



The Patroller Peek

A Publication of the Far West Division of the National Ski Patrol

Fall 2001 Edition

2001 AWARDS

Far West Division Finds National Gold In Sacramento

Dave Ritchie - FWD Awards Coordinator

Our annual Far West Division awards banquet was held during our summer division meeting in Sacramento. Leading off, Daryl Whitcher presented Certificates of Appreciation to staff members who had served in division positions during his tenure as Division Director. Outgoing Region Directors John Tannaci and Chuck Herbert were also awarded Certificates of Appreciation for past efforts. Dave Ritchie was presented with the Division Director's Award.

Division Director Ray Bryan then took over the presentations and called Daryl back to the podium to receive a Meritorious Service Award. Ken Bergmann, who had previously entertained us with his after dinner show, was named Outstanding Alpine Patroller. Larry Crawford took

honors as Outstanding Nordic Patroller. Susan Kaempfer received the trophy for Outstanding Auxiliary Patroller. Our Outstanding Professional Patroller plaque went to Eric Knudson. Janice Waits was awarded the Outstanding Administrative Patroller trophy. Patrol Representative Richard Roth received the Outstanding Award in that category. Our Outstanding Instructor, Jim Otto, was runner-up nationally and received a silver merit star for that honor.



Ken Bergman was honored as Outstanding Alpine Patroller.

Photo by Merryl Chewning

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Perception is Everything



Your Division Director tries some new arguments to again pursue a subject about which he is very passionate. Positive change in our perception for the future. If you have spent any time discussing division issues, you have probably heard some of this before

Ray Bryan - Division Director

It is said that perception is everything. I believe we must work together to change some of our old and at times misguided perceptions of the NSP to make any significant changes with the goal of improving ski patrolling in the Far West. I have come to understand from my eight years on the national board that some decades ago the perception of the NSP evolved differently in the Far West than in other parts of the country. Simply stated, somehow the perception has evolved that the NSP is not the training and credentialing association for every patroller. It has been my observation that this perception exists only here, in our back yard. Here, the NSP has become perceived as the association of volunteer ski patrolling, creating differences in the way you interact with the non-NSP patroller and your ski patrol department. Many of you don't recognize these differences because the evolution has taken place over many years. It has become part of your culture. Changing this perception is possibly the greatest opportunity and challenge we have before us as a division.

In most of the nation the ski patrol department has a common bond from their membership in the NSP, while the lack of this same bond can be divisive in the Far West. Membership in the NSP represents 98% of all ski patrollers in the US. Since membership in the FWD consists primarily of volunteers, the hundreds of patrollers who are non-members in this division alone account for much of the NSP's missing 2%. Again, the perception that the NSP is for volunteers. Changing this perception would significantly increase FWD membership. Elsewhere, the NSP is a membership association of every patroller. This is further evidenced by the over 2500 paid patrollers who are NSP members; more paid patrollers than our entire Far West Division membership. Entire departments exist at areas in the Rockies with no volunteers, but complete membership in the NSP.

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Perception - Continued from page 1

During the past few months I have been working on strategic alliances with other associations. In addition to making us a better partner in the industry, these alliances can play an important role in achieving our goals over the next few years. For one thing, they can help us change how we are perceived. While at the California Ski Industry Association (CSIA) annual meeting in September, I found that we continue to have possible misunderstandings regarding the use of volunteer ski patrollers in the patrol department, the role of the NSP, and the advantages of using NSP training and credentialing department wide. I will be working to improve these understandings within the CSIA.

But perception change needs to occur from the grass roots patroller level too. So, what can you do? Start acting differently about the NSP. At our Summer Conference in Sacramento we had an excellent presentation on why OEC is the ski industries emergency medical credential of choice. Use this information to change perceptions about OEC and EMT at your area. Also at the Summer Conference, we heard expert panel members explain why the use of NSP training and credentialing is good risk management. Close ties to the NSP are good for business and often supported by the area paying or reimbursing membership dues.

Getting non-member patrollers to see the NSP as their association will require that they have control over the use of programs and training. It would be silly to think that this could succeed by forcing conformance with program delivery schemes that have evolved with a volunteer patrolling focus. Like training for 8 consecutive Saturday's to become a basic patroller. For a rookie paid patroller this may need to happen in the first 8 days on the job.

Patrol representatives and instructors need to promote ways for these patrollers to be in control of their own needs from within the NSP offering, from the training of rookie patrollers to the self-maintenance of emergency medical credentials with our industry recognized standard. Ski patrol department managers need to feel like they are not alone in bonding with the NSP. If they don't have the support from their peers at neighboring ski areas, then we need to acquaint them with peers from other parts of the country. In the future, the FWD would have a better balance of paid and volunteer patrollers in leadership and instructional positions.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Host Programs

The NSP is working with the NSAA to develop a "how to" for the broader implementation of mountain hosts, safety patrols, and related functions in the industry. http://www.nsp.org/whatsnew/mtn_host_program.asp. The NSP will consider creating a new classification for these people to be members at its winter meeting in January. This is seen as an excellent way for prospective and exiting patrollers to be involved at the resort.

Need Rust and Blue?

Mountain Uniforms is one place where you can get rust and blue patrol uniforms. www.mountainuniforms.com.

Supreme Court

The California Supreme Court decided not to hear a further appeal in the Kane case, bringing this matter to its very end. The appellate courts decision makes a number of points which are of great value to ski patrolling and the industry. http://www.nsp.org/Press/kane_vs_nsp.pdf.

Web Site

The Division web site www.farwest.org is quickly getting back online after a lengthy hiatus. The web site currently has listings including links to patrol and Regions in the Farwest Division. Check here for the latest Farwest Division news and events. **+**

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More Than Just A Patroller

Bob Ashcraft - Assistant Division Director

As this year begins we need to be very much aware of our role as ski patrollers. Yes, we will continue our role as first aiders on the hill, but there is another aspect with which we need to be equally involved—being good ambassadors to the customer. In a recent meeting of the National Ski Areas Association and Trade show in May 2001, major themes emerged concerning the ski area segment of the industry as it relates to the current future of the ski patroller. Because the ski areas are experiencing significant changes the roles of the ski patroller need to accommodate these changes. Ski areas are putting greater emphasis on the total experience of the customer, thus patrollers need to continue their important role in skier safety education, accident prevention and guest services.

Certainly, most of us are good ambassadors; but the next step, to meet the challenge of positively impacting the total experience of the customer, will become a goal for us now. How do we do this? There are numerous ways, and I am sure

that you can name many more than I am listing here.

1. Rather than riding the lift with a fellow patroller try riding with a customer and have conversation with them.
2. As you encounter customers ask them what kind of day they are having and if there is anything you can do to help make their day better.
3. Customers who are having problems need to have their questions answered in a positive way.
4. Be Clear when directing customers to various facilities at the area.
5. Be courteous with a smile on your face.

Another area that the National Ski Areas Association is concerned about is identifying and nurturing the next generation of ski patrollers. It is appropriate to ask customers if they are interested in becoming a patroller. Be prepared to tell them how they may join. Other ways to seek out candidates could include radio announcements, television "spots", and personal encouragement at your place of business, your professional organizations, or at safety lectures to ski clubs. **+**

Instructor Development

Jennifer Bryan - FWD Instructor Development Supervisor

The third edition for the Instructor Development curriculum is just around the corner from going to print. The third-edition re-write team took a long hard look at the second edition's contents, what worked for members, and what didn't. They also looked at the course and text titles.

They wanted those too to directly reflect the goals of the texts and the course while concurrently eliminating confusion between the student and instructor's text. The third edition student text will be entitled *Instructor Development, Student Text*, the instructor's text *A Guide to Teaching the Instructor Development Course, Instructor's Manual* and the course will simply be called *Instructor Development*.

I believe that you will find the new third edition much more user friendly. The re-write team trimmed down on the heavy educational terms and educational concepts while maintaining a professional manual focused on developing quality instructors.

Another new section you'll find will be the implementation of Mentoring. We all see and use mentoring in business and professional education arenas, so what better place than with NSP instructors, too! After an instructor trainee completes the classroom/text portion of Instructor Development (I.D.) it will be the Mentoring component that will complete a patroller's education in becoming an NSP instructor in his/her desired area of study. The latest edition of Pointers will give you an in-depth look at this new tool.

In listening to member's requests and concerns the Global component has been enveloped into the I.D. and Mentoring curriculum, activities have been stream-lined for

time and focus and the glossary has been expanded.

The Instructor Development third-edition team is also aware that patroller lives have become more and more time poor, and many patrollers live further away from their education centers. These factors make it difficult, if not impossible, to take those occasional night classes. This is where distance education is filling the gap. There are so many ways now that people can enhance their education: video, text, cassette tape, the web, etc. and NSP realizes the value in these alternatives for its members. Developed correctly, a student can have the same quality education as the traditional classroom. It may even provide a better education because of the high standards, consistent course content, and availability at an hour best suited to the student's schedule. NSP will continue to develop programs and services to meet patroller needs. **+**



Photo By Doug Hill

Mountain Travel and Rescue)

Tri-Advisory Education Conference

Joanne Barnes - FWD Mountain Travel and Rescue Supervisor

What more awe inspiring setting is there than Yosemite Valley for the annual TRI-ADVISORY EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE. November 3-4 are the dates. \$25. is the registration fee which includes Saturday's continental breakfast, lunch and dinner. Topics pertain to all patrollers from medical to the NSP role in Search and Rescue, capped off by an exciting evening slide presentation.

National MTR Program Director, Monica Spicker, will be our special guest and among the presenters. Sunday morning there will be a three hour program on Mentoring, which will qualify as a clinic for instructor recertification, conducted by FWD Instructor Development and Leadership Development Program Supervisors Jennifer Bryan and Susan Kaempfer weather permitting, there will also be outside rope work or just nature viewing. It's a great place to network and inform-

Toboggan

Bit By Bit

Gerry Calomico - F.W.D. Toboggan Supervisor

For those of you who were not able to attend the F.W.D. Summer Conference, Get with someone who did and have them share with you some of the good information they got by attending.

In the Ski & Toboggan discipline we focused on the training and training of IT's to entry level people. When we train people, if we give them the necessary information one bit at a time, and stay away from sharing more than they need to know at that given time, they will be less frustrated and/or overwhelmed.

Positive Motivation

When training someone, look for something that they are doing right (no matter how many things you perceive them to be doing wrong) and focus on that. Talk to them and compliment them for it. When we do this, we open up a line of communication with them, much more powerful than using a critical tactic. By doing it this way you are getting their attention, so that now you can concentrate on correcting the areas that you perceived to be a problem. They will now listen, learn & feel good about themselves at the same time!


Bit By Bit Entry Level Toboggan Example

This can be broken down into separate stations. The class can be trained at one station and quality checked before moving on to the next station.

Some people may be ready to move on sooner than others, you can set up your programs to accommodate this, if you

ally meet with our Division Director and two Assistant DDs who are already registered.

Need a pre-registration form? Call me at 650-494-8895 or e-mail me atgagard@att.net. Then, send it to me! ADVANCED MOUNTAIN TRAVEL AND RESCUE in the northern part of the Division is offered every other year. Classroom and ropework days in Piedmont and Berkeley are November 10-11. The three day field session will be held over Presidents' Day weekend February 16-18, 2002, in the Donner Summit area. Prerequisites are Basic MTR and Level I (Basic) Avalanche. It's a wonderful way to gain knowledge and improve skills that can be applied to everyday patrolling as well as private trips.

Contact me for additional information. If you would like to take the Basic MTR or refresh that information, consider joining a Basic MTR class. Consult your regional calendar for dates or come to the Tri-Advisory where they will be posted. 

want to, I like to start with the following:

Station 1. (Route selection)

- Side Slip
- Snow Plow
- Explain route selection and fall line

Station 2. (Toboggan Check)

- In detail, demonstrate with a toboggan what we should be looking for structurally, to make sure the equipment is in good working condition.
- In detail, show them the different components of the toboggan and their importance.

Station 3. (Running the Toboggan unloaded)

- Explain
- Demonstrate
- Hands-on (student)

Station 4. (Approaching the Scene) may be combined with station 3.

- Explain
- Demonstrate
- Hands-on (student)

Station 5. (Equipment set-up site)

- Explain
- Demonstrate
- Hands-on (student)

Station 6. (Loading patient) May be combined with station 5.

- Explain

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WHERE IS OUR

ORGANIZATION GOING?

Bob Ashcraft, Assistant Division Director

Many businesses go thru an overview and evaluation of where they were, where they are now, and where they should be going in the future. Such is the case with National Ski Patrol at this present time. In the year 2000, a committee of National Board members (called the G-1 Committee) were selected to seek out an organization to take on the task of evaluating changes that we will make in the future. The services of Association Management Services, Inc., (AMS) was selected to perform this function.

The function has been proceeding in phases, overview, lessons learned and implications. In order for AMS to do research they started with a member-at-large survey, education/program leaders survey, phone interviews with related organizations and focus groups with National Ski Area (NSAA) members. An eye opening situation resulted from these surveys as follows; Historically, NSP has tended to focus on internal matters and preserving the status quo. Now, due to rapid changes within the snowsports industry, NSP finds itself increasingly out-of-touch with industry

KANE: The Aftermath

Geoff Hutcherson - FWD Legal Advisor

All patrollers should know by now that the NSP prevailed in the suit brought by the Kane family. The suit involved a challenge to our training. The ultimate ruling, which is now precedent in California, clarified a rule that protects instructors. Indeed, the case decision may be viewed as a broad protection for the teaching profession. The Court said that a teacher's role is to challenge and encourage the student to improve. The simplified version is that if you sign up for a class, you can expect and you assume the risks that you will be challenged to push the limits of the abilities in question. Under this circumstance, you assume the risk of getting hurt.

As you may imagine, this has broad implications for coaching sports, cheerleading, climbing schools, defensive driving schools and many other activities. But, if this is the result, how does it effect our operations?

As one might expect, being involved in a lawsuit is not a pleasant experience. NSP as an organization, and its members, don't volunteer to become involved in litigation. Of course, the risks are always present. As a partial response to KANE, the FWD instituted a series of releases for partici-

trends. Therefore, the National Board developed a Mission Statement as follows: "The function of the NSP Board of Directors will change to address strategic national issues important to the organization. This change will result in a business model that will be more effective for members and industry stakeholders".

Some of the frequent questions asked at this point are:

What will this mean to the patroller on the hill?

- A better use of a patroller's volunteer time
- Clearer communication with ski area management
- No change in the patroller's responsibility of care and transportation, but we anticipate greater opportunities for involvement in the ski area
- Clearer, more consistent understanding of the role of the volunteer patroller on the hill

What will it mean to the NSP organization?

- NSP will, once again, be a valued partner in the ski industry
- NSP will be more focused on the big picture and less focused on its internal issues
- NSP will be a full partner in the growth of the ski industry.

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pants in NSP functions. These releases have been available on the FWD website. There is a release for candidates and a release for specific events (i.e., mountaineering class).

The main value of these releases is that they will discourage suits. One cannot prevent suits. In the U.S. the courthouse is always open. However, given the state of the law and the release the plaintiff's bar must seriously evaluate the chances of recovery. Since releases of this type are ordinarily upheld, they provide another layer of protection.

The releases are designed to include the host ski area or agency. We have a valuable and worthwhile service to deliver to the general public. It serves our interests to do what we can to protect the operational environment in which we can continue this endeavor. Patrol directors are encouraged to see that their instructors use the releases. They are of no use if not used.

Remember, we serve the injured public. When they need help, they get it faster, more efficiently, and, I believe, more effectively because we are on the mountain or trail. I enjoy helping and would like to stay on the mountain. The releases will assist us in that goal.

I suggest that patrol directors be responsible for showing *Continued on page 11*

FOCUS ON SENIOR

John Kreiswimmer – Assistant FWD Director

At our annual Summer Divisional meeting, we endeavored to peek into the NSP's future - Into areas that can and will have an impact on how we patrol, where we patrol and organizational expectations of a patroller. Of particular interest was a very impressive presentation by the Sam & Doug team on OEC - "Why OEC is the emergency medical training standard of choice for the winter resort environment". This session was very well received, and you can bet, we'll be seeing more of this type of presentation in the future.

As a follow-up to this excellent presentation there was a reviewed focus on how we evaluate the OEC Senior Candidate. There are concerns (within the NSP), that there may exist a misperception of the NSP having a multi-level OEC certification program.

Clearly this is not the stated position of our National Office, nor should it be the intent when evaluating for Senior OEC advancement. Senior OEC, as it was originally designed; is to evaluate problem management, leadership, and decision making, not hands-on OEC skills.

With thanks to our OEC Supervisors, various scenarios were presented; specifically inserting the pseudo senior candidate into management/leadership roles. Focus was not on a re-test of already proven fundamental hands on demonstration of OEC skills, but rather on managing and controlling the scene - from establishing a safe environment, recognition of the problem and life threatening conditions, prioritizing and directing first care, arranging for transport and evacuation to appropriate resources, while recognizing area management protocols and forms administration. A model of these presented scenarios for conducting Senior OEC Evaluations, should be the message that is going back to all patrols, and all patrollers.

A short story – The Senior Patroller:

As of year 2001, the National Ski Patrol registered 26,520+, NSP members. 21% of this membership is classified as Senior Patrollers. (In the FWD this number is 19%). Of our total Senior Patroller Classification population, 50% are also represented as Instructors. So ... How do you answer these questions? ... Is this a positive return on investment? Should we be promoting Senior Advancement? Is there any question that our answer is an unequivocal, YES?

The Senior Program (generally speaking) has three

36 years as a member of one of the finest service organizations in the world.

Avalanche Supervisor's Report

Mike Laney - Far West Division Avalanche Supervisor



Hello, I am Mike Laney. I succeeded Tom Duffy as Avalanche Supervisor this spring and am now appreciating what an awesome responsibility he had, and what a distinct privilege it is to be working with the rest of this Division's dedicated staff.

I joined the NSP in 1966 as a professional member of the Sugar Bowl Ski Patrol in Northern California. Sugar Bowl Ski Resort is classified as a Class A avalanche area and my professional duties included avalanche forecasting and control. In 1967, one of our NSP volunteers invited me to help teach an NSP advanced avalanche course that he was conducting at the resort. I was immediately hooked on avalanche instruction. This instructor took me under his wing and guided me through the instructor-ship process. At that time there was no such thing as Phase I or Phase II instructor training; instructor interns learned their craft by getting involved with instruction and working closely, yet informally, with veteran instructors. Today we would call them mentors. My mentor and I taught courses and attended clinics together all over Northern California. We became good friends, taking family trips together during the summer.

In 1973, Mike Hiehle, Far West Division Avalanche Advisor, offered me a scholarship to attend the third annual National Avalanche School (I was a volunteer member by then.). My mentor was also there, in the capacity of organizing the training staff for the school. I learned as much from glimpses behind the scenes as from attending the formal sessions. After that, we did a few more courses together, but then his employer transferred him to Colorado. As a glacial hydrologist with the US Geological Survey, he couldn't have been happier. Bill Hotchkiss and I continued occasional contact until his death last year.

In the early 1980s, I discontinued instructing to spend more time raising my family, although I continued to remain active as a patroller and kept current with avalanche theory, forecasting and control operations. Five years ago I re-entered the program. I took the mandatory Instructor Development Phase I and Avalanche Phase II courses, assisted other instructors of record, requalified as a level I instructor and then a level 2 instructor, simultaneously serving as Mother Lode Region Avalanche Administrator for the last three years and as Tom Duffy's assistant last year.

I figure that my new duties are a way to help repay my predecessors and the NSP for an extraordinarily rewarding

I give this background to lend some perspective to my position toward the NSP's move BACK to a mentoring and I fully prefer the mentoring model. I am a professional educator, with over 28 years of experience in curriculum development and teaching middle school, community college, military, and university graduate level students (not to mention patrollers). I have attended countless teacher credentialing courses, professional development workshops and clinics. Few of them have prepared me for teaching as well as working alongside a veteran in a real world environment.

Mentoring requires more personal contact with instructor interns over a longer period of time, but in terms of a quality teaching-learning experience it has no equal. I look forward to working with the National Avalanche Committee, the FWD Education Committee, and my Region Avalanche Administrators to develop a working mentoring program for our avalanche instructors before the year is out.

Not only is that change on the horizon, but Shep Snow, National Avalanche Director, and the National Avalanche Committee will also have an all-new, up-to-date Avalanche Instructors' Manual ready for distribution by the end of this year. Expect updates of program policies and procedures, instructor development, and an expanded avalanche curriculum (with an avalanche awareness unit designed to meet growing need for public outreach). The committee will be putting the final touches on the manual during the last week-end of October through the first week of November, in conjunction with the National Avalanche School at Park City, Utah. If you have any questions, concerns or issues regarding the NSP Avalanche program that you would like me to address at this meeting, please contact me as soon as possible.

Finally, I want to remind and encourage you to attend the National Avalanche School at Park City UT, October 27 - November 2, and/or the Far West Division Tri-Advisory conference at Yosemite, November 3-4. Both events are worth the time and expense. For the National Avalanche School, contact Karen Hageman at the National Office. For the Tri-Advisory Conference, see Joanne Barnes' article in this issue of the PEEK

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Far West Seeks to Become a State S & R Resource

Mike St. Clair - Nordic Supervisor

Mom Nature is giving us some clues that winter may be coming early. The swallows have left Capistrano, the leaves on the trees are changing colors, and our dogs have dragged the skis out of the closet.

The big news this fall is the Far West Division Nordic patrols are forging a relationship with the State of California Office of Emergency Services (OES), which is in charge of Search & Rescue on the state level.

Years ago, Dave Tollakson (a ski patroller/mountaineering guru I greatly respect!) worked to develop a relationship with the search and rescue community; because, he felt that ski patrol had a lot to offer.

He taught Winter Survival at SAR City (Search & Rescue), which is a once-a-year conference held in Barstow, California. At this conference, search & rescue teams from all over the western US meet to refresh, learn new skills, and share new ideas.

Most SAR groups had no idea what the ski patrol was

Perception - Continued from page 2

In a conversation this summer with Walt Foley, president of the Association of Professional Patrollers (APP), we discussed how his association fits into this perception. Some believe that patrollers need to choose between the NSP and the APP. In reality it is more appropriate in many cases to be a member of both. The NSP and the APP are not at cross-purposes, nor are they in competition with each other. The APP has its primary focuses as an association; providing an organization for the common issues of those who patrol as a profession, and conducting its Certified skill level program.

The NSP focuses on the delivery of education, training and credentials in everyday patroller skills at the ski area level. This takes the form of bringing new patrollers into the patrol department, and maintaining the skills of returning patrollers using an instructor network and high quality training materials. These are requirements that exist for paid and volunteer patrollers alike. At the same time, the FWD and the APP have a long successful history of working together in the APP's Certified process. There is no reason why patrollers can't be members of both associations, and every reason to belong to both if they are involved with Certified, or paid to patrol.

We must change this old and incorrect perception of the NSP. As a division, this is an important goal so that the NSP can become a stronger association. Without this change, I fear the FWD will evolve in a way that will continue to be a disadvantage to our members and our industry. **+**

about or what our capabilities were. Many Nordic patrollers like to help with searches in the winter environment. Up till now, if we assisted SAR in any searches, we were simply volunteers helping out.

Currently, the Nordic patrols are working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be recognized as a 'Resource' with OES. Being called out as a 'Resource' to assist OES during the winter has many benefits. The main benefit is that we will be requested because of our expertise in the winter environment.

The second important benefit is we will be under the auspice of OES, not ski patrol. As patrollers pass the requirements/qualifications, their names will be added to a list, which will be provided to the OES. The State wants this relationship because of our high level of training in Mountain Travel & Rescue. We want this relationship because our members have expressed the desire for an opportunity to utilize their training over a broader level.

Any patroller may be on this list so long as they meet the qualifications.

See you when the snow flies. **+**

Bit by Bit - Continued from page 4

- Demonstration
- Hands-on (student)
- Station 7. (Running loaded)
- Explain
- Demonstrate
- Hands-on (student)

Station 8. (Direction Changes)

- Use many methods to accomplish this. All this should be accomplished one bit at a time. The end product will be:

A very proficient Patroller.

Recap (Bit by Bit)

- Start at the beginning
- Use positive motivation (make them feel good about the abilities the do have) then they will be more willing to work on the abilities that need improving.
- Make sure the student is ready to move on to the next level.

This training format can easily be used at all levels of Patrol Training in all disciplines. There are videos available, that can be accessed from the N.S.P. Video Library on-line by calling them. Please avail yourself of these, as they are very valuable training tools.

If you have questions or need help, contact your regional advisor. I look forward to interacting with you and your regions leaders this winter.

See you on the mountain - Gerry **+**

Awards - Continued from page 1

As nominees for national outstanding awards, Mark Cohen (nordic patroller), Virginia Nakada (auxiliary patroller), Richard Roth (patrol representative), and Janice Waitis (administrative patroller) received yellow merit stars. A silver merit star went to Richard Seward as runner-up for National Outstanding Professional Patroller.

Mike Baker, First Assistant National Director, took pride in presenting the U.S. Ski Patrol Outstanding Administrative Patroller Award, called the Charles W. Schobinger Award, to Cliff Chewning. With this, Cliff also received a gold merit star. Thus, we began our run on national awards.

The Far West Division did well at the national level this year. Our Outstanding Alpine Patrol, Big Bear Valley Patrol, won the national title again. It also won the national title in 1998 and was the runner-up patrol in 2000. Pinecrest Nordic Patrol repeated as Far West Division Outstanding Nordic Patrol and was judged to be the National Outstanding Nordic Patrol. It is awesome to have both of these national awards come to our division this year.

Janice Waitis receives the Outstanding Administrative Patroller Award from Ray Bryan.



Jim Otto, Richard Roth and Susan Kempher bring home the Division and National awards for Outstanding Alpine Patrol to their Big Bear Valley Ski Patrol members.

Photos by Merryll Channing

Ski area management is concerned about identifying and nurturing the next generation of ski patrollers. Would you believe the average age of NSP patrollers is 44?

Ski areas are putting greater emphasis on the total experiences of the customer.

Patrollers need to continue their important role in skier safety education, accident prevention and guest services.

There are other stakeholders besides National Ski Areas Association who are interested in our change. Nordic patrols serving the National Parks, Forest Service and many other areas not associated with a ski area will be focusing on our change. As a member of the National Board and as your Assistant Division Director, I am excited as we proceed through this phase of change. Most important is the daily job that we perform on the hill, one that we have been doing a great job of for many years. You Patrollers deserve the credit. **+**

Visit www.farwest.org

Emergency Management Replaces Senior and Certified OEC Mentoring for OEC Instructors is Here

Sam Bradley and Doug Hill, FWD Division OEC Supervisors

The senior OEC and certified OEC components of NSP's Senior and Certified Programs have been officially renamed "Emergency Management" and will be incorporated into the programs this season in the Far West Division. All Division OEC Instructor Trainers should have received the initial bulletin from NSP formalizing this change last month. More information will be distributed soon to the OEC Instructor Trainers to help with the transition.

Why the change to "Emergency Management" from Senior and Certified OEC? The main reason was to eliminate a misconception that seemed to have developed over time in some circles that a patroller who had taken and passed Senior and/or Certified OEC was operating at a higher level of first aid in the NSP system. In actuality, the program and evaluation, although requiring strong basic OEC skills that all patrollers should exhibit, was not a "higher" or "more advanced" level of OEC, but was intended to provide the patroller experience in leadership, problem management, and decision making in multiple-victim and/or multiple-injury situations.

What will this mean to the Senior and Certified Patroller candidates? They will not notice a radical change in the program, at least not this season. The actual focus and original intent of this module, as stated above, has not changed. This season's "Emergency Management" module will continue to primarily use OEC-based scenarios to provide this experience, and will primarily use senior-level OEC instructors as evaluators and advocates. All "Emergency Management" OEC evaluators must take or must have taken in the past year a senior evaluator clinic to acquaint them with evaluation techniques for the renamed modules.

Another problem was identified by OEC program directors, and that was that some senior patroller candidates being evaluated did not demonstrate strong basic OEC skills during the evaluations. The division OEC Instructor Trainers have been or will soon be assigned the responsibility of Quality Assurance in the OEC skills check-off process prior to patrollers participating in a senior "Emergency Management" final evaluation.

On the horizon for next season, we can see the "Emergency Management" module expanding into other disci-

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the releases to management and come to some agreement regarding the storage of these records. Volunteer organizations with high turn-over in officers are notorious for having elusive records. Just when you need the record, it can't be found. In most cases a year will be sufficient. If an adult gets hurt they have one year to bring suit. If you know of an injury, flag the release and keep it. It would be very unusual for an instructor to be unaware of an injury in his or her class.

Because the triggering case is past, don't get sloppy. Lets be vigilant and careful in all that we do. With the snow coming soon (trust me), lets get organized so that we increase the fun and decrease the more mundane things, such as paperwork. *Enjoy the season!* ✚

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Local Instructor Trainer: Input from all OEC Instructor Trainers is welcome. Local IT involvement would seem to have the advantage of putting the right personalities together.

What is the process? There is an initial meeting between the student and the mentor. At this meeting, goals are set, expectations are defined and a plan is formulated. At this point, the student is introduced to the requirements and responsibilities of an NSP OEC Instructor and an explanation of the administrative process.

The "team" should then take advantage of viewing an experienced instructor at work. (This also accomplishes an instructor QA). The mentor and his trainee can discuss the teaching methods and decide which were most effective. The instructor being observed can also benefit from the critique.

The "Pre-Observation Conference" takes place before the trainee makes their first presentation. The purpose of this visit is to give the trainee the best chance for success by reviewing curriculum, lesson planning, instructional methods and environmental management. During the conference, the mentor encourages and motivates the trainee so they may approach the teaching with a positive mindset.

During the observation itself, the mentor will sit inconspicuously and take notes as they observe the trainee and the students. All observations should be presented to the trainee immediately after the presentation in the "Post-Observation Conference." The mentor and trainee will review the objectives they created before the presentation and define any specific needs of the trainee.

How long does the process take? If a trainee comes into the program with previous experience in adult education, the trainee and mentor may choose to go immediately to the evaluation. The ultimate goal is to work with the trainee until they have the skills to be a good instructor and are comfortable with their new role.

The final observation is done in the presence of an OEC Instructor Trainer. The mentor will be present as the trainee's advocate and coach. Once the presentation is complete and has the approval of the IT, the IT will forward a standard course completion record to the National Office, as well as Region and Division staff.

Ongoing mentoring is an opportunity for the new instructor to ask questions and to take advantage of the expertise of the mentor.

The new mentoring process is very different than the



Members of Lee Canyon Ski Patrol participate in helicopter evacuation clinic during their fall OEC refresher at the Las Vegas Ski & Snowboard Resort.
Photo by Doug Hill

Phase II classroom setting and can be personalized for the trainee. It is important to remember that the mentor should be guiding the trainee to think for him/herself, not just giving them the answers. The mentor is a coach, not an umpire. Corrections should be by suggestions, not by command, and should be clearly explained.

We will be sending out more information and education on this concept as we get into the season, and it will also be addressed in instructor clinics. Until then, we encourage your ideas, questions and comments.

Please let us know if you would like to be in on the ground floor of this exciting new project....Sam (nspysam@aol.com) and Doug (dch@cadwest.com). ✚



THE PATROLLER PEEK

The following office is due for election in 2002: National Board Representative. I therefore announce that nominations are now open for National Board Representative, Far West Division position. Nominations or announcements of candidacy must be sent, in writing, to the Divisional Election Chairperson, Janice Waits, no later than December 17, 2001. This is in accordance with National Bylaws Article III, Section 3.13(b), "Nominations and announcements of candidacy must be received by the election coordinator not less than 7 weeks (forty-nine days) before the date of election. A nomination or announcement must be accompanied by a one-page resume of the candidate's membership in NSP which demonstrates the candidate's eligibility for office, and may be accompanied by a one-page statement of the candidate's platform. A nomination also must be accompanied by written acceptance of the nomination signed by the nominee." FWD Bylaws, Section 5.4 and 5.5. Please forward your nomination to:

Janice Waits
Election Chairperson
1202 Rembrandt Dr.
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

2002 FAR WEST DIVISION ELECTION NOTIFICATION

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