

Express



Newsletter of the Western Region, Central Division, National Ski Patrol System, Inc. April 2010

In This Issue

	Page
Western Region Director's Report	2
Sharing the Fun	2
Narrowbanding	3
Awards	3
Spring has Arrived	4
Instructor Development	4
Whew!	4
New WR Nordic Supervisor	5
Nordic Workshop	5
PHAT	6
TES Update	6
SEM at Coffee Mill	7
Western Region Senior Evaluation	7
SEM Journey	8
Patroller Spotlight	9
Spring Fling	10
Winter Withdrawal	10
Final Sweep	10

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2010 CENTRAL DIVISION FALL MEETING

The Western Region cordially invites you to Bloomington, Minnesota for the 2010 Central Division fall meeting!

Mark your calendars now for September 10, 11, and 12

Educational offerings will include:

- Mountain Travel and Rescue
- Yoga for skiers
- OEC IT meeting
- Instructor Development
- A Day in the Life of a Flight Nurse
- Patrol Director breakfast with the Division Director
- Introduction to Avalanche Safety and Rescue
- "Words of Wisdom" from Jim Woodrum, Division Director



Just for fun:

- Wine Tasting Tour
- Golf Outing
- Hospitality Suite
- Motorcycle Ride
- Saturday night banquet
- Trade show



Lodging:

The meeting and most courses will take place at the Hilton Minneapolis/ Bloomington
3900 American Blvd. West
Bloomington, Minnesota 55437
<http://www.bloomingtonhilton.com/>

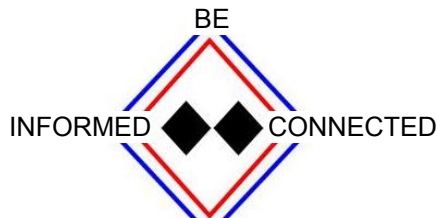
All Western Region Patrols are encouraged to help with this event!

- Greeters
- Registration table
- Runners / drivers
- Banquet prizes

Watch for online registration information – coming soon!

If you can help, want to run a class, or want to have a table at the trade show, please contact:

Jeannine Mogan
jmogan@threeriversparkdistrict.org



Go to www.nsp.org
Verify
Profile & Email



John (JT) Thomas
Western Region Director
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Wow, where did the 2009-2010 season go? It seems like it was just yesterday, I attended the Summer Midwest Ski Areas Association meeting and listened to the Ski Area Owners talk about their patrols and how they would like to see us improve in many ways. Now, I am getting ready for the Spring Division meeting and the Region Spring BOG. The season got off to a great start at Afton as they hosted the Fall Region Meeting. Thank you, Afton, for a great meeting. It was good to see so many patrollers in attendance. I hope everyone saw value in the time they spent with everyone and were able to increase your knowledge. Then, it was off to OEC refreshers and as I traveled around the Region, I got to see a lot of great ideas and received a few of your concerns on how the NSP organization is doing from your perspective. I have passed those thoughts and concerns along to Jim Woodrum and other National board members and we will see what changes come in the future.

The Western Region hosted one of the three division Ski Trainer's Workshops for the second year in a row at the Trollhaugen ski area. I heard a lot of good comments from people who attended and I look forward to Trollhaugen hosting the event again next year. Mark your calendars as it will be the weekend of **December 4 and 5th**. The STW allows you to work on your skiing and tobogganing skills as well as your on-the-snow teaching skills. You pick the skills you want to improve on. If you have feedback on what should be offered at the STW, please drop me a note.

Then, it was off to work with patrollers who wanted to improve their skills, whether it was for a certification level exam or they just wanted to improve. The Region held many SESs, TESs, and Senior and Certified exam clinics. We had many successful patrollers who received the pin, while others improved their skills. Remember, it's all part of the journey; the pin is just to help you keep track of the progress you have made in your journey. The journey never stops.

The 2010-2011 patrol season promises to be very busy for the Western Region. We start off the season hosting the Central Division Fall Meeting in Bloomington, MN. The team is off to a great start with a lot of activities being planned. Visit the Division web site for more information <http://nspcentral.org/fallmeeting.php>. This meeting gives you first-hand experience and knowledge of how your Division operates and what is happening at the National level. Last year's meeting, hosted by Northern Michigan Region, had two National board representatives and the NSP Director of Finance in attendance. I can't promise who will be present; however, since the Central Division has the largest number of members within the NSP, I hope to see several National Board Representatives and Directors at this meeting.

Then, we are off to the Northwest part of Minnesota for the Western Region Fall Meeting being hosted by Northwest Nordic Patrol. I am looking forward to visiting with many of you at this meeting. Please help support Section 3 and Section 4 patrollers by attending.

As I mentioned previously, Trollhaugen will be hosting the STW again in December. The next big event: Western Region is hosting the 2011 Central Division Certified exam at Lutsen Mountains, March 3, 4, and 5th. Everyone is welcome. Come watch or we always need helpers. Please contact me if you would like to attend all or part of the Certified event.

I would like to thank you for all the time, effort and dedication each and everyone puts into being a Patroller. Keep working on your patrol journey and have a great and safe summer.



Mark Gottwald, Assistant Region Director

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Sharing the Fun!

As a skier and a patroller, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to some fun loving friends. The people I am



talking about are adaptive athletes. I have been a ski patroller for over 20 years and for the last 13 years, I have also been an adaptive ski instructor. During my 13 years volunteering with the Courage Duluth Alpine Ski Program I've met a lot of amazing people. I have also learned a lot. One of the first things to understand is people are people are people. In other words, we are all people first and everything else is secondary. If you take a minute to consider it, we all have abilities and disabilities. I have been nearsighted since 3rd grade and one of my co-workers has limited mobility in his right shoulder. We both have a degree of disability, but we do not think of ourselves as disabled. Most people don't think disability before person.

The athletes I work with come in all ages and sizes. We have people who use wheelchairs or Canadian crutches to get around. Some of the folks may be blind or have various levels of autism. One thing we all have in common is a desire to have fun. With adaptive techniques and equipment we can work together to make this happen.

A person with impaired sight doesn't need any special equipment, (except a vest to help other skiers identify him) but will need a guide to verbally talk them down the hill. Someone with one good leg can ski with a regular boot and ski, but will need outriggers (Canadian crutches with ski tips on them.) These folks are known as 'three trackers.' Some people I've worked with can stand but may require help controlling speed or turning. This is accomplished with tethers and maybe a ski bra to keep the skis in a wedge.

I also work with sit skiers. The reason people need to sit ski are many – traumatic brain injuries, spinal injuries, cerebral palsy, congenital reasons, etc. There are three basic types of sit skis. The mono ski has a single ski mounted to a frame and bucket (seat). This ski can be skied totally independently. The skier uses hand held outriggers and can load chair lifts by raising the bucket up to the correct height. The bi-ski has two skis which are attached to the bucket and frame or hand held outriggers, or a combination of both. Bi-skis do need someone to tether the ski and another person to help load on the chair lift. Like the mono ski, the bi-ski hinges in front to drop the skis down and allow the bucket to load on the chair lift. The third type of sit ski is a dual ski. It uses a pair of conventional skis mounted to a frame with a higher bucket. It is skied with hand held outriggers. All three types of sit skis have three straps that can be hooked to a carabineer if they ever need to be evacuated from a chair lift.

The fact that this program facilitates play appeals to me a lot. Let's admit it, we love to ski, why shouldn't everyone? It is a great moment when the light bulb goes on with one of your students. They realize they are having fun skiing and if they can do this, what else can they do?

As patrollers, it helps to think about how we communicate with



people. Remember to have patience and to sit or kneel to talk to a wheelchair athlete. Speak directly to the athlete, not to the guide who is skiing with them. If you cannot understand, ask for them to repeat or spell the word. Be mindful of the types of questions asked.

Take the time to talk with the adaptive athletes and you will be amazed at some of their stories. Please remember to treat adaptive equipment with care and keep track of it if you are providing medical care for an adaptive skier. A sit ski can cost anywhere from \$1500.00 to \$6000.00 which is a sizable investment. I have enjoyed skiing with Courage Duluth for many reasons but mostly for their heartfelt enthusiasm for the sport. That is something I can really relate to!



Paul Botnen, Telecom Contact/ W-2 Section Chief

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Narrowbanding, Coming to a ski area near you

You may have seen or heard about narrowbanding before. Did you pay attention? Did you check out your current radio inventory? Did your questions get answered? Are you confused?

In an effort to use radio spectrum more efficiently, the FCC mandated that the current size of a voice channel be cut in half. When complete that means twice as many voice channels available for use. The issue has been discussed since the mid 1990's. Since that time, manufacturers have developed equipment to meet that mandate. This equipment has been available for several years. But with budget cuts and shifting priorities, many organizations have not purchased new (er) equipment for some time. Even Public Safety users, who depend on reliable radio communications every hour of every day have been caught off guard by how fast the deadline is approaching. There is discussion of a new ruling cutting the new bandwidth in half yet again. No date has been set for the proposed ruling, but in anticipation, a couple manufacturers have developed equipment that will also meet that even narrower bandwidth.

Some time back, the FCC decided they needed to find a way to add spectrum. All of the channels that were available were crowded and yet more requests for those channels kept coming in. They decided to take the existing bandwidth and shrink it in half. Go from a 25 kHz channel to 12.5 kHz channel. Without adding any additional spectrum, they effectively doubled the available channels. The benefit of this shift was to reduce interference and to promote new technologies. The problem was how to get users to switch over to the new narrower channels. This change affects all users under 512 MHz.

The most important date to keep in mind, **January 1st 2013**. After this date, wideband emissions are not allowed. This applies to all business, industrial and public safety users operating on frequencies between 150 and 512 MHz. This means your ski area is affected. Applications for wideband operation will be accepted until January 1st 2011. After this date only narrowband operations will be issued licenses. Since February 14th 2010 only equipment that is capable of operation on narrowband channels has been certified. A request to extend the deadline has been submitted and turned down. The FCC has stated that they will take action against anyone not operating on narrowband channels by the deadline, including Public Safety users.

First of all, check your existing license. If you have not applied for narrowband emissions, now would be a great time. You do not have to make use of narrowband emissions right now, but your migration will be smoother and quicker if your license already allows for it to happen. Secondly, inventory your radio equipment. Is it capable of operation on 12.5 kHz channels? Third, does your existing radio system meet your needs? If your needs are not being met, now is a great time to implement those changes. Do you want to switch to UHF and add a repeater? Do you want to move your base station to a new location? Do you want to add more power to your base station? Do you want to switch over to digital operation? All of these questions should be examined to meet your future needs. If you need to purchase new equipment, start budgeting funds now. You may be able to buy a couple of radios a year to replace older outdated equipment. If you buy used equipment, be careful that the equipment is capable of meeting the narrowband requirement. There is a lot of equipment on the market that is being dumped by other organizations that do not meet the mandate. Please contact me with questions.



Tom Gray, Western Region Awards Advisor

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Awards Program

This is just another friendly reminder that we have an Awards Committee meeting on **May 7, 2010**. At this meeting we will be reviewing nominations for the following:

Western Region Outstanding Service Awards
Merit Stars: Yellow, Blue, Green, and Purple
Patroller's Cross
Meritorious Service Awards
National Appointments
Leadership Commendations Appointments
Distinguished Service Awards
10th Mountain Award
Critical Care Certificates

Please remember that all award nominations must be on **the new NSP awards forms**. These can be downloaded from the National Web Site. The Western Region Outstanding Service award form can be downloaded from the Western Region Web Site. Please feel free to contact committee members (list mailed to PR's) to help you with questions, and/or how to write an award.

All awards must be typed.

On a Merit Star nomination, the Patrol Representative and the sponsor must be two different people. Please do not X the box for yellow, blue, etc. This decision will be made by Division and National as to which merit star category the award falls into.

National Appointment and Leadership Commendation nominations must be sponsored by a patroller with an Appointment.

The Western Region Awards Committee has decided that the Western Region Outstanding Service Award may be awarded to more than one person, per patrol, per year. It is up to the Patrol Representative and the Patrol Awards Advisor to limit the number of recipients, and to insure they meet the qualifications. Each patrol has been provided with the Western Region Outstanding Service Award Plaque. We request that you send a plate from this plaque with your nominations. (Staple the plate to the original). Some areas are engraving their own plates, this is fine, just let me know so that I do not duplicate the engraving.



The deadline for receiving one copy of each award is April 30, 2010. Please send these via e-mail that can be read in Microsoft Word ('.doc'). If I do not respond within two days, please contact me to make sure they were received. The additional 14 copies may be hand-carried to the meeting by a member of the committee. If the copies need to be mailed to me, I must receive them no later than May 4, 2010.



Kristi Ball, Western Region Avalanche Supervisor

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Spring has Arrived

As I write this, Minnesota is enjoying some very early warm spring weather. At the same time Grand Targhee Resort in Wyoming has extended its winter ski season because they received 77 inches of new snow **in the last 7 days**. Each year, the weather gets more and more unpredictable. Even if you've skied the same resort, the same week of the year for the last 20 years; chances are next season you will experience a different weather pattern. Therefore, in addition to enjoying our great Minnesota Spring weather I would encourage each of you to think ahead to what skills you may need during the 2010-2011 ski season. If you are considering a trip out West and haven't taken a basic avalanche course; then plan ahead to add this to your educational resume.



Bob Iverson, Western Region Instructor Development Supervisor

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Instructor Development Program has Active Winter Season

Education of its members is a large part of the Mission for the National Ski Patrol. This is carried out largely by volunteer instructors in each of the disciplines. There are five identifiable disciplines in the Ski Patrol system--Avalanche, OEC, Transportation, Mountain Travel and Rescue and Instructor Development. There is also skills development--which contains parts of other disciplines. This includes the Senior and Certified Programs, as well as the Enhancement Seminars in many of the disciplines.

To be able to instruct in any of the NSP Disciplines, patrollers must take the Instructor Development course. The course is designed to show how instructors can create a positive learning experience for their students. It is not possible to make patrollers into instructors in this eight hour course, but patrollers will get a good foundation for planning lessons, and knowledge about how adults learn, how to evaluate and monitor learning, and how to manage courses. The ID course is followed by a period of mentoring in the chosen discipline. During the mentoring, candidates are assigned a mentor to assist them in the transition to become full instructors. The mentoring portion of instructor training is on the job training for candidate instructors. When the candidate is ready, as determined by the candidate and the mentor, the candidate instructor will be observed by an Instructor Trainer and, if successful, will become a fully certified instructor.

Instructor Development courses can be arranged through your patrol or may be offered at the Division and Region Meetings. Please check the Region Calendar on the Region Web site for offerings. Since the last newsletter, we have held two Instructor Development courses. One course was held at Buck Hill in January and one in Bemidji in March. Both of the courses were well attended and were quite successful. Since last July, there have been five courses and 38 total candidates have completed the course.



Sue Hayes, Western Region OEC Administrator

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Whew!!

Is it just me or did this ski season go really fast?? It seems like just about a month ago I was putting on my snow tires and now with 70's predicted soon, it's time to get them off before they melt!!

This season's OEC program was very busy and eventful for our Region. First of all, congratulations to Ken Liddell from Afton Alps for completing all the requirements and becoming the newest OEC Instructor Trainer (IT) to join the team!

Also, congratulations to all 9 SEM candidates- we had a pass rate of 100% this year!! Good work, all of you!!: Kent Anderson (Afton Alps), Paul Botnen (Lutsen Mt), Dave Bramel (Afton Alps), Tom McConville (Viking Nordic), Matt Stordahl (Welch Village), Sheila Smith (Afton Alps), Greg Thordson (Three Rivers), Sue Vermeland (Afton Alps), and Tim Ruda (Wild Mountain). Glad to have you on the Senior SEM side and hopefully as evaluators in the years ahead.

Within our Region, we held 12 OEC classes providing our Region with 98 new Ski Patrollers!! That's great news to those of us that have been doing this awhile- you are the life-blood to our (aging) organization.

We also trained and signed off 12 new OEC instructors this season. I'm looking forward to working with you. We appreciate your talents and expertise!

Western Region put on 22 OEC refreshers this year as well. Good to know as you are making your plans for next fall. There's probably a Fall OEC Refresher not far away from you.

Thank you again to Kathy Glynn and Mary Pritchett for their hard work organizing the SEM pre-courses and the SEM final. Thank you so much to all the ski areas for hosting us for these events- Afton Alps, Buck Hill and Coffee Mill. We truly appreciate all the "extra" organizing that goes in to make these events run so smoothly.

Thank you also to all of the OEC instructors and the extremely dedicated and flexible OEC IT team that I have the good fortune to work with.

Have a wonderful spring and summer. Hope to see you all real soon!!





New Western Region Nordic Supervisor and W-4 Section Chief

Congratulations to Roger Petry, a familiar name and face in the Western Region, as he assumes the positions of: Western Region Nordic Supervisor and W-4 Section Chief.

In addition to his new duties, many will recognize

Roger as the Western Region Webmaster, email support contact person, Newsletter assistant and kind, compassionate, technical expert. Roger is also a patroller at Spirit Mountain and Giants Ridge. When interviewed about his new position, Roger states: I'm honored to have been asked to succeed Peter Wollan as the Region's Nordic Supervisor and Section Chief for W-4. Nordic patrolling is a very important service we provide at x-c ski races, and we very much need additional Nordic patrollers, and Alpine patrollers who enjoy x-c skiing, at these events.

I feel I have three charges as the Nordic supervisor:

- To promote Nordic patrolling to the public and recruit new Nordic patrollers.

- To promote Nordic patrolling to our alpine brothers and sisters; encouraging them to consider patrolling at one or more of the larger x-c races (like the Birkie, Pepsi Challenge at Giants Ridge, Mora Vasaloppet in Mora and the Finlandia in Bemidji).

- To promote the Region and Division Nordic workshops for skill development.

We wish Roger Good Luck as he brings his outstanding work ethic and commitment to excellence to his new jobs!

Congratulations and best wishes to Peter Wollan as he moves to the Central Division, Nordic Supervisor position and thank you to Dave Squires for his years of service as the Division Nordic Supervisor.

Also, Congratulations to: Paul Botnen, re-elected as W-2 Section Chief. Welcome, Mike Nies, the new W-5 Section Chief. Thanks to Vicki Young, the kindest person, for her service as W-5 Section Chief.



Mona, Todd, Debby, Roger, Peter, and Bob skate for a technique critique photo



Arden, Todd, Peter, Debby, Bob, Mona, Roger, and Ann



Roger Petry, Western Region Nordic Supervisor, W-4 Section Chief and Patroller: Spirit Mt., Giants Ridge

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Photo's by Ann Ogg, Giants Ridge SP



The 2010 Western Region Nordic Workshop at Giants Ridge

January 30th, 2010 was a nearly perfect winter day for a Nordic workshop. If a little cool, we had clear skies, plenty of snow, expertly groomed trails, and calm winds.

The Western Region usually holds it's annual Nordic Workshop at a location near to the Twin Cities. This year, Giants Ridge patrollers were treated to a day of classic and skating skiing lessons, exercises and helpful critiques, with the workshop held at GR for the first time. The Nordic Workshop also offers certification, which represents demonstrated skiing proficiency at the Basic Patroller level through PSIA level 3.

The Nordic Workshop is open to all patrollers. Two of the participants (both alpine patrollers), are enthusiastic x-c skiers, and really enjoyed the workshop. Thank you, Ann, for stopping along the way to make our memories.



Paradise





Jim McLeod, NSP-C/PSIA Ski School Supervisor;
& Cindy McLeod, NSP-C/PSIA Ski School Assistant
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PHAT

What a season!!!! It started out slowly with our first scheduled shift at Lutsen Mt (cancelled due to no snow) and ended with a BANG with our last SES at Lutsen!!!

Jim and I attended and assisted facilitating Ski Trainer Workshops (STW) at Trollhaugen and Cascade Mountains. Next year check out the Division calendar for dates and times (usually the first three weekends in December). The cost is minimal and it is a great way to start the season. The workshop includes ski and toboggan skill events.

Thank you to all eleven ski patrols and their hill management for supporting the Ski Enhancement Seminar program, allowing patrollers to improve and fine tune their ski ability.

Dec 12, 2009 – Spirit Mt
 Jan 5, 2010 – Coffee Mill
 Jan 10, 2010 – Christie Mt
 Jan 17, 2010 – Buck Hill
 Jan 29, 2010 – Wild Mt
 Feb 6, 2010 – Lutsen Mt
 Feb 12, 2010 – Giants Ridge
 Feb 20, 2010 – Buena Vista
 Feb 27, 2010 – Lutsen Mt

Ski Gull cancelled due to weather but booked for next year.
 Welch Village cancelled due to conflict.

Enrollment this year was phenomenal again; 79 participated in the clinics. We visited three more ski areas than the 2008-2009 season.

A BIG THANK YOU to the NSP-C Ski School Instructors below, without them the SES or Senior program could not be as efficient or effective:

Jim Andrews (PSIA)
 Tom Gray (PSIA)
 Jeff Gullickson (PSIA)
 MaryBeth Gullickson (PSIA)
 Allan Johns (PSIA)
 Jim McLeod (PSIA)
 Cindy McLeod (PSIA)
 Bob Moe (PSIA)
 Ron Sluka
 John Thomas (PSIA)
 Tim Thomas
 Wes VanNurden

A special thank you to Mary Beth Gullickson for helping us with three events this year, her dedication and knowledge is much appreciated.

More than any other year, senior candidates attended these clinics, some more than one clinic. To future seniors, these clinics help develop your skills and get you ready for the Senior evaluation, watch the Region calendar for scheduled SES or TES's.

A significant change for next year, Jim and I have planned all SES's as 2 day events. Day one to evaluate and focus on a skill set, video taping and to then work on that skill the next day with more fine tuning. Sign up early so we have enough trainers per student ratio. Once I firm up details with the hills, I will have them

posted to the Region calendar. There will be a minimal cost associated with the events to cover paying PSIA instructors. The registration deadline will be two weeks prior to the event and money will need to be mailed in advance.

Any hill interested in an event, please notify us as soon as possible as our calendar fills up fast.

Scheduled so far:

Spirit – Dec 10&11
 Buck Hill – Jan 8&9
 Mt Kato – Jan 29&30
 Lutsen - Feb
 Buena Vista – no date set yet
 Ski Gull – Feb 22

Put this Paper in Your Boot, Again.

Jim says, enjoy your summer, again as you did last season, take a piece of paper and write down what you have been working on in your skiing, exercises that help, and how you know when you achieve the desired results. Put this paper in your boot and next season as the snow begins to fall you will have a focus for those first few runs down the slope.

In completing this article, I wish to stress the importance of helmets, as I would not be here today without the grace of God and a helmet. My season may have ended with a BANG, but next year I will be back, and I don't care if it starts slowly as long as it does not end with a BANG!!!!

*****PHAT*****

Protect your Head at All Times/Protect your Head on All Terrain



Cindy McLeod, NSP-C/PSIA Ski School Assistant
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TES Update

When Jim and I are not busy with Ski Enhancement Seminars, we were in the Region facilitating Toboggan Enhancement Seminars.

Thank you to the ski resorts and hill management for promoting safe toboggan handling for their patrols and patrollers within the region. Without management allowing us to put on Toboggan Enhancement Seminars (TES) or Toboggan Refreshers, we would not be able to improve or practice our skills.

TES's held within the region this season:

Dec 13, 2009 – Spirit Mt
 Jan 5, 2010 – Buck Hill
 Jan 24, 2010 – Powder Ridge
 Jan 31, 2010 Mt Kato
 Feb 20, 2010 – Buena Vista
 Feb 21, 2010 – Giants Ridge
 Feb 28, 2010 - Lutsen Mt

Congratulations:

New Toboggan Instructors:
 Spirit Mt: Jim Hill, Mark Pankuk
 Mt Kato: Trevor Carstens
 Ski Gull: Jim Leaders, Matt Schmid
 Wild Mt: Judy Hill, Steve Hill
 Powder Ridge: Becky Kenning, Mary Zelko



New Toboggan Instructor Trainers:
Cindy McLeod, Tim Thomas

Congratulations to all 19 patrollers who recertified their toboggan training status.

The TES calendar for next year, so far..... When I get dates firmed up with patrol representatives, I will have them posted to the Region website. Any Patrol wishing a TES to be held at their hill, please notify Cindy McLeod, Dave Bramel, or Ron Sluka as soon as possible so instructor/student ratio is appropriate for learning. There is never a cost for a TES, but multiple toboggans are needed.

- Spirit Mt – Dec 12
- Buck Hill – Jan 16
- Mt Kato – possible Jan 30 in conjunction with SES
- Lutsen – February

Hope you all had a great season, enjoy the summer and see you this winter.



Kathy Glynn, Central Division Assistant OEC Supervisor
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SEM at Coffee Mill

On March 13th 2010 approximately 39 patrollers, a few family members and friends came together at Coffee Mill ski area to help with the Western Region Senior Emergency Management (SEM) Evaluation. What a great day we had!

9 SEM candidates tackled 9 difficult on-hill scenarios. In teams of three; they worked through scenarios with multiple patients, and single patients with multiple injuries and/or difficult extrications. They really showed their stuff. Combining their leadership, problem management and decision making skills with OEC skills, they really shined. All 9 passed! Congrats on a job well done! We want you back next year to help.

SEM events simply can't happen without the help from all of you. Whatever your role, you play a vital part in making these events successful. Thank you everyone who participated in the evaluation and the two pre-courses. Thank you to our pre-course and final evaluation hosts, Afton Alps, Buck Hill and Coffee Mill. Your hospitality is so greatly appreciated. And to Mary Pritchett, you do an awesome job as the region's SEM coordinator, thank you.

Have you considered participating in the senior program/SEM? You will learn new and valuable skills and meet some new friends. It's a great way to enhance your overall patrolling experience.



SEM Scenario



Candidates: Tim Ruda, Greg Thordson, Matt Stordahl, Dave Bramel, Tom McConville, Paul Botnen, Kent Anderson, and Sheila Smith holding Susan Vermeland



Newest Senior Patrollers Paul Botnen, Susan Vermeland and Dave Bramel



Terrie Brandt, Western Region Senior Program Coordinator
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2010 Western Region Senior Evaluation

What a great year! The Senior Program had another record year with a large number of senior candidates. Two Senior Ski and Toboggan evaluations were held: Sunday, February 14th at Wild Mt. and Sunday, February 21st at Giants Ridge.

10 Candidates passed the Ski/Snowboard evaluation:

- Dave Bramel – Afton Alps
- Dale Carlstrom – Wild Mt.
- Mark Duvall – Wild Mt.
- Timothy Fischer – Wild Mt.
- Jerry Holm – Wild Mt.
- Gavin Johnson – Spirit Mt.
- Alane Lucht – Afton Alps
- Elizabeth Luzum – Buck Hill
- Mark Pannkuk – Spirit Mt.
- Matt Stordahl – Welch Village



7 Candidates passed the Toboggan Handling evaluation:

Dave Bramel – Afton Alps
 Dale Carlstrom – Wild Mt.
 Timothy Fischer – Wild Mt.
 Jerry Holm – Wild Mt.
 Gavin Johnson – Spirit Mt.
 Elizabeth Luzum – Buck Hill
 Mark Pannkuk – Spirit Mt.

9 Candidates passed their SEM evaluation, which was held, at Coffee Mill Ski Area on Saturday, March 13th. Even though the ski area was closed for the year, Coffee Mill management, being wonderful hosts, took good care of everyone and served lunch.

Kent Anderson – Afton Alps
 Paul Botnen - Lutsen
 Dave Bramel - Afton Alps T
 Tom McConville – Viking Nordic
 Tim Ruda – Wild Mt.
 Sheila Smith – Afton Alps
 Matt Stordahl – Welch Village
 Greg Thordson – Afton Alps
 Susan Vermeland – Afton Alps

We have 7 new Senior Patrollers who have passed all their requirements and we proudly welcome them in as full-fledged seniors!

Paul Botnen – Lutsen
 Dave Bramel – Afton Alps
 Ted Hanna – Hyland
 Jerry Holm – Wild Mt.
 Alane Lucht – Afton Alps
 Elizabeth Luzum – Buck Hill
 Susan Vermeland – Afton Alps

Congratulations to all who passed these evaluations!

Thanks to:

Candidates for all their hard work, efforts, and accomplishments in their pursuit of excellence.
 For all the trainers and those who helped work with the candidates.
 Evaluators, Advocates, patients, and everyone who helped assist in the pre-courses, evaluations, and training of the senior candidates.
 Mike Nies, the Senior Ski/Toboggan Coordinator and Kathy Glynn, Mary Pritchett, and Sue Hayes, the SEM Coordinators who have all spent a lot of time making sure that these programs run smoothly.



The following three articles represent perspectives on the 2009-2010 SEM journey:

My scenic trip to the Alpine Senior program.

By Paul Botnen

After I finally made the choice to be an active part of the National Ski Patrol program, I knew that the next step would be the Alpine Senior program. After I made that decision, I began to practice, mostly on my own. When it came time to take the senior ski and toboggan test, I chose to go to Lutsen for the challenge. I got lucky and passed the test. I was elated. Now came the true test. Were my OEC and leadership skills honed? At that time, there were not a lot of practice sessions available and all of the pre-courses were optional. I recall going to Wild Mountain and working with Diane Larkin on a couple of occasions. She was very patient with

someone (me) who thought they knew almost everything there was to know. I vaguely remember a pre-course at Hyland Ski and Snowboard area. I did not leave the pre-course feeling I knew what I needed to know to be successful. Finally, test day arrived. I remember being in good spirits. I would either succeed or not. When we got down to Welch village, it was a cloudy, gloomy day. It was rather warm for the month of March. And to add some frosting to the cake, it began to rain. I should have taken my clue. I pressed on. During the practice rounds, I did okay. It gave me hope for the afternoon evaluation rounds. During lunch, changes to how the afternoon was going to flow had been made. There was confusion on all fronts. The evaluators were confused. The candidates were confused. I was certainly confused. The afternoon did not go well. I was not able to recover my normal calm self. I got flustered and never got settled down. My OEC skills were okay, but I struggled with keeping the “big picture” in mind. Needless to say, I did not pass. I left that afternoon vowing not to return.

For the next fifteen years or so, I helped out in a variety of ways with the Senior SEM program. I had little interest in coming back as a candidate. Over the years, changes have been made to the program. Most importantly, from my point of view, Mary Pritchett and Kathy Glynn coming on board as the masterminds running the program here in the Western Region. I was lucky to be present at Spirit Mountain when Mary had her first SEM Final with a 100% pass rate. It has happened several times since then, and there has not been a loss in the quality of the program.

Finally last fall, the thought occurred to me that training with Mary and Kathy at Hyland on Tuesdays was a key part to passing the test. I checked my schedule and found, I would be able to train with them at Hyland, running practice scenarios in preparation for the big day. As I look back, those Tuesday night practice sessions were important to passing the final. I signed up to attend both pre-courses, as well. It turns out that nearly all candidates went to both available pre-courses. It requires a lot of talent to successfully organize and pull off pre-courses and the SEM final evaluation. The Western Region is loaded with that talent. Thanks Mary and Kathy!

And yes, I did pass the requirements for the SEM evaluation this time around, so did everyone else that came to Coffee Mill this March. If you have not signed up to be part of the Senior program, think about giving it a try. At the very least, you will improve your skills. You will be challenged, but you will be better for the effort.

Challenging and rewarding.

By Matt Stordahl

Challenging and rewarding. This is the best way that I can sum up my experience with the Senior Emergency Management (SEM) course. I patrol on a weeknight shift and have found a number of benefits and one drawback from that shift decision. One benefit is, we typically see fewer accidents than our weekend counterparts. The drawback (it's very hard to call this a drawback), is that we typically see fewer accidents, especially the more serious ones.

I, probably like most, joined the patrol because I love to ski. I'd also like to think I'd be there for anybody who needed a hand if I could, which makes the patrol a natural fit. What I found from the SEM course is, while I've never felt that I gave improper care for a patient, my skills certainly didn't hurt having a tune-up. I also found that while my skills were being tuned, the course forced me to look further ahead in managing an accident, utilizing resources more efficiently and ultimately giving better care.



I can't say enough good things about the crew at Hyland Hills where I did my training. The attitude wasn't one of egos or empowered trainers, but simply of people who wanted nothing more than to help others be better at what we all love to do. I also witnessed this type of camaraderie at the Pre-Courses and the Final Test. The whole experience was great and I would recommend that everybody consider, at a minimum, becoming involved with the Pre-Courses to witness what SEM training is. Working with other Patrols can only help all of the Patrols in the region become better. Everyone has different tricks. Everyone has different experiences. Bringing this all together, and at the same time meeting a great group of people and friends, will benefit not only our individual Patrols but the entire skiing public.

If for no other reason, what a great excuse to slide into those boots again!

Training was fun, yes fun!

By Susan Vermeland

Last fall I toyed with the idea of not doing SEM this year. I had successfully completed my senior ski and toboggan last year, and last fall assumed the patrol director position at Afton Alps. I also have two kids on a high school alpine race team and the D-team, work a demanding full time job and thought I didn't need one more thing on my plate this year. I'll do it next year, I thought. Then I was in the patrol room in early December when there was a lot of talk about the senior program, someone made a comment about how much time it took and another patroller shot back "if Sue can find time to do it, anyone can!" I was committed to getting it done!

Initially, I undertook the senior program because a couple of my patrol buddies had or were also involved in the program and encouraged me to join them. I wanted to move my patrolling skills up to the next level, work on leadership, problem management and decision making in the patrol environment so training to be a senior seemed like the next logical step. There was also the issue that all the senior patrollers for the last twenty plus years at Afton, until this year, have been male and I thought that needed to change. Plus, I am always up for a challenge.

Training was fun - yes fun! We met every Sunday afternoon at Afton to go through scenarios. Our trainers were great, honest and critical of our work, just what was needed so our skills would be ready for the test. Tuesday evenings found many of us Aftonites at Hyland working with the outstanding group of trainers there. They put us through our paces in a supportive and encouraging environment. We got extremely proficient at ankle hitches, blanket rolls, traction splints and ironing our cravats! (No, we didn't do any ironing during training but sure heard how important it was!) One of the additional benefits to this training was the opportunity to work with patrollers from different hills.

Attending the pre-courses is an opportunity that cannot be replaced. It put me in situations that were similar to the test with the evaluators and my advocate staring at me, scribbling on their papers stacked on clipboards. Thankfully Mary Pritchett keeps everyone well-stocked with chocolate. Excellent, creative and constructive feedback was provided. I left each pre-course tired but wanting to keep practicing scenarios. Our trainers wanted to take the next day off, but we wouldn't let them.

Passing SEM and reaching the senior level is a wonderful feeling of accomplishment. Being surrounded by very encouraging trainers, evaluators and advocates all along the way gave me the will to continue training, especially when I would have a non-stellar performance in a scenario.

Are you contemplating stepping up to try senior out next year? Whether it be skiing, tobogganing, SEM or all portions, do it for the skill building, but have fun. We laughed a lot, but we learned so much. And no, the reward isn't double pay; it's knowing you completed something you set out to do.

Are you "IN" for the 2010-11 Senior Program?



Patroller Spotlight



Jim Gears, Patrol Director, Spirit Mountain writes:

Great choice!

Cindy McLeod has been a member of the Spirit Mountain Ski Patrol since 1976 and continues to contribute countless hours to the patrol, region and division. She and husband Jim coordinate Spirit Mountain's Outdoor Emergency Transport program and Senior program. They improve skiing/riding and toboggan skills by working with both basic and senior candidates. Additionally, Cindy helps teach SES and TES clinics across the region and maintains a database of trainers. As a patrol director, I would be hard pressed to coordinate the activities of a large patrol without her assistance and support. She truly exemplifies our motto of "service" and "safety".

Kathy Glynn, Central Division, Assistant OEC Supervisor comments on Cindy's work:

In addition to being Spirit Mt's SEM trainer, Cindy is involved with the region SEM program. She has participated in many pre-courses and final evaluations as an evaluator and an advocate. Numerous times Cindy has gotten area manager's permission to host an SEM event at Spirit. Cindy has worked with Spirit's area manager to provide the region with excellent host facilities for pre-courses and the final evaluation. When Spirit is the host of an event, Cindy is our local contact person. She is instrumental in selecting appropriate station sites and set-up, and assists with equipment. Cindy's help with SEM is always appreciated.

Susan Mullenix, Patrol Director, Lutsen Mountains states:

Cindy and Jim McLeod included two of Lutsen Mountain's candidates in Spirit Mountain's candidate toboggan and ski training program. The candidates report that it was excellent training for which they are very grateful.

Cindy was quite seriously injured while on patrol duty at Lutsen this spring. She plunged into the woods off the Plunge. We wish her all the best, as she continues to recover!

John Thomas, Region Director, writes:



The first time I met Cindy McLeod, she was working on obtaining her Senior status. This was many years ago. Ever since that time, Cindy just keeps going and going, a lot like the "Energizer Bunny"! Cindy is one of the trainers at her home area: Spirit Mountain. She helps train the Spirit Mountain Basic and Senior Candidates in OEC, and Ski and Toboggan skills. You can also find Cindy at many of the Senior events and pre-courses helping out as an evaluator, advocate, area liaison/coordinator and of course, overall cheerleader. Cindy also helps with the registration, coordination, facilitation and teaching of the SESs and TESSs. Cindy is **always** willing to volunteer to help! As the Region Director, I depend on patrollers like Cindy to help keep the Region operating. Thanks Cindy!

Jim McLeod, NSP-C/PSIA Ski School Supervisor describes Cindy's work:

Cindy has done so much to promote safety in our sport in the Central Division, Western Region, and at Spirit Mountain. She is a certified PSIA instructor and has her National Number. She has been on patrol for 34 years. She patrols at Spirit Mountain and Lutsen Mountains. At the division level, she has led toboggan sessions at the Ski Trainer Workshop's. At the region level, she is the assistant toboggan advisor and the assistant ski school advisor. Cindy does all the scheduling for SES's and TES's in the Western Region. She also leads most TES's and is involved with the SES's. She is a Senior Evaluator and a toboggan IT. She is also a CPR and OEC instructor. At the local level, Cindy runs the basic on hill training and evaluation program. She is also the Senior ski and SEM trainer. She has been the chairperson of both Division and Region annual meetings.



Tom Wiczorek, Activities Director
tom.wiczorek@bendtec.com

Spring Fling, March 27th and 28th

The **Spring Fling** went well despite the rain on Saturday. We had a tour of Lutsen Mountains and plenty of good food, including steaks on the grill. Sunday, we had sunshine and good skiing. Please join us next year!



Ron Nichols, Welch Village Ski Patrol
snowflyr@hotmail.com

Winter Withdrawal

Now that spring is upon us, we'll have to hang up our skis for another year.

As winter enthusiasts, most of us do not succumb to cabin fever, "winter blahs" or other cold weather ailments like many of our family and friends. We have our own sickness to contend with. Many of us have experienced this over the years when the ski season ends. We may be a little sad or just not as content in the early throes of spring. As we're hitting that golf ball or riding our bicycle, it just doesn't give us the same thrill as riding or carving over the snow. Eventually, as spring wears on and we get more involved with other outdoor activities and our skiing experiences are more in the past, these feelings go away.

What we are actually experiencing is called **winter withdrawal**. It is a feeling, I am sure our winter brethren-those who cross-country

ski, snowmobile, dogsled, snowshoe experience also. Here are some ideas to help cope with winter withdrawal: In line at the grocery store, pretend we are waiting in line to get on a chairlift. At our local theatre, when we receive our movie tickets, we can think we are getting a lift ticket (attach the ticket to a wire wicket on our jacket) As we are on our favorite mountain bike trail, weaving around the trees, we can imagine that we are skiing around gates and riding through snow and... Before we know it, our favorite season will be upon us once again! Have a Great summer!



Final Sweep

The **Double Black Diamond Express** is published biannually by the Western Region, Central Division of the National Ski Patrol.

Deadline for Fall 2010 Newsletter Submissions: 10/31/10

Address Changes can be updated on the NSP National Web Site. Please log on to www.nsp.org and access your NSP member page to update your personal information. The NSPWR Newsletter mailing list is downloaded from the National database.

Remember the NSPWR calendar at:
http://www.d.umn.edu/~nspscdwr/calendar2009_2010.php



Laws of Gravity strictly enforced!

