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**SNOWMASS ANNOUNCES MARDI GRAS THEME
Sign up now for floats, costume contests & Mother of All Ascensions**

Snowmass Village, CO. On February 5, Snowmass Village morphs into the “Biggest Show on Snow” for the 26th annual Mardi Gras Festival on February 5. Sponsored by KSNO and The Aspen Times, this annual Fat Tuesday Celebration is one of the biggest festivals of the season in Snowmass and one of the oldest Mardi Gras parties in the mountains.

“Snowmass is the ultimate Mardi Gras mountain destination,” says Susan Hamley, Marketing Director for the Town of Snowmass Village. “Snowmass works hard to honor the original New Orleans visitors who introduced the festival over a quarter century ago.”

This dawn-until-wee-hours authentic fete began unofficially in 1980 by New Orleans natives seeking an alternative to the crowds of their hometown celebration. Today Snowmass still lures a large contingent of New Orleaners and draws between 3,000 to 5,000 visitors annually. The “Biggest Show on Snow” includes traditional Mardi Gras elements such as a madcap costumed parade, king cake giveaway, a festive bead throw, crawdad boils, Hurricane drink specials, and wild celebrations late into the night along with untraditional elements such as the Mother of All Ascensions Uphill Race.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION: Be part of the biggest show on snow in 2008:

The Mother of All Ascensions:

Celebrating its 16th year, this early morning uphill race kicks off Mardi Gras and is open to snowshoers, skiers, hikers, and runners, and costumes are highly encouraged. Ascending 1,741 feet in elevation, the race heads from Fanny Hill up to Gwen’s High Alpine where \$15,000 worth of prizes are awarded for everything from best and worst costume to best and worst time. To pre-register (\$35) and receive a fabulous goody bag and long sleeve T-Shirt, racers should visit Christy Sports in Snowmass, The Ute Mountaineer in Aspen, or Summit Canyon Mountaineering in Glenwood Springs. Download the application off www.snowmassvillage.com.

The Parade:

Businesses, families, visitors, and organizations are encouraged to get their message out to crowds as large as 5,000 during the annual Mardi Gras Parade. Snowmass offers cash prizes for Best Float (\$450), Best Use of Theme (The Greatest Show on Snow) (\$200) and Best Costume (\$150). The Snowmass Marketing & Special Events Department provides \$100 reimbursement towards float expenses as well. To register costumes or floats or receive reimbursement, stop by the TOSV Marketing offices in Snowmass Village (between the Mall & Daly lane) or download the registration form from www.snowmassvillage.com.

For additional media information, visit www.snowmasspress.com/mardigras.

The resort town of Snowmass Village, Colorado, is located in the heart of the Elk Mountains 9 miles from Aspen, Colorado. Snowmass is accessible via four regional airports (Aspen, Eagle, Grand Junction, and Denver). Snowmass offers diverse lodging and daily activities for families, adventurers, and couples. For a media guide of this popular mountain destination, please visit www.snowmasspress.com and for visitor information go to www.snowmassvillage.com.

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