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Off-piste adventures: a safety check list

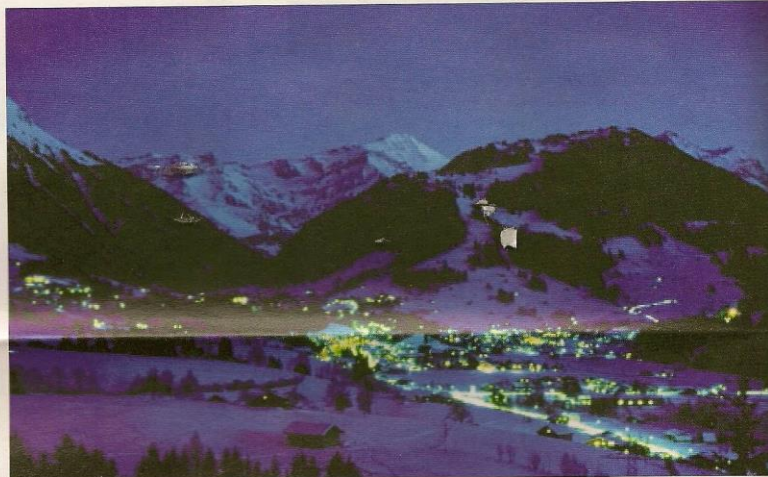
By Tim Kilchenmann

On January 3, a 29-year-old snowboarder lost his life in an avalanche in the Lenk region. In spite of immediate search attempts carried out by his companion, Rega, Air Glaciers and other specialists, the snowboarder could not be revived. For Ueli Grundisch, *continued on page 3*

More potential for disabled skiers in Gstaad-Saanenland

by Alison Chabloz

For many years, ski instructors in Gstaad-Saanenland have been assisting people with disabilities such as blindness, enabling them to ski and enjoy the mountains in winter. Now a new association, Ski2Freedom, a non-profit making organization registered in the UK, is helping the snow pros to improve *continued on page 6*



Many would prefer that there be no piste lighting, but the demand for night skiing is large. Although light pollution causes concern, it seems to be no issue in Saanenland.

Is light pollution an issue in Saanenland?

By Diana Oeh

Several of GstaadLife's readers expressed frustration recently regarding what they believe to be the excessive lighting of Saanenland's ski runs. They are concerned that the lights are intrusive and cause light pollution.

"This topic comes up very often," said Theo Wirth of Dark Sky Switzerland, a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing light pollution in Switzerland. "We would prefer that there be no piste lighting, but we understand that

the demand for night skiing is large. The fact that the lighting occurs only during the four winter months and that it is for a limited amount of time makes it reasonable."

According to Wirth, it is the responsibility of the canton and the Gemeinde to uphold federal statutes that protect the environment, and to issue the necessary permits.

"Such piste lighting must have the proper permissions," Wirth said.

The Huble racing center at the foot of the Eggli in Saanen also has necessary permits, according to Thomas Annen, manager of Huble.

Armon Cantieni, director of Bergbahnen Destination Gstaad AG indicated that light pollution has not been a concern before. "So far, we have not been confronted with the issue," Cantieni said. "I haven't received one single complaint." Cantieni explained *continued on page 6*