



# The Patroller Peek

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

Fall 2004 Edition

## More ... On Division Focus

Ray Bryan - Division Director

The most important thing the National Ski Patrol (NSP) does for its members is to provide the education, training and credentials you need to patrol. If membership in the NSP does not enhance your ability to patrol, you may not believe it is important to belong. In the spring issue I wrote to you about how the role of the Division was being brought into sharp focus with program delivery to members the number one responsibility. We continued to push this theme at the Far West Division Summer Conference, and I have been asked by the NSP Board of Directors Planning Committee to coordinate a task force of all the Division Directors to establish an education delivery mission for all Divisions.

At the heart of education delivery for the Far West Division are two basic principles:

- Every program should be available to every member every year; and
- All programs are to be delivered at the most local level practical.

By their very nature, these principles preclude having the Division deliver the programs to individual members. Rather, these principles bring into focus the need for our peer network approach to operate efficiently for our delivery of NSP programs to be successful. Thus, I have made the health of our delivery network top priority of every Program Supervisor this season. This means delivery needs to happen as intended:

- Instructors will deliver NSP content;

- IT's create instructors using the mentoring process, provide instructor renewal and do quality management;
  - Region Administrators perform needs assessment, scheduling and allocation of instructor resources locally, with and between patrols; and
  - Div. Supervisors "supervise" the delivery network, select IT's and make sure the network is working.
- In short, Division Supervisors empower others to perform instruction, quality management, mentoring and needs assessment functions, and fix the network if it is broken, ensuring the network operates at peak efficiency. Instructors must be empowered to deliver NSP programs and content at the local
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## Why We Patrol?

Ken Bergmann -- Region Director Mother Lode

When I first became a patroller, I cared only about the National Ski Patrol (NSP). I knew only that my local area management allowed me to patrol their hill. I did not have a clear understanding of the role of NSP or the role of the ski area owner, and how they interacted or *why* they allowed me to patrol. In my first few years I was under the impression NSP, and its officers, ran volunteer patrols for local resorts. I was wrong.

What NSP does is very simple-- NSP provides educational programs which set nationally recognized standards for ski patrol operations.

As part of these programs NSP provides curriculum and liability insurance necessary for teaching and administering its programs. The rest is up to the local ski area owner.

Ski area owners choose the structure for their patrol -- all paid, all volunteer, or a mix of both paid and volunteer staff. Local management also determines the qualifications of its patrol staff and the standard of care to be delivered. We, as NSP members, do not have any guarantees as to when, where, or how we patrol. It is the individual ski area owner who chooses whether or not they wish to partner with NSP.

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Ray and Jennifer Bryan (Viall).

So, why should we pay dues and join NSP when it appears it is ultimately up to the ski area when, where, and how we patrol? Well, NSP offers a huge benefit to individual ski areas and corporations, and it is in the ski area's interest to have NSP members working their mountain. And, for some ski areas NSP dues for paid staff is paid by the owners. To understand the benefits fully, you have to look at it from a dollar/liability/risk management point of view.

Ski areas are required to provide customers with a competently trained patrol staff. Failure to do so could result in significant liability losses, including the loss of their Forest Service use permit. Ski areas are required to train personnel, paid or volunteer, to deliver a set standard of care, whether under NSP, American Red Cross, or some other protocol. A benefit to ski area owners for choosing to follow NSP guidelines is a decreased liability exposure by sharing the risk of training with NSP. For example, if I came to you and said I'd be responsible for half your car insurance would you say "no?" Likewise, why should a ski area owner be forced to reinvent the wheel? Why waste time creating mountaineering, toboggan, avalanche or medical training when NSP has already done it? In summary, NSP is a good business partner if you run a ski resort.

Another example, from a defense lawyer's point of view: Imagine you are involved in an incident and the guest filed a claim against a ski area alleging inept care by ski patrol. If the ski area trained its patrollers under NSP programs a defense attorney can stand behind the recognized training standard and standard of care as part of the defense. Conversely, if you were a ski area owner undertaking all training responsibility, you may face some difficult cross-examination when it came to standards of training in all disciplines. An NSP affiliated ski area will be able to point to their NSP nationally recognized education programs (OEC, toboggan, mountaineering) as their defined standards of care.

Notice through this whole diatribe there has been little distinction between volunteer and paid patrollers? Although NSP has many volunteer patrollers, NSP also counts over 3000 paid patrollers in its membership. Many resorts, Vail, for example, rely on only paid-NSP trained patrollers. And some resorts use a mix of both paid and volunteer NSP trained patrollers. Again, it is up to ski area owners to decide whether they have paid, volunteer or both as part of their staff. Ski area owner's concept of Ski Patrol is changing rapidly. There was a time when there was no such thing as a full time paid patroller – the volunteer NSP-trained patrol ran the mountain. With the exception of a few ski areas, those days are gone. While there still remain ski areas which rely on the NSP volunteer patrol to train, test and operate the ski area patrol, it is not the norm.

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## FAR WEST REGION ANNOUNCES ANNUAL AWARDS

Far West takes home 9 National Awards  
*Cathleen Calkins - Bear Mountain Ski Patrol*

This past July, many gathered at the Annual Summer Conference held in Reno, Nevada. And at Saturday night's banquet, in front of an enthusiastic crowd Ray Bryan handed out certificates and plaques to 9 Far West Division national award winners. Never has one Division won this number of awards in the total 11 categories. Congratulations to all winners; follows is a wrap-up of the results:

**OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR:**  
*Mike St. Clair*

Mike joined NSP in 1981 as an Alpine Patroller, attaining Senior in 1984. In 1996, Mike challenged and passed the Nordic Senior test and went on to become a Certified Patroller that same year. He became an MTR instructor in 1990 and has been an MTR IT since 1996. As

part of his affiliation with the State of California Office of Emergency Services, he instructs Winter Search Management. At the 2002 Winter Olympics Mike taught Winter Survival.

**OUTSTANDING SMALL ALPINE PATROL:**  
*June Mountain (Southern California Region)*

Once again June Mountain shines; this patrol's excellence was noted by the National Ski and Snowboard Opinion Survey, which ranked it no. 1 according to guests surveyed. Moreover, many of its 34 members hold leadership positions at the National, Division and Region levels.

**OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROL:** *The Pinecrest Nordic Patrol (Mother Lode Region)*

This patrol has a long history of excellence. The 44 members of this patrol have hosted numerous NSP training events, including MTR I, Avalanche I and II and Senior Nordic toboggan events. In short, this patrol contributed over 2400 hours of training and testing this past season.

**OUTSTANDING LARGE ALPINE PATROL:**  
*The Prospector Patrol (Mother Lode Region)*

The Prospector Patrol has a long history of NSP leadership, including past Division Director, past Region Directors and numerous other Division and Region appointments. Impressively, of the 107 members of this outstanding Patrol, 22 have National Appointments, and over 40% are active NSP instructors.

**OUTSTANDING ALPINE PATROLLER:**  
*Don D'Alessandro (Sugar Bowl Patrol)*

A founding member of the Sugar Bowl Patrol, he received his National Appointment in 1967. Don retired in 1975 after 24 years of patrolling, but returned as a candidate in 1990. His commitment is highlighted by the fact that he lives in Washington State and commutes to Patrol at Sugar Bowl.

**OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROLLER:**  
*Jeff Gurrola (Pinecrest Nordic Patrol)*

While rather "young" in his NSP career (he joined NSP in 2000), Jeff has become a Senior Nordic, taken on the responsibility as Assistant Patrol Representative and is an IT for Nordic Toboggan. Not only is Jeff an accomplished Patroller, he is a Search and Rescue team leader.

**OUTSTANDING PATROL REPRESENTATIVE:** *Lance Vaughan (The Prospector Patrol)*

Lance joined NSP in 1985, attained Senior status in 1995 and became a Certified Patroller in 1998. A National Appointment was awarded to him in 2002. His competence as a leader was further underscored by his nomination and win of this award.

**National Runner-Ups**

**OUTSTANDING STUDENT PATROLLER**  
*Joshua Wright (Donner Ski Patrol)*

At just 16, Josh not only is an OEC Instructor, but was the Instructor of Record for his Patrol's 2003 refresher. Refresher.



Farwest Division Awardees show off their Awards (Viall)

## FWD Toboggan Program

*Lance Vaughan, Far West Division Ski & Toboggan Supervisor*

In preparation for the coming season, consider taking a course from our FWD Toboggan Instructor Team. Two popular and widely offered courses are the Ski Enhancement Seminar (SES) and Toboggan Enhancement Seminar (TES).

These courses will help you improve your skills and expose you to new ideas, all while having fun. Taught on the hill, it is a chance to keep the “skiing” in Ski patrol. You will find these courses listed on Region planning calendars. If not offered at your hill, attend another hill’s fulfillment of these courses. Training at a different hill adds benefits beyond the skills covered in the course, as well as time well spent. If your patrol has a desire for these classes contact your Region’s Toboggan Supervisor and make a request to hold a course at your hill. Contact information is on Region websites, via Patrol Rep’s and me. Help create the need for a class, and we will do our best to staff the course.

### Ski Enhancement Seminar

This seminar is designed to improve the skiing/tele/snowboarding skills of NSP members and to improve the patroller image within the snow-sports industry. Focusing on techniques to ski more efficiently and offer feedback to individuals, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. Snowsports drills are provided to help participants continue to improve on their skills long after the seminar has finished.

- Course pre-requisite: Current NSP Member
- Course time commitment: One day
- Fees (course or challenge): NSP – none (PSIA Prep and/or exam fees)
- Credential: NSP Certificate of Achievement (PSIA prep and exam completed, attained Level I, II or III)
- Continuing education/refresher requirement: None
- Instructor of record: PSIA Division clinic leaders; qualified and screened PSIA Certified Level III instructors

### Toboggan Enhancement Seminar

The goals of this course are to improve the toboggan-handling skills of NSP members, improve patroller image within the ski industry, maintain interest in patroller education, and provide a valuable program to members. The participants will demonstrate the ability to identify personal toboggan-handling strengths and weaknesses, develop with each individual activities/exercises for continued improvement and identify opportunities for additional training at the patrol level.

- Course prerequisite: Current NSP member
- Course time commitment: One day
- Fees (course or challenge): National~ none; division~ varies; section, region, patrol~ varies
- Credential: NSP Certificate of Achievement
- Continuing education/refresher requirement: None
- Instructor of record: NSP toboggan instructor

### Toboggan Instructor Mentoring

If you are interested in joining the Toboggan Instructor team, see details following:

- (1.) Complete an Instructor Development course.
- (2.) Contact a Toboggan Instructor Trainer, Regional Toboggan Advisor or myself and we will assist by pairing you with a Toboggan instructor.
- (3.) Start the mentoring process, work with your mentor and team teach.
- (4.) Demonstrate accomplished Toboggan instructor skills to an instructor trainer and join the team.

A toboggan instructor taught each of us our skills. So, take the challenge, become a toboggan instructor and pass on NSP skills to help shape our future patrollers. Position descriptions are available on the Division and Region websites for those wanting more information.

## Is your Garage Beginning to Resemble REI?

Looking to upgrade your equipment, but need to sell the old stuff first? The Peek Classified Section may be the answer: The spring issue of The Peek will feature a section for listings. So, if you are looking to sell, swap or upgrade your gear, send an e-mail to Cathleen Calkins at <cathleen@summit-freelance.com>. Include item description, size, cost and contact information. (Space is limited. The Peek not responsible for items sold or resulting transactions.)

## The Far West Division Awards 3 New NSP Certified Numbers

*Dave Rhodes, Far West Division Certified Program Supervisor*

The Southern California and Mother Lode Regions claim 3 more patrollers to its Certified ranks. They are: Keith Tatsukawa (Mt. Waterman), Todar Petrov (June Mountain) and Ken Bergmann (Sugar Bowl), receiving numbers 628, 629 and 630, respectively.

The NSP Certified Program is closely aligned with the Association of Professional Patrollers. Volunteer patrollers test to the same standards and criteria as their paid counterparts. Testing takes place at the mid-winter and spring clinics. There are 8 disciplines in the NSP Certified program, including skiing/riding, toboggan handling, first aid, risk management, hill safety, ropes, avalanche and transceivers. (APP includes an additional discipline to its testing -- explosives.)

This year, the Mother Lode Region will be offering a training clinic to be hosted by Sierra Summit. The dates for this clinic are March 12-13, 2005. This clinic is open to all Certified candidates in the FWD.

Thank you's go out to Jim Otto for his many years of service, and to Rich Bailey, the NSP representative to the APP Board of Directors. Their involvement and leadership

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## The Deposition Zone *Avalanche Program Meets the Standards*

*Mike Laney - FWD Avalanche Supervisor*

Help us better serve you, the NSP membership.

Courses are scheduled based on perceived demand (e.g., that's you expressing your interest in taking an NSP course). Region leaders of the disciplines you are interested in are notified. Courses can be scheduled where ever and when ever, and accessible to you. We encourage you to do this now as courses tend to become booked and conflicts will arise based on conflicting schedules. You can find current course listings on NSP Regional websites.



In short, get course information early, enroll early and then work out your individual patrolling around the training and educational events. Not vice, versa.

In early articles I have described NSP avalanche course offerings. A recurring theme is advisability of taking a Level 2 Avalanche course. If you have taken Level 1 and decided that you wanted to know more, by all means, enroll in a Level 2 course. It is not just for those with aspirations for become avalanche instructors, nor is it only for those wishing to become professional or certified patrollers. The Level 2 course is for anyone wanting to know more and improve their skills/knowledge as a patroller (and maybe even give back a little to the organization by becoming a instructor).

There is a significant leap in the scientific and technical aspects of avalanche knowledge between Level 1 and Level 2 courses, but there is also improved text materials to help bridge that gap. An excellent resource is Bruce Temper's book "Staying Alive in Avalanche Country." It is the approved textbook for Level 2 course work, and probably the most interesting and readable book in my avalanche library. You may order it through your NSP catalog (item no. 534, \$15.00). However, if it has been three or more years since you completed Level 1 training, enrolling in a refresher prior to taking Level 2 is strongly recommended.

We are making efforts to have at least two Level 2 Avalanche courses in the Far West Division this coming season. The first is tentatively scheduled for the first weekends in February and March at Bear Valley (Mother Lode Region). Contact Ted Hullar at <ted@hullar.com> for information for this course. In Southern California, a course is tentatively scheduled on the same weekends as Bear Valley, and will be held at June Mountain. For more information on this course, contact Region Advisor Aaron Walters at <awalter@aol.com>. The more interest expressed by membership, the more likely these courses will become a reality.

### NSP Education Credit for Non-NSP Avalanche Training

In the past, NSP members have taken avalanche training through non-NSP courses, but were unable to get NSP education credit. The primary concern was that non-

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## Tri-Advisory Time again in Yosemite

NOVEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> – 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2004

Robert Parkhurst, FWD Mountain Travel and Rescue Supervisor

This year's Tri-Advisory will be held November 6th and 7th at the Yosemite Bug Hostel, located 25 miles from Yosemite National Park in Midpines, California. (See [www.yosemitebug.com](http://www.yosemitebug.com) for more information and reservations.)

The program scheduled for this year promises to be exciting. Here is a preview of some of the content and speakers.

### Nutrition for Peak Winter Performance

Have you ever "bonked" in the middle of a gorgeous ski day? Did you know your nutrition could be the culprit? A sports nutritionist will be hosting a discussion on current research regarding nutrients and exposure, glycemic index relationships to peak performance, and the nutritional do's and don'ts for the outdoor athlete.

### Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs)

Between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004, 1,611 PLB's were

registered; 145 PLB's are being registered each month. REI is renting them for \$49.00 a week. What impact will this technology have on our programs? Will we be responding to more incidents as a result of their use in the backcountry? This is sure to be a lively and interesting discussion.

### 2002 Accident on Mount Hood

Steve Rollins, Vice President of Portland Mountain Rescue, will discuss the May 30, 2002 accident on Mount Hood. Steve's discussion will feature his team of volunteer's response to a mission where 8 climbers had fallen into a crevasse high on the mountain. During the procedure to evacuate the patients from this already extraordinary mountaineering accident, one of the H-60 Blackhawk helicopters crashed into the mountainside, injuring all members of the flight crew and severely complicating the rescue effort. Steve will provide an overview of the climbing accident, how the rescue effort was conducted, what went wrong and the lessons learned.

Don't miss out! Fill out the registration form and contact the Yosemite Bug Hostel. Mark your calendars and make your plans now! For reservations at The Yosemite Bug Hostel please call (209) 966-6666, or visit their website at [www.yosemitebug.com](http://www.yosemitebug.com). Rooms are going fast and available on a first come, first served basis. ✚

## Instructor Activity Logs

Jennifer Bryan,

Instructors, did you know that you can easily document and keep track of your instructor activities?

Just sign on at [www.nsp.org](http://www.nsp.org). Go into Member Services, enter your patroller number and password. When your member profile comes up, look to the far left of the screen and scroll down to Education Tools, select Instructor Activity Log.

After selecting Instructor Activity Log, add the events and classes you took part in.

That's it, and there it shall remain for your reference! ✚

## Mountain Travel and Rescue - The OEC for Lost Skiers

Robert Parkhurst, FWD MTR Supervisor

Often get the question, "Why should I enroll in a Mountain Rescue Travel class? I'm never going to climb a mountain?" Contrary to this philosophy and the name of the program, Mountain Travel and Rescue is not about climbing mountains. Rather it involves skills to survive in a sometimes harsh winter environment, and is built upon those core skills learned through OEC. As such, Mountain Travel and Rescue has always been an integral part of snowsports activities.

The OEC program prepares patrollers on pre-hospital injury assessment and treatment. Our role as first

responders is critical in the treatment of injuries at our resorts. In much the same manner, the Mountain Travel and Rescue (MTR) program provides fundamental skills necessary in finding skiers and snowboarders before they become seriously lost or suffer injuries from prolonged exposure to the environment.

Historically called Mountaineering, two years ago the program was renamed to more accurately reflect its goals. The primary goal of the MTR discipline is to prepare patrollers to provide assistance in a search and rescue operation. The critical period of a search is between 30 minutes and 3 hours after a skier/snowboarder is lost, or reported missing. Less than 30 minutes is too early to tell if a person is lost, and after

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Welcome to the 2004 Tri-Advisory Conference  
November 6-7, 2004  
at the Yosemite Bug Hostel



PRE-REGISTRATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Patrol Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position in the patrol: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline Interest: (Nordic, Mountain Travel & Rescue, Avalanche, other) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes) \_\_\_\_\_ (Discipline)

Guest(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are attending with children, what are their ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Lodging reservations available at The Yosemite Bug Hostel (Call (209) 966-6666.)

Patroller Registration Fee: \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tri-Advisory Polo Shirts: \$20.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

S ( ) M ( ) L ( ) XL ( ) XXL ( ) : \_\_\_\_\_ (# of shirts)  
(The Conference shirts are a prepaid item.)

Total: = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: FAR WEST DIVID

SEND CHECKS & REGISTRATION TO:

Mike Laney  
18784 Lake Forest Drive  
Penn Valley, California 95946

*More ... On Division Focus - Continued from page 1*

level, whenever they want, wherever they want, provided:

- The content is in accordance with the NSP program;
- They follow NSP guidelines for delivery, risk management and documentation; and
- They involve the Quality Management System.

If we don't let our instructors do what we have trained them to do, the network will fail at the most basic level.

### DIVISION FOCUS FOR THE 2004 - 2005 SEASON Delivery Fundamentals

**W**ork to provide the fundamentals well:

- Get delivery network in top shape;
- Ensure instructors are familiar with NSP's deliverables, and empower them to deliver;
- Continue to reinforce the correct role of the IT;
- Make sure the role of the NSP patrol representative is understood and taking place at the local level;

- Use NSP funds for appropriate expenditures at all levels.

And, don't lose Division focus on:

- Correcting membership demographics to include all patrollers - paid and volunteer;
- Promoting the benefits and value of NSP education, training and credentialing to our members and ski areas; and
- Keep programs walking the talk for quality, content and documentation.

*Ray Bryan is Far West Division Director.*



Far West Division Summer Confernece attendees in Reno. From left to right: Michael Long (Mt. High), Scott Hoffman (President, Association of Professional Patrollers); Allison Dutch (Mt. High); Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Muszynski (Bear Mountain), (Brian Stotts hiding in background (Bear Mountain)), ,Jane Phanfkuch (Bear Mountain), Guest, Ron Migdal (Bear Mountain), Keith Tatsukawa (Mt. Waterman) and Karl and Maria Chulski (Bear Mountain), (Migdal)

*New Certified Members -- Continued from page 5*

in NSP's Certified program has led to unprecedented cooperation and mutual respect between the volunteer and paid patrollers.

For more information on becoming involved in the NSP Certified Program, please contact your Region Certified Program Advisor, or e-mail Dave Rhodes at [nsp528@mercednet.com](mailto:nsp528@mercednet.com). You may also refer to your Region website.

## The 10 Essentials

*Cathleen Calkins, Bear Mountain Patrol*

There are a number of critical items everyone should carry in their pack when venturing out and into the wilderness. These are in addition to the normal supplies of water, clothing and food, and have been deemed "The 10 Essentials." While these items likely won't be used on every adventure, their inclusion in your personal pack and gear could prove to be the lifesaving items in an emergency.

- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Map                      | (6) Headlamp/Flashlight |
| (2) Compass                  | (7) First-aid supplies  |
| (3) Sunglasses and sunscreen | (8) Fire starter        |
| (4) Extra food               | (9) Matches             |
| (5) Extra clothing           | (10) Knife              |

*Continued from page 6- MTR*

3 hours, Search and Rescue (SAR) teams are required.

There is an increasing trend at Resorts to open boundaries for backcountry access. While this is an incentive to many, it poses an increased potential for snowsports enthusiasts to become lost. As patrollers, we often take advantage of this access to untracked powder, challenging lines and time-out from crowded slopes. Because of our abilities in out-of-bounds territory, we, as patrollers, are a critical component of SAR efforts to locate lost skiers and snowboarders. We are familiar with the terrain and can travel faster than most SAR teams.

The focus of an MTR class is twofold: be able to stay comfortable in the out-of-doors environment, and assist with a rescue. From the comfort perspective, MTR classes educate students on proper clothing and equipment, and nutrition that works in the demanding and cold outdoors. The second part of MTR concentrates on finding your way in the backcountry by learning basic search and rescue techniques: Map and compass skills, route selection, and organizing and conducting a thorough search.

Just as the OEC program trains us on how to hand over an injured guest to a higher level of care, the MTR program educates us how to hand a search over to a SAR team.

In short, the MTR program compliments the skills we gain through OEC. Take a class this season or become an instructor in the program -- it will enhance your ability to help the snowsports public.

## Nordic Happenings

*Gwynne Pugh, FWD Nordic Supervisor*

Have any of you watched a Warren Miller film; read an article about an out-of-bounds bowl at a Resort; read about a winter survival epic like Ernest Shackelton's? Well if you haven't, a plethora of others have; and, it has motivated them to venture out, not to the groomed slopes or the set track, but into the backcountry. The biggest growth in the retail ski industry has been in backcountry ski equipment (around 77%), while alpine and snowboard equipment has remained relatively flat. Snowmobile and snowshoe sales have also grown. Some participants know what they are doing in the backcountry, and

others do not. In response, the FWD has birthed a new Patrol to service this need in the Mammoth Lakes area. What distinguishes this patrol and what is so revolutionary is why it was formed and how it was brought into existence. In reality, this backcountry patrol is expressly set up to respond to the changing reality of the who and the where.

Two years ago Mark Daniels, the Law Enforcement Officer for the Inyo National Forest Service, approached Mark Giebel, Wayne Wong and Steve Newman, all seasoned patrollers from the Southern California Region. Having spent time as a Snow Ranger in the Angeles National Forest outside of Los Angeles, Daniels was new to the Eastern Sierra and facing mounting tensions amongst the divergent users in the local forests. Commercial and recreational snowmobilers had been expanding into areas between Mammoth Lakes and June Lake. Much of this territory was historically used by cross-country skiers. Daniels was looking for an experienced, trained and neutral third party that could educate the diverse group of users,

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Volunteers that would also resolve user issues. So Giebel, Wong and Newman wearing Stetsons rode to the rescue, literally, on snowmobiles.

Education in the disciplines of Avalanche and Mountain Travel and Rescue is imperative. Local Forest Service Management provides training in snowmobiling, “Gun it around that turn, and lean, lean, I say” -- or something to that effect.

Locally, Mammoth Lakes citizens are pleased with the results, and outreach has commenced to find local talent to join this new Nordic Patrol.

Alpiners are invited to take off their training heels, snowboarders are encouraged to split their boards, and both are asked to get out there and expand their horizons.

These are exciting times and there is a wealth of opportunity in the backcountry. “Go west young man (and woman).”

*Members of the new Mammoth Basin Patrol free their heels and smile for the camera.*



## **Getting High: Going to Altitude**

*Cathleen Calkins - Bear Mountain Patrol*

What is the impact of going to altitude?

At altitude, oxygen levels are lower than those found at sea level. This in turn stresses the cardiovascular system's ability to deliver oxygen to the muscles during high level aerobic activities, such as skiing or snowboarding, pulling a toboggan across the base area or even digging out tower pads.

Can pre-season training help?

Keeping in mind that muscles are forced to work harder at altitude, the impact of pre-season training will result in an increase in physical stamina. Better fitness and endurance at sea level will greatly assist in the comfort level experienced when resuming patrolling activities this season at altitude.

What are the initial effects felt at altitude?

Exercise feels harder at altitude. Both breathing and heart rate show an increase, and without acclimatization (the time it takes the body to become accustomed to a new environment) you won't be used to the lean air and your oxygen exchange will be off. With this increase in ventilations comes the risk of dehydration. Appetite may also be influenced

by the loftier heights – you won't feel as hungry.

Finally, recovery takes a bit longer at altitude: Rest is important to battle the lingering fatigue from your first few days back on the slopes.

Short of moving to the mountains, combating the effects of altitude can be as simple as 1, 2, 3 and 4:

Drink often. It's easier to become dehydrated at higher elevation, so keep hydrated and avoid alcohol. (Okay, well, avoid copious amounts of alcohol.)

Remember to eat, even when you aren't hungry. The body demands fuel in order to keep warm in the colder environment.

Sunscreen. The sun's rays are more intense at altitude. Apply and re-apply the sunscreen.

Get anaerobic. Add some anaerobic challenges to your workouts prior to the season. Activities like training on a single speed while mountain or road biking or running repeats on your local high school's stadium stairs. These activities not only strengthen your muscles, but the cardiovascular system as well, and will help to better prepare you for your return to the resort and the physical demands of patrolling.

*Awards - Continued from page 3*

**OUTSTANDING AUXILIARY PATROLLER:**  
*Scott Lessard (Sugar Bowl Patrol)*

When not aiding guests in the first aid room, Scott is out on the hill assisting with set up, maintenance, sweep and improving his patrol skills.

**OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE PATROLLER:** *Jerry Muszynski (Bear Mountain Patrol)*

Jerry became an NSP member in 1970 and is currently the Southern California Region Director. Jerry has also been involved in Ski & Toboggan training at a Region and National level.

The Far West Division is proud to count these members in their ranks: Congratulations to all!+

*Members of June Mountain Ski Patrol take a moment and pose for the cameras. Erice Diem, Patrol Director, stands center displaying the Award June received. (Viall)*



*Avalanche - Continued from page 5*

NSP courses might not meet NSP curriculum and quality management standards. This still may be the case in many instances, but it is no longer cause for blanket rejection. Mike Baker, National Avalanche Program Director, has provided guidelines allowing me to assess and approve non-NSP avalanche courses as “equivalent” on a case-by-case basis. The details for this assessment and approval process are currently be worked out and finalized. If you have taken an American Avalanche Association approved Level 1 avalanche course, or completed both phases of the

National Avalanche School within the past year, please contact me directly to discuss credit for these educational courses.

Annual Tri-Advisory Conference  
If you are an instructor involved in the Avalanche or Mountain Travel Rescue program (or are thinking of becoming one), or are a Nordic patroller/skier, the annual Tri-Advisory is a ‘not to be missed’ event. This year it will be held at the Yosemite Bug Hostel 25 miles outside of Yosemite Valley. (See registration details and information in this issue.) Robert Parkhurst is coordinating this event and his article in this issue highlights this year’s meeting.

What impressed you? What disappointed you? What should we add to the curriculum? In addition to complying with NSP standards and quality, we need to make our courses valuable to you, the membership. Providing feedback will help us accomplish this. Feel free to e-mail me your impressions, thoughts and suggestions. Mike Laney can be reached at <stauchwall@hotmail.com>. +



Feedback

How are we doing? If you participated in an NSP avalanche course recently, I would like to hear your comments and feedback on the quality of the course you took part in.



*(Above) Checking snow conditions in Southern California (Calkins).*

*(Opposite) Approaching Jepson Chutes in Southern California (Calkins).*

## 2004 Region Director Election Results

*Janie Waits, FWD Election Chairperson*

Congratulations to the following new Region Directors: Stephen Simi, Arizona; Ken Bergmann, Mother Lode; and Jerry Muszynski, Southern California.

All will serve a 2 year term for their respective Regions beginning June 1, 2004, ending May 31, 2006.

The following is a complete breakdown of the ballots sent out and the return rate for both mail and web votes.

### Arizona Region

189 Possible votes:

Stephen Simi: Total Ballots Cast: 12; web votes: 10; mail in votes: 2;

possible mail votes: 45.

Write-in candidate George Pales: Total Ballots Cast: 4; web votes: 3; mail in votes: 2; possible mail votes: 0.

Blank: Total Ballots Cast: 1; web votes: 1.

### Mother Lode Region

561 Possible votes.

Candidate: Ken Bergman: Total Ballots Cast: 78; web votes: 70; mail-in votes: 8; possible mail votes: 157.

There were no other candidates for this election.

### Southern California Region

699 Possible votes.

Candidate: Jerry Muszynski: Total Ballots Cast: 64; web votes: 56;

mail in votes: 8; possible mail votes 197.

Blank: Total Ballots Cast: 2.

The 2002 Election had the following return rates for ballots mailed out:

Arizona: 60%;

Mother Lode: 83%

Southern California: 68%



*Descending Devil's Slide near June Mountain in the Eastern Sierras. (Calkins)*

## Far West Division Announces: Authorized Training Center Program

*Steve Francisco, FWD Assistant Division Director*

The National Ski Patrol is an organization based on the delivery of education and training to its membership and others. And in recognition of the delivery of such outstanding education programs, the Far West Division will be handing out "Authorized Training Center" certificates to each patrol indicating their expertise among its membership ranks.

Upon review of NSP credentials for each individual member of a Patrol, the Far West Division will recognize the Patrol's ability to deliver an education program based on the disciplines it has registered and current instructors in. Thereby authorizing a patrol to deliver the educational programs they are qualified to teach to the public, its current membership and prospective membership.

In addition, these Certificates may be placed in the public areas of the Patrol room so that visitors and patrol may review the status of the NSP educational programs they are authorized to provide.

Region patrols, depending on individual member qualifications, may be authorized to instruct any and/or all of the following programs: Outdoor First Care; Outdoor Emergency Care Class; Outdoor Emergency Care Refresher; OEC Enhancement Seminar; Introduction to Ski Patrolling; Mountain Travel and Rescue Awareness; Mountain Travel and Rescue I; Mountain Travel and Rescue II; Avalanche Fundamentals and Rescue; Avalanche Level I; Avalanche Level II; Instructor Development; Nordic Training; Alpine Toboggan Training; Toboggan Enhancement Seminar; Senior Module Training; and Certified Module Training.

If your ski area has PSIA Level III instructors available, your "Authorized Training Center" Certificate will include Ski Enhancement Seminar and Ski Trainers Workshop.

So ask your fellow patrollers to step up to the challenge and become instructors. Having instructors in each discipline as members of your patrol will allow for all of the programs listed above to be included in your Patrol's "Authorized Training Center" Certificate.

*Why We Patrol? Contd from page 2*

Those ski area owners understand the value of an NSP volunteer patrol. Further, the NSP has no authority to grant patrols such responsibility; it is the ski area owners choice to grant you, as an NSP-trained, volunteer patroller, those privileges. Consider it a compliment.

The current trend is toward all patrollers, both paid and volunteer, to be NSP members. This translates to patrols trained to NSP standards utilizing NSP educational programs. Just recently the paid staff of both Squaw Valley USA Ski Patrol and June Mountain Ski patrol joined NSP. Several other major ski resorts are considering the same course of action.

Why should we care? We, the individual members of NSP are responsible for maintaining the quality of our patrolling skills.

The day ski area owners perceive a failure in maintaining standards is the day you, regardless of how good you are, will be asked to turn in your name tag and use the customer line. As a group we,

the individual members of NSP, are only as good as our weakest member. Thus, each individual patroller has a responsibility to make sure they are at their best, ready to run any scenario in any condition, anywhere and at any time. Those of us who are NSP instructors have a duty to register classes, update instructor logs and teach to the standards outlined in NSP curriculums. Most importantly we have a responsibility to say "no" to those who do not meet NSP standards.

Moreover, we have an obligation to work with those who have let their skills falter and if they cannot, or are not willing to bring their skills up to NSP standards, we have a responsibility to the public, ski area owners and NSP to remove those members from service. This is a huge responsibility, and we are obligated to follow through.

So, what have you done to improve your training? What have you done to help your fellow patrollers? Is your ski area owner happy with your performance? It's time to think about it.

**Submissions to the Peek**

The Far West Division Patroller Peek invites you to submit general interest articles be published on these pages. Articles are chosen at the discretion of the Editor. Articles must be submitted by e-mail sent to Cathleen Calkins at [cathleen@summit-freelance.com](mailto:cathleen@summit-freelance.com).

We can only accept articles in the following format: Plain text in either the body of an email or as an attachment; *Microsoft Word, Pagemaker, or Illustrator*. Original digital photos may also be sent along with the article We cannot accept page spreads sent as bitmaps, tiffs or as *Adobe Acrobat* (.pdf) files.

Pictures are always welcome and encouraged, especially those taken of patrolling activities. Pictures may be sent as .jpeg, .jpg and .tif. You may also send us photographic prints. The Patroller Peek can only return submissions if they are received with a stamped and self addressed envelope.

**2004-2005 Season**

It's that time of year again! Be sure to review your Region's website for information on training programs offered this coming season. Or contact your Region's Program Administrator for a listing of dates and deadlines for registration. By taking a moment now, you can alleviate schedule conflicts and set your calendar to include days out for fun educational experiences.

**NSP Lending Library**

NSP maintains a lending library of videos and other education materials for the benefit of the membership. You'll find a wealth of information for your area, divisional or personal training programs. To borrow a video, check out the NSP Lending Library Guidelines and Request Form. Then, send the completed form to the NSP Member Information and Services Team.



## 2005 Far West Division -- Election Notification

### ELECTION -- Nominations are now open for Division Director and Assistant Division Director

Both positions are for a two year term June 1, 2005 - May 31, 2007. The positions are presently held by Ray Bryan, Division Director and Stephen Francisco, Assistant Division Director. **Please note the following dates: December 15, 2004** Nominations DUE for Division Director and Assistant Director positions. A nomination or announcement must be accompanied by a one-page resume of the candidate's membership in NSP that demonstrates the candidate's eligibility for office and may be accompanied by a one-page statement of the candidate's platform. A nomination must also be accompanied by a written acceptance of the nomination signed by the nominee.

**January 3, 2005** Division Director and Asst. Division Director candidates list finalized by Elections committee.

**January 24, 2005** List of Division Director and Asst. Division Director candidates, their resumes and platforms to be posted on the FWD web site.

**February 7, 2005** Date of election. Ballots will be distributed to the electorate.

**March 9, 2005** Division Director and Assistant Division Director ballots to be received/postmarked by.

**April 9, 2005** Results announced (sooner if all eligible ballots are returned).

PLEASE FORWARD ALL NOMINATIONS AND/OR ANNOUNCEMENTS TO: Janice Waits, Election Chairperson, 1202 Rembrandt Drive, Sunnyvale, California 94087

### REGION DIRECTOR ELECTIONS 2005

Please be advised that **Eastern Sierra** and **Northern California** regions are due for Region Director elections in the Spring 2005. Nominations are now open and will be accepted no later than **February 7, 2005**. Consult your region's bylaws, officer's handbooks and ski patrol manual for qualifications. Submit nominations to Election Chairperson, Janice Waits.



## The Patroller Peek

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