

Many Americans first discovered both the potential uses and the attractions of skiing from reports of the achievements of an early skier, pioneer mail carrier John A. "Snowshoe" Thompson, who transported letters and parcels in a backpack as he covered his 90-mile territory through the Sierra Nevada. During his two decades of devoted service, 1856-1876, he won a well-earned reputation for heroism and faithfulness as he traversed the mountains, first on his large, handmade skis and later by sleigh, to keep frontier communication open between Nevada and California.

Since then, other dedicated Americans have employed skiing in the defense of our country, in rescue operations, and in similar activities.

Through the years, skiing has experienced revolutions in equipment, technique, and participation. Wood skis were replaced by metal ones, which then gave way to fiberglass, and bindings have improved greatly. Today some 15 million Americans engage in Alpine or Nordic skiing, and highly skilled and dedicated skiers and biathletes vie for coveted positions on America's Winter Olympics squads.

Skiing, of course, offers many benefits. In the areas of health and fitness, Alpine skiing's courses improve strength and flexibility, and Nordic skiing's cross-country trails build endurance. Skiing helps people improve coordination as they attain or maintain good physical condition. Skiing provides enjoyment for spectators as well as participants, fosters appreciation for the outdoors, and affords the opportunity to enjoy winter and its splendors. Skiing also increases the recreational uses of national forests and provides winter employment and income for residents of rural communities.

In recognition of skiing and its benefits, the Congress, by Public Law 100-189, has designated January 8, 1988, as "National Skiing Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim January 8, 1988, as National Skiing Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5757 of December 23, 1987

### National Day of Excellence, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America*  
*A Proclamation*

Theodore Roosevelt once said: "The foundation stone of national life is and ever must be the individual character of the individual citizen." Nowhere has that fact been better demonstrated than in our national

quest for excellence, which has spurred Americans to strive to live up to the highest ideals of our nature and our heritage.

For three decades, that quest has been best symbolized by the magnificent achievements of our space program. The program has proved beyond a doubt that, with will and resolve, Americans can draw upon the insights and inventions of generations past and accomplish great things. In striving for excellence in space, we have expanded the horizon of human potential, brought countless scientific and economic benefits back to Earth, and demonstrated to ourselves and to the world our national vitality, courage, and imagination.

Through the years, the space program has had brilliant successes—but also some disheartening setbacks. On January 28, 1988, the second anniversary of the Space Shuttle CHALLENGER accident, we remember CHALLENGER's courageous crew and other space pioneers who made the supreme sacrifice in the pursuit of excellence—in technology, in goals, in achievement, and in their personal lives.

Their sacrifice was not in vain. For they taught us, above all, that our national quest for excellence must never end if we are to remain a great nation.

When the space shuttle is launched again, the world will know that, once again, the United States is back in space—ready to accept its boundless challenges and eager to pursue its countless opportunities. With the shuttle, we will move toward our next logical step—building and operating a permanently manned space station.

To recognize the importance of space to our future and to honor our space pioneers, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of excellence, the Congress, by Public Law 100-190, has designated January 28, 1988, as a "National Day of Excellence" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim January 28, 1988, as a National Day of Excellence. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to pursue, in the course of their regular activities, the spirit of excellence represented by the crew of the CHALLENGER.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN