

MEET

# TOM HERISHKO

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OFFICIAL NAMER OF THE

**KAATSKILL FLYER**

## WE FOUND AN INTERESTING HISTORY & STORY IN THE WINNER OF OUR SIX PACK CHAIR NAMING CONTEST. WE THOUGHT WE WOULD SHARE!

I have a pretty long history with Hunter Mountain. Starting back in 1990, my brother Mark and I were working on developing a private ski hill on our family farm (we later named our fledgling little project Polar Peak). We were then in our early teens and very curious about the workings of the ski industry when we had the idea of writing to Hunter Mountain. Our father had skied Hunter for years and remembered the tons of great accomplishments from summer skiing, night skiing, and the festivals; it was only logical we write Hunter, "The Snowmaking Capitol of the World".

We were very surprised when Mr. Israel Slutzky wrote us back and invited us to tour the snowmaking plant, which we quickly accepted. Our first trip to Hunter began a relationship with Izzy and Orville that would last years. They not only provided us with ideas, know-how and material (including the old R1 Ropetow for our Polar Peak); Izzy also gave me guidance when I was deciding on going to college, and wrote me a letter of recommendation to his alma mater (and now mine) Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Additionally, both Mark and I worked at Hunter Mountain during our college years. Hunter Mountain has provided our family with great friendships, happiness, and of course memories. While I will miss the Snowlite Express (perhaps my favorite of all lifts in the east), I'm looking forward to the new Six Pack.

Having the portion of the name used for the new lift is a great honor! My most notable memories at Hunter include skiing November 6th one year, and on May 3rd back in 1992. Well, to add to the story... Izzy and Orville grew up on a farm, as did we, so we shared our stories of farming, and country life. I remember my first semester at Rensselaer, Izzy asked me how many cows we would be selling to pay for that year's tuition. Izzy and Goldye actually visited our farm one summer—their visit was much appreciated.

When I was at Rensselaer, I had the opportunity to actually intern at Hunter Mountain, which was a very unique experience considering most of my peers were interning at high tech start-ups or dot coms—their experiences revolved around quick growth, and hectic pace. My experience was different, as well as very fun! Hunter Mountain was a tried and true family organization based on sound business principles and decisions. I learned a LOT in a very short time, some times just as a casual observer in the lodge or riding incognito on the Quad, listening to guests conversations. The experience introduced me to principles that would become very important to my education. Some of the larger resort conglomerates have either folded, merged or are experience severe hardship, whereas Hunter Mountain continues to be family owned and operated, there is a lot to be said for that.

As for these days, my main job is in Albany where I am an accountant, and have been a ski industry enthusiast since beginning skiing, and was a former ski patroller for 5 years (until I ran out of time to enjoy skiing 54 days / year!)

There's more information about the Polar Peak experience (including the history of our relationship with Hunter Mountain) on our website [www.polarpeak.com](http://www.polarpeak.com). Thanks for the opportunity to give a little back to Hunter, I'm really looking forward to the Kaatskill Flyer! 🌞

### KAATERSKILL FALLS

Kaaterskill Falls is the highest cascading falls in New York state. The base of the falls can be reached from the parking area on Rt. 23A located between Haines Falls and Palenville. There is a short hike down the shoulder of the road to the trailhead, followed by an approx. 1/2 mile walk to the falls. The top of the falls can be reached from Laurel House Road, off of North Lake Rd. The trail follows the stream through a forest of sugar maple, American beech, yellow birch and hemlock trees. The dove's steep walls trap moisture and limit light. Although rocky, the route is not difficult. The trail ends at the fall's base. The falls drop over 150 feet, so use caution when hiking nearby!