thirty feet or more were common his heart raced with excitement. Storms dropping three or four feet of snow at a time were a regular occurrence and the wind patterns were far gentler than further north. All this information confirmed, without a doubt, what he'd been looking for all those years and he decided to move his operations south to Blue River in 1974.

At this time, he started to buy land and develop a full service resort for a world-wide growing clientele.

The first guest chalets were built next to Eleanor Lake in 1984. Not long after, in 1988, the main guest lodge opened which contains the Powder Max Dining Room, the Silver Buckle Lounge, the fitness centre and stretch room, as well as the massage therapy clinic.

In 1992, Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing Resort started summer operations with activities such as helihiking, biking and fishing.

Matthias Maresch, a long time friend and guest donated the Grizzly Hut in 1993. The hut was built to support avalanche research and development. This was a co-operative with both the University of Calgary and the Federal Government to gain knowledge and expertise. The Grizzly Hut also serves as an emergency shelter and an education and training center for the Canadian Ski Guide Association and a resting place for summer hikers.

The Canadian Ski Guide Association was founded by Mike Wiegele in 1990. The association trains and develops young Canadian as ski guides. One of Mike's mandates is to give others the chance to experience the mountains of the area. In addition, he would like to provide those passionate about the mountains with the ability to gain long term employment.

In 1995, the Thunder Ridge Centre was built to accommodate the administration staff at the Resort. It includes a reception area, a large meeting room upstairs, and a front desk check-in area. In 1996, the Guides Haus was added to the Resort to provide the ski guides with better conditions to prepare each day for skiing with the guests.

Mike has received a Medal for Bravery from the Governor General of Canada. This medal is awarded to individuals who have risked their lives to rescue and to protect others from harm. He has also received the Marshall Award of Excellence from the Canada West Ski Areas Association for outstanding contribution. As well, he has been inducted into the Canadian Skiing Hall of Fame.

Biography of Founder and chairman Mike Wiegele cont'd

Today Mike continues to develop his business nestled between the Cariboo and Monashee mountain ranges in Blue River, BC. It is the single largest heliski area in the world, encompassing 1.2 million acres (4,506 square km or 1,740 square miles) of terrain. In 2001, Michelle Wiegele succeeded her dad as president of Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing.

As the founder and owner of Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing, Mike proudly carried his Austrian heritage into the majestic mountains of Western Canada – and in so doing established a business here that has no equivalent anywhere else on the planet. Today, the Wiegele name is synonymous with helicopter skiing around the world. His energy, his vision has created a wonderful bridge between the two countries. That's why Mike was awarded Austria's prestigious Gold Medal ("Goldenes Verdienstzeichen") by Austria's Ambassador to Canada, the honorable Wendelin Ettmayer in December 2003.

The latest projects include the *Albreda Lodge* that for opened in December 2004. The Lodge is located in Gosnell, British Columbia, just 28 miles (45 km) north of Blue River and offers 18 rooms for 20 guests, as well as, a dining room, lounge, sauna and ski shop.

Further developments include the *Eight Peaks Plan* which will provide significant benefits for Blue River and British Columbia. The goal is to create a world class powder skiing experience for a wider range of guests. The standard for skiing resorts in the world will be raised with the premier product designed to attract people from around the globe and will complement the established operations of Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing.

To this day, Mike Wiegele plans to ski as long as possible, living true to his motto:

"Let's Go Skiing!"