



Far West Division News and Views

News and Views of the Far West Division, NSP; www.farwest.org

February, 2018

Volume Ten, Issue 1



From the Far West Division Director, Lance Vaughan

What a difference a year can make in our skiing experience!

Last year January 2017 was a huge snow year and this year we get the opposite. While the snow quantity is reduced the snow quality to the end of January was pretty good. As we pursue a sport with a large amount of Hope, let's add another hope to our list – Hope we see this weather pattern break in February & March.

As patrollers we provide First Aid when needed, assist the skiing public and increasingly are additional eyes for Risk Management. Helping reduce risk on the slopes is an activity we can directly and positively impact the skiing experience of the skiing public. Risk reduction is an activity with an impact across all patrol activities: pre & post skiing, training, patrolling and free skiing.

Please keep an active eye for risk while training. The prospect of a shorter season or limited terrain could pressure some instructors or patrollers

to rush training or not adjust training to the available terrain. A patrols normal training run if closed is exactly that, closed and not available for training. Look at the risk presented while training and remember to make wise safety based decisions. The mountain will be here next week and month, let's all do our part as instructors to ensure the safety of those we teach.

Across the Division instructors are offering an active training schedule of Avalanche, Toboggan, Ski enhancement Seminars, several Women's clinics and Mountain Travel & Rescue. Check out the articles



MLR leaders checking out the NSP Subaru Outback while attending MLR meeting at Sugar Bowl in January. From left, Jim Simons, China Peak, Dore Bietz, Dodge Ridge, Tom Sleckman, Soda Springs, Chris Petersen, Dodge Ridge, Evan Todd, Donner Ski Ranch and Mike Nealon, Pinecrest Nordic

listing the various sessions offered and remember to register yourself for the clinic you attend. Without self-registration you have no record of completing a course.

Take a minute and meet our new Division OEC Supervisor Sue Dennison or Sugar Bowl. I had a chance to ski with Sue on January 27th after the Mother Lode Region meeting. We had a great time touring Sugar Bowl while talking about the OEC

Please see Director, continued p. 9

Mark your calendars:

- Senior SEM trainings, March 23 and April 14,**
 - Far West Winter Meeting, March 3, Heavenly CA side,**
 - Women's Summit, Squaw Valley, March 19-21**
 - Sea Otter Bicycling Classic at Laguna Seca Raceway near Monterey, April 19-22**
 - Far West Awards Dinner, August, 2018, Davis, TBA**
- Continually check out the FWD (and, your own Region's) web site for updated calendar dates.**

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Lots more; see inside!

Addresses up-to-date?

Is your mailing address and e-address current with the National office? Remember, the FWD gets its mailing lists and email lists directly from the National office in Denver. If you change your US mail or email address, to to your Member Profile to change, and, notify your own patrol.

Don't miss out on exciting future issues of FWD 'News and Views' and other NSP publications!

FWD News and Views

News of the Far West Division, NSP

Division Director, Lance Vaughan

Asst. Dir., Nancy Stormswold

Asst. Dir., Richard Wilson

Arizona Dir., Andrew Youngblood

Eastern Sierra Dir., Katie Dumont

Mother Lode Dir., Tony Atkins

Northern Cal., Sam Lanier

Professional Rep, Rich Bailey

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Treasurer, Keith Dickens

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Registrar, Peggy Jamison

Alumni Advisor, Tim Viall

Awards Advisor, Bill Gibson

Avalanche Supervisor, Keith Church

Certified Advisor, Lance Vaughan

Community College Advisor, Steve

Thorsted

Conferences Advisor, Sonja Kively

Instructor Devel. Super., Doug Hill

Mountain Travel, Rescue Supervisor,

Karl Chulski

Nordic Supervisor, Jeff Gurrola

Communications/Newsletter, Tim Viall

Communications/Web, Rye

Livingston

Outdoor Emergency Care Supervisor,

Sue Dennison

Outdoor Emergency Transportation

Supervisor, Daryl Whitcher

Recruitment/NorCal, John McGuigan

Recruitment/SoCal, Open

SAR Liaison, NorCal, Roger Yang

SAR Liaison, SoCal, Mike St. Clair

Woman's Program, Trudy Nye

The FWD News and Views is published three times yearly, in September, December and February. Deadline is the end of the month prior to publication. Features, photos; send to Tim Viall, fwd-newsletter@farwest.org, or mail to 5854 Turtle Valley Drive, Stockton, CA 95207.

Far West Division Election Results January 1, 2018

ELECTION RESULTS FOR ASSISTANT DIVISION DIRECTOR – TERM: JUNE 1, 2018 – MAY 31, 2020:

Nancy Stormswold, Assistant Division Director. This will be Ms. Stormswold's second full term.

Election for the office of Assistant Division Director were opened August 5, 2017, with only one nominee for the position being received as of the December 4, 2017 date.

December 4, 2017 — Nominations DUE date for Assistant Division Director Position. Note: Any 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 a one-page statement of the candidate's platform. All nominations, other than self-nominations, must be accompanied by written acceptance of the nomination signed by the nominee.

After an additional one-week, results were given to Lance Vaughn, Division Director per Bylaws 5.4.2.1a, *If, after nominations are closed there is only one (1) nomination for an office, the single nominee shall be declared elected to the office, and no balloting or other action shall be required. The Division Director and/or Elections Chair shall notify the eligible voters in writing, as soon thereafter as possible.*



Mentees/Assistant FWD leaders sought

Seeking FWD mentees/ assistant leaders for several positions:

a) **FWD 'News and Views' Assistant Editor:** The FWD newsletter is published three times yearly, in September, December and February. Deadline is the end of the month prior to publication. Seeking an assistant for newsletter editing and layout, will happily train and mentor! Contact Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com, 209.969.3875.

b) **FWD Assistant Alumni Advisor:** Work to help build, retain and involve FWD Alumni members at the patrol, region and division level. Fresh ideas sought in outreach, marketing, organized activities and the like. Contact Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com, 209.969.3875.

Welcome to winter from the Women's Program!

Welcome to the 2017-2018 Winter Season!

I hope all of you are patrolling by now even with low snow amounts and more man made covering. I want to start this report with comments on our first National Women's Program advisers meeting then move on to a listing of events that I know about up to now.

National Women's Program Conference Call:

About 10 of us discussed the program's mission statement and agreed on the stated goals of Recruitment, Enhancement and Retention. All 3 are important parts of growing our women's program and encouraging women to move up into higher levels of participation. We all can encourage female patrollers in our own patrols to move on to being an instructor, run for a position on the board, take an additional class for skill development, or mentor an up and coming patroller.

Events for this season (so far):

Women's Summit at Squaw--
March 19-21;
<http://www.womens-summit.com/>

This one conference is a must do for everyone! This year's is the 4th annual event, March 19-21, 2018 at Squaw Valley. It brings together professional women from across the ski industry. Those of us who have attended have nothing but praises for the ski instructors, the workshops, the networking time provided, and guest speakers. For the last 2 years, NSP has run toboggan clinics down some great terrain. Check out the website and you will see our famous double tail rope run at Squaw 2 years ago. Last year, we went to Mammoth and had fantastic conditions and fun but challenging clinics, especially a skills session on how to go off a cornice, safely!

Heavenly Women's Ski and Toboggan Clinic—
Feb. 25, 2018

This will be our 21st year of offering this well attended

clinic at Heavenly Resort in South Lake Tahoe, CA. It is run as an Eastern Sierra Region event but female patrollers for all over are invited to attend. We do sled runs on intermediate then advanced runs for ½ day, break for lunch, then meet our fantastic ski instructors and break out into groups to work on skills decided by the group. By the end of the day, we're tired but thrilled to have run sleds and skied some of the best runs in the area. For questions or to sign up, contact Tammie Hoedeman at tami2ski@hotmail.com



Women of the Heavenly National Ski Patrol gather for photo!

Until the next newsletter, enjoy your season, ski safely, and continue to check the Far West Division Women's Program website for more information. Contact me for questions or to add an event.

**Trudy Nye, Far West
Women's Program
Adviser, 707-321-9694**



Alumni Program celebrates 40th anniversary!

Forty Years and Counting! (excerpts from article in National Patroller Magazine, by National Alumni Advisor Marty Huebner)

Yes, It's true. The National Ski Patrol's program for retired ski patroller's, the Alumni Program, was commenced by National Director Charles Haskins back in 1977. Since then, it's had more than a proper share of ups-and-downs which will be briefly discussed here. But the handful of retiring patrollers of the original Alumni Members has grown steadily in spite of some NSP neglect, and frequent lack of proper governance and support. Today's Alumni Membership of former Lifetime Members and Annual Members is around 4000 Alumni Members today (editor's note: FWD alumni membership is well over 400!).

In the mid-1970s, many retiring veteran ski patrollers wanted to stay connected in some way with the fine men and women of their patrol, and ski patrolling in general. Responding to this widespread interest, in 1977, National Director Charles Haskins, one of the best and innovative NDs ever, established the forerunner of the Alumni Program. The first Alumni "advisor" was ED's Peter Austin. How many charter members there were, where they were from, is not known.

It is unfortunate that there is almost no historical record of the growth and development of the Alumni Program. About the only record that is available is one listing: *Past Alumni Advisors/National Chairs*. This item makes it it is easy to envision the roller coaster trajectory of the Alumni Program from 1977 to date.

Inspection of this listing shows that for seventeen years of the past forty years, the Program had no Director/Advisor/Supervisor of any type. There frequently was no one designated to administer and oversee the Program, or its steadily growing membership.

However, in the 2009 Board of Directors meeting, the Alumni Program was reportedly a hot topic. An RFA was drafted which simply asked the BoD to get the Program started again. Charles Herbert, of the Far West Division, was a Member at Large. He was appointed to implement the RFA and start a search for someone to head up the Program. A Search Committee began a series of telephone interviews of

the Alumni Director applicants. One of the applicants had an impressive resume' and had served as an Alumni Advisor and had recently received the prestigious Outstanding Nordic Ski Patroller award.

Josie Elting, from a small Nordic patrol in Oregon, was thus chosen by the BoD as the newest Alumni Program Director after the past ten years. The BoD directions to Josie about the Alumni Program were relatively simple. Josie was to promote the Alumni Program throughout the entire NSP. She was to educate, enlighten, and inform all possible ski patrollers about the benefits of retiring to the Alumni Program rather than just retiring. And Josie planned to do just that! But there weren't always sufficient funds for such travel.



When the word did get out that there was now a National Program Director, Josie began being besieged with many questions via telephone and e-mail. Some queries Josie could answer, other queries were referred to the appropriate NSP subject manager. All answers were saved. Eventually the answers and related information evolved into the *National Ski Patrol's Alumni*

Manual. Besides the *Manual*, in her two year term, Josie produced an excellent Alumni recruiting brochure. She also persuaded several outstanding persons to join the National Alumni Advisory Committee.

As a Life Member, I automatically joined the Alumni Program after notifying the NSP I had retired in 2001. During 2012 it was suggested that I submit an application to serve as the head of the NSP Alumni Program, So I did.

In mid-February 2013, I learned I was the new Program Advisor of the Alumni Program; I also learned I had inherited a female member to help with the Program, Mary Shaffer, from Central Division. Mary was a important addition to the Advisorship. I was sorry when she eventually retired to pursue other interests.

Getting a viable National Alumni Advisory Committee (NAAC) organized was a first priority. With Josie returning as a Division Advisor, and by calling in some favors from previously heading up the NSP Nordic Ski Patrolling

Please see Alumni, continued next page...

Alumni, continued from p. 4

Program, there was soon an NAAC with Division Alumni Advisor representatives from every NSP Division, including European Division. This NAAC membership included three former or current Division Directors.

Some NAAC members felt that the Regional Alumni Advisors were the real "worker bees" insofar as operations and recruitment of Patrol Alumni Advisors and new members were concerned. When new information was sent out to the DAAs in the NAAC, it was now also sent to the Regional Alumni Advisors (RAA), and to the Regional Director line officer if the RAA spot was vacant..

The recurrent question of "What can Alumni Members do to help NSP patrolling?" was answered with *Tasks Lists for Alumni Patrollers* of fifty-plus specific items. A "Guidelines for the Patrol Alumni Advisors" was developed to help the PAAs and the Patrol Directors to be more supportive of the Alumni Program. These materials and others were distributed to the DAAs and the RAAs (and can be found on the Alumni page of the FWD website).

In conclusion, a metric of the effectiveness of the operations of the Alumni Program to date would be to compare the historic number of Alumni Members. In 2012, Alumni Membership was about 2,000. In 2017, it is expected

to be about 4,000, a doubling of numbers.

The credit for such an increase is mainly due to the operations and newly effectiveness of the NAAC. This increase is also a direct response to effectively employing the Regional Alumni Advisors ("workers bees") in all Divisions and the increasing numbers of Patrol Alumni Advisors. Cooperation with the National Office Staff has also been superb; their responses to questions have been both prompt and pertinent.

I herewith thank EVERYBODY for making this Advisor's job so much fun and so personally rewarding with feelings of accomplishment.

- **Marty Huebner, Chair, National Alumni Advisory Committee, Program Advisor, NSP Alumni Program**



Alumni program growing in the Far West!

To celebrate this year's 40th anniversary of the NSP's Alumni Program, we're working to collect alumni member's information as to your "former Patrol" and "former Region". This will allow your former patrol and/or region to contact you for special patrol or regional events (like the Eastern Sierra Region's Alumni Celebration Day in March). Here's what you need to do:

Current Alumni Member: If you are currently an Alumni member, **please email your name and former Patrol to FWD Alumni Advisor Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com**, who will add that insight to the Alumni database and share with your old patrol and region.

New Alumni Member: If you would like to join as an NSP Alumni, merely **print the Membership form on page 7 and send with your annual dues of \$30 to the NSP Denver office.** Please also email your name and former Patrol to FWD Alumni Advisor Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com, who will add that insight to the Alumni database and share with your old patrol and region.



Left, Ruth Dargitz is Alumni Advisor for the Dodge Ridge NSP; Chuck Herbert, long active in alumni affairs, was recently inducted into the National Ski Hall of Fame and is a Squaw Valley alumnus.

West Division (FWD) of the National Ski Patrol. Alumni offer a wealth of experience, talent, knowledge and dedication. While the Alumni Program is certainly an excellent way to "retire" from active patrolling it also has the potential of a vast resource of needed skill and expertise to supplement the efforts of the "active" membership.

There is no doubt that your collective experience can substantially add to the current goals of your patrol, the FWD and National Ski Patrol. There are many reasons to go "inactive" besides "retirement": family responsibilities, new additions to the family, job responsibilities, health issues, a move to the south seas and so on.

What are your ideas for Alumni involvement?

With your interest and help, additional value and enthusiasm can be added to a well-established Alumni Program. Your individual input is needed to grow the program and your ideas are appreciated. Some possible

Please see Alumni, continued page 6...

Alumni, continued from p. 5

suggested directions for alumni include:

- A resource list of willing alumni that can be called upon from time to time to assist with specific projects and functions.
- Alumni reunions, perhaps as part of the Divisional meetings.
- Alumni participation in patrol training activities, as well as regional and divisional National Patroller Education Conference type events.
- Involvement in fund raising on a local and corporate level, lobbying efforts, patrol administrative support, and numerous other service projects.
- Documenting your patrol experiences that add to the NSP history & heritage.
- Alumni recognition and identification such as wearing apparel.
- Alumni perks such as ski pass discounts, access to the NSP catalogue and varied NSP “pro deals”.

NSP Patrols are urged to consider the following:

- Establishing an Alumni Advisor for your individual



Left, Larry Bolander, alum of Heavenly, is active as one of the NSP Sea Otter Bike Classic leaders; Steve Thorsted is moving to an active alumni role, and serves as FWD Community College Supervisor.

patrol, to take the lead on building alumni support, activities for alumni in the patrol, and opportunities for alumni who wish to remain active with their old patrol.

- Advise current patrollers of “life after active patrolling” as an alumni in the patrol and the NSP.

- Keep current patrol leadership thinking of ways to retain, and involve, patrol alumni and those “contemplating going inactive”.

- Share your patrol's Alumni Advisor's contact information with your region's and the FWD's Alumni

Advisor, so individual patrols receive ongoing alumni updates and tools! **For more info, Tim Viall, FWD Alumni Advisor, tviall@msn.com; or (209) 969-3875.**

Tim Viall, FWD Alumni Advisor,

fvad@farwest.org;

For additional info, go to:

www.farwest.org, click on Member Services, then, Alumni!



Alumni Celebration Day at Northstar, tentatively set for March 23

Plan to join other FWD Alumni for a fun day of skiing and sharing tales of NSP service. The event is tentatively set for Northstar Resort on Lake Tahoe on Friday, March 23. Watch for full details coming to you via email soon!

Over the last three seasons, Sierra at Tahoe, Heavenly and Sugar Bowl have hosted Alumni Celebration Days, thanks to the work of Bob Hoffman and others of the Eastern Sierra Region to toast their alumni and recognize their long-standing service.

Watch for more detail, shortly, coming to FWD alumni!



In March, 2016, this group of FWD alumni celebrated with skiing and tall tales at Heavenly Resort; thanks to Bob Hoffman and the Eastern Sierra Region, and to resorts like Heavenly, Sierra at Tahoe and Sugar Bowl for hosting alumni days!

Renew alumni dues on-line!

Alumni members; renew your NSP Dues on-line. I have had this question come up several times recently. Here's how to do it; as an Alumni member you merely:

a) Logs into the NSP web site, with member number and your Password, then,

b) At top, upper right where it will say "Hi, (member name)" - merely click on that icon, and it takes you to your My Profile page, then, at bottom left of the Profile, click on the "Renew Now" button, and it allows you to pay with a choice of credit cards, PayPal and the like.

I just did that, myself. **Tim Viall, FWD Alumni Advisor**

Best Alumni practices sought!

The Eastern Sierra Region does an annual Alumni Reunion, a number of patrols in the Far West Division work hard to involve their alumni in patrol affairs and patrol activities/celebrations and several FWD alumni are regulars at such annual off-hill activities like the Sea Otter Bike Classic each year.

Please share your best programs and success stories with Tim Viall, FWD Alumni Advisor (and FWD Newsletter Editor), tviall@msn.com. We will compile the “best ideas, top programs and events that worked like crazy”, and tap the National office for their advice, as well.



BECOME AN ALUMNI MEMBER TODAY!

Have you taken a break or retired from patrolling? If you want to stay connected with NSP and were a patroller for at least one year, you can become an alumni member.

Alumni membership is a way for former patrollers to remain affiliated with NSP. You can choose how involved you want to be, whether as an instructor or with your local patrol. You always have the option to go back to patrolling with current OEC and your patrol rep's approval.

For only \$30 a year, you'll receive benefits including:

- Member voting rights;
- *Ski Patrol Magazine*;
- *Sweep and Sweep Deals* monthly e-newsletters;
- Discounts through the *Ski Patrol Catalogs* and NSP Pro Deals Page;
- Education resources; and
- Online access to the NSP website.

Become an alumni member today, and join over 2,800 other alumni who help support our great organization. Send in the form below with a check or money order for \$30 made payable to National Ski Patrol to:

National Ski Patrol
133 S. Van Gordon St., Suite 100
Lakewood, CO 80228

Photo credit: Jan Nelson.



New Alumni Registration Form

133 S. Van Gordon St. • Suite 100 • Lakewood, CO • 80228
Phone: (303) 988-1111 • Fax: (303) 988-3005 • Email: nsp@nsp.org

Name _____

NSP Member # _____

Address _____

Phone _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Email _____ Birth Date _____

Nat'l Appt/LCA # _____

Your former NSP Patrol _____ Former NSP REGION _____

Mountain Travel & Rescue...what a difference!

WOW!

What a difference a year can make!

While last season gave plenty of snow to make snow caves for shelters, this season thus far is more of a challenge. However, the need to be prepared for what the winter mountain environment is yet important regardless of the snow depth. To take a MTR course this season may prove to be prepared next season.

How to enjoy the snow and weather that comes with the winter mountain environment is the goal of the MTR courses. Besides the conditions at the Alpine hills conditions are developed in the back country that prove to be challenges and dangers we must be knowledgeable and be prepared to encounter.

The Avalanche program covers the danger avalanches present. See Keith Church for the courses, but how to survive and enjoy the traveling and camping in the winter mountain environment is the MTR program. Shelter, food & nutrition, clothing, route selection (to medicate avalanche danger) and many other topics are presented to be more knowledgeable in how to enjoy the winter mountain back country.

Lost skiers and others out in the back country has become a major concern. We as patrollers are often called upon to conduct or assist with these searches as we are looked upon as ones that enjoy the mountains and know how to safely navigate in this terrain, thus SAR (Search and Rescue) has become a major topic covered to become an effective member of a SAR team.

The public is expecting us to be skilled in the mountain winter environment in all aspects of it both on the slopes of the resort and being able and knowledgeable of the winter survival skills off the resort.

Here are the courses that have been scheduled. If you would like to learn more about the MTR program and join in a course contact myself (numbers below) or the instructor listed for the course of interest.

Northern California Region:

None scheduled at this time. Make plans to attend one of the other courses.

Mother Lode Region:

MTR 1 Classroom T o b e scheduled webex

Field session M a r c h 1 7 - 1 8 Pinecrest

For more information contact Jeff Gurrola at ascenderjeff@gmail.com

Course number: F067180003

Eastern Sierra Region:

MTR Classroom Has already been held.

For more information contact Chris Haagen at cmhaagen@gmail.com

Southern California Region:

MTR 1 Classroom Has already been held.

If you have had your classroom but not the field session contact Natalie.

Field session February 3 - 4 location Mammoth area

For more info contact Natalie (Muraciov) Regg at scblackdiamond@yahoo.com

Arizona Region:

None scheduled at this time.

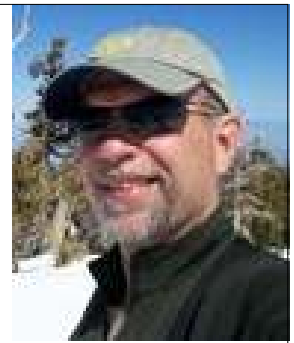
For more info contact Guy Roll at guy.roll@gmail.com

These courses are designed for the patroller and will increase the skills and knowledge of winter mountain survival and travel.

These courses are opened to all patrollers, Alpine, Nordic and Auxiliary. This course is designed to expand your knowledge and experience of the mountain winter to a higher level and gain confidence in how to survive in relative comfort and how to be an effective member of an SAR (Search And Rescue) team if called upon by your Hill management.

These courses and skills are designed for the patroller that has not taken this type of activity and are designed to increase your confidence in the winter environment.

Karl P. Chulski, FWD-MTR Supervisor, Far West Division Mountain Travel & Rescue Supervisor, fwd-mtr@farwest.org



Division Director, continued from page 1

program. Sue has some ideas, is interested in best practice sharing and asks that all patrollers check their NSP records for correct course data. Folks that is your record of training and certification, do check your data reflects your efforts and classes completed.

AWARDS -- Recognizing our members for their dedication, efforts and results is a key way we can say thank you for your investment of time and energy. We are all free time poor, awards teams take a look at your patrol and get the awards forms in your region awards advisor by the posted deadlines. The Far West Division has excellent members and each year the awards teams complete wonderful write-ups listing the efforts and results of our members. Thank you all, and do keep up the great work.

Women's Clinics are scheduled in February and March, see the story and get the dates. These events fill quickly and normally provide excellent instructors. Squaw and Heavenly are hosting and both have great skiing this season. Don't miss the chance for great instruction, skiing and smiles.

Avalanche, Mountaineering and Toboggan are making the best of the snow pack so far this season, some courses might reschedule – lack of snow while last year it was an abundance of snow causing changes. I trust all will make the best of the wonky weather and utilize any training sessions offered to the fullest.

Alumni program is really taking off, Tim Viall heads up the Far West Alumni efforts offering skiing events at several resorts mostly on weekdays so you can avoid crowded runs and really get some enjoyable laps completed. Check the dates and locations for this season, most are drop in or send a note the day before if that is your schedule.

Congrats to Bear Valley for a new 6 pack chair, Yahoo. I recall some great powder skiing days at Bear in my younger days, with a 3 minute ride up, I'm sure many of us will be

quickly wishing for those younger legs.

Don't overlook your plans for the spring and the Sea Otter Classic. This event is a hit every year, Tim Viall and his team put together a fun week of events, stories and tales of crazy bike racing antics.

Get out and ski, greet each other and the skiing public with a smile and make the most our snow conditions. It will get better.

Be safe, ski smart and do your best.

Lance Vaughan, Far West Division Director, National Ski Patrol



FWD Events Calendar:

Senior SEM trainings, March 23 and April 14,

Far West Winter Meeting, March 3, Heavenly Resort California side

Women's Summit, Squaw Valley, March 19-21

Sea Otter Bicycling Classic at Laguna Seca Raceway near Monterey, April 19-22

Far West Awards Dinner, August, 2018, Davis, TBA

Tri-Advisory event, November, TBA, Yosemite National Park

Post your key events in 'News and Views', send to editor Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com.

**See the FWD Web site for updated calendar and training opportunities:
www.farwest.org!**

Website offers community service opportunities!

Got big outdoors event that could use NSP help? Looking for an off-season way to utilize your OEC skills?

List your events and opportunities! If you are working to organize NSP first-aiders for Tough Mudder events, annual Cerebral Palsy bike-a-thons, community fund-raising events, big outdoor events like the Sea Otter Classic and more, list them! And, don't forget to work to enlist your alumni to assist!

And, make a habit of scanning the FWD website for

continuing updates on such events and programs - as well as new developments in your Far West Division!

Send your event and activity postings, with the "who, what, where, when and how" to **FWD Webmaster Rye Livingston**, webworker@farwest.org. Also send your events to **Tim Viall**, **FWD Newsletter Editor**, tviall@msn.com and we will profile them in FWD 'News and Views', the newsletter of the Far West Division!



Pictured, left to right, Dori Bietz and Mike Fanelli worked the Tough Mudder event at Northstar during summer; NSP members and an NSP Subaru worked the Headwaters 50 K Trail Run, and over 40 patrollers and family members worked at, and enjoyed off time, at the Sea Otter Bike Classic in April. Please post notices for such events on the FWD website, and, scan the site for volunteer opportunities!

Certified Training offers you new learning opps!

On January 19, 20, 21 the Certified clinic at June Mountain was a great example of folks thinking of ways to make the best of a snowstorm during a clinic. Open the mountain, change the schedule and get busy with a powder clinic. June Mtn and Eric Diem hosted what sounds like a fun clinic and to the envy of most of us provided powder skiing during the clinic.

More clinics are scheduled, most during the week which allows more focus on a relaxed training atmosphere for all attending and instructing. Looking for a road trip adventure? Steven's Pass has snow, and Arizona Snowbowl enjoys the very vibrant Flagstaff.

Training and testing for Certified Classification is conducted in tandem with the Association of Professional Patrollers in the Far West Division. Testing and training with this program is unique and offers both organizations a great way to share information and operational procedures. Those earning the Certified Classification add knowledge and skills to their patrols and typically become a mentor for their team.

Certified Training clinics and evaluation events.

Sierra at Tahoe - 6,7,8 February **CONFIRMED**

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Steven's Pass Washington Feb 14-16 **CONFIRMED**
Arizona Snowbowl (Flagstaff) - Feb 20,21,22 - **CONFIRMED**
Red River, NM - Feb 27/28 **CONFIRMED**
Spring Clinic Mt Rose April 23-27,2018 **CONFIRMED**

Regional Contacts for Certified:

ESR - Keith Tatsukawa - Northstar
SCAL- David Moore - Big Bear
MLR - Lance Vaughan - Dodge Ridge
Arizona - Andrew Youngblood -
Arizona Snowbowl
Northern CA- Bill Gibson - Mt Shasta

Ready to extend your learning? Approach a Certified patroller at your hill or contact one of the Regional contacts listed above ask for help and visit the APP website for the module content outlines, www.propatrollers.org.

Lance Vaughan
FWD Certified Supervisor
fwd-certified@farwest.org



Check the new FWD website: www.farwest.org

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OEC welcomes supervisor and invites involvement

As 2018 begins and we continue to do our snow dance, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you. As you know, Kevin is stepping down as the FWD OEC Supervisor. I have agreed to step up into that role. Hard act to follow, but I'll do my best.

I've been the OEC Advisor of the Mother Lode Region for a few years now. In addition I am an active patroller with Sugar Bowl over the past 11 years. Before that, I served as a member of the Mountain Safety crew.

As OEC Supervisor I will help guide people through the process of OEC. I will oversee OEC; however we are all expected to follow policies and procedures established by NSP. I don't know everything OEC, but I if I don't, I will help in finding the answer to the question asked. With all of your support I know we can accomplish the tasks given. With all of us working together we can continue to make OEC within our division successful.

A brief reminder - Ensure to follow the proper protocols and the chain of command is followed. It all starts at the patrol level, then region, and finally division. Please don't have patrollers personally contact National regarding their profile. We need to ensure we involve only those necessary to complete the task. Many times the patrol representative or patrol records person will be able to take care of many issues that arise. The main thing is communication.

With OEC, as with any other course, we need to all be reminded whether we are a student, IOR, or IT our profile is only as good as our records. To participate in a course, you must enroll (online) for courses. The IOR needs to ensure that the enrollment roster is correct and make any adjustments to the roster accordingly.

As OEC technicians each one of us needs to continuously train and practice. When you think you've got it, practice some more. One of my trainers told me as I was learning OEC, he learned many years ago "train like you fight, fight

like you train." When you think of it; that holds true with patrol also. When we continuously practice, it becomes second nature. Thus, practice, practice, practice.

Upcoming Dates of Interest

SEM March 23, 2018 Dodge Ridge

SEM April 14, 2018 Heavenly Valley

As with any SEM, this will take a lot of support people. Please check your calendar now and pencil one of these events in. Then when the call comes out for help, you'll already have it on your calendar.

I look forward to getting out and meeting people throughout the year. Of course I won't be able to make it everywhere my first year (I'm still learning). For me (and probably many of you) it's nice to associate a face with the name. Thanks for your patience during the FWD OEC Supervisor transition.

In the meantime, keep doing that snow-dance. . . **Sue Dennison, FWD OEC Supervisor**



Sue Dennison, FWD OEC Supervisor, fwd-oc@farwest.org; H (559)781-7208; C (559)359-6056

Communications enhanced in FWD, regions!

Did you know that both the FWD web site and the FWD Facebook page have been enhanced and expanded to share information with patrollers and alumni?

As an example, is you need insight on Awards, go to the web page and click Awards in the Member Programs area. The FWD web site offers a new look, new organization and offers new options like Community Service Opportunities. To see the start of this new resource for you, the patroller, go to: farwest.org/MemberPrograms/CSO/CSO.html.

The FWD Facebook page continues to grow in interest (almost 700 FWD members) and utilization as more patrollers and patrols use it as a place to communicate their

successes, fun activities and to recruit patrollers and alumni into off-hill and on-hill activities. Go to: facebook.com/groups/448272738574183/ and Join the page! It's there for you and your patrol!

On the Facebook site, you can post up news to reach our FWD members, upcoming events and special projects, or just good skiing insight worthy of sharing. So, check it out, and use it!

If you are sharing news of your patrol or region, also remember to send it along for inclusion in the FWD 'News and Views' newsletter. Send to newsletter editor Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com!

Avalanche updates for the Far West Division

Mammoth AVY ICE Clinic Recap

December's Mammoth AVY Instructor Continuing Education Clinic brought folks from NorCal and SoCal together for an interesting and challenging weekend. The snow conditions at Mammoth we're good for early season, but not deep. Nevertheless, our instructors got out there to work on their teaching skills.

Highlights included examining an avalanche crown face—courtesy of Patrol and one of their howitzers—and digging pits to test the abilities of the Avatech SP2 electronic penetrometer (the profiles were remarkably similar). We enjoyed good discussions about classroom topics and new curriculum on the horizon over back-to-back spaghetti dinners.

I can't recommend this clinic enough for instructors and candidate instructors. The educational and networking opportunities are unique and you might even get to make a few turns between sessions!

California's Dearth of Snow

Most NSP courses can be taught adequately in low snow years. A season like this really challenges the Avalanche program because we need plenty of undisturbed natural snow to get students through our field sessions.

At this writing, there is little in the way of precipitation in the long range forecast for our division. When you feel too tired to do another another snow dance, consider the plight of your friendly, local avalanche instructor and try to bang out a few more moves for us!

ISSW 2018 will be Held in Innsbruck, Austria

The International Snow Science Workshop (ISSW) is the world's largest conference on snow and avalanches. Its motto is 'A Merging of Theory and Practice' and you can see that in the attendees' backgrounds. Patrollers, guides, avalanche educators, academics and researchers all gather in October of even-numbered years to share practical knowledge and cutting edge theory to make our mountains safer.

This year ISSW will be held in Innsbruck, Austria October 7-12. You'll find registration information (in English) at www.issw2018.com/en/.

In 2020 the conference will return to North America at Fernie, BC, Canada. You'll find general information and access to past "proceedings" (a fancy word for the papers presented at the conference) at www.issw.net/.

AIM 2018 Update

The National Avalanche Committee is working hard on your new Avalanche Instructor's Manual. The AIM 2018 curriculum is on track to be issued for use next season.

This month got through about half of the Level 1 course edits. We will be moving on to the Avalanche Rescue course shortly. Look for more details about and potential release of AIM 2018 this summer.

Submitted by Keith Church.



Keith Church, FWD AVY Program Supervisor;
fwd-avalanche@farwest.org



It's time for awards in the FWD!

It's time for awards...

Even though this season has not been all we had hoped it would be, you can still submit your fellow patrollers for awards. In fact this may be the best year ever to submit them.

Why you ask? What have they done this year? With so few patrol days, do they really have a chance for any of the Outstanding Awards?

The answer is yes. Yes you should submit them, yes they have done some really outstanding things and YES....they do have a really good chance for an Outstanding Award. How you ask?

12.7 National Outstanding Awards in the NSP Policies and Procedures covers all the requirements for a patroller or patrol to be submitted for recognition. The section that I want to draw your attention to the is *section 12.7.2.2 No information dating back more than four years, including the current season, may be used in the nomination.* This is important this year since last year with all the outstanding service our members provided can and should be included in the submission.

I heard from some of you last year that even though you submitted one of your fellow patrollers for an award, they were only one of many that should have been submitted. That is great because you now get another chance to submit the others that also should have been submitted last year. Or they were submitted but in your Region there was another member that just barely beat them out for the recognition. This is your chance to resubmit that same member for an award you thought they deserved last year. Or look back over the last four years and write up a very deserving member for an Outstanding Award. They deserve it and it all starts with you.

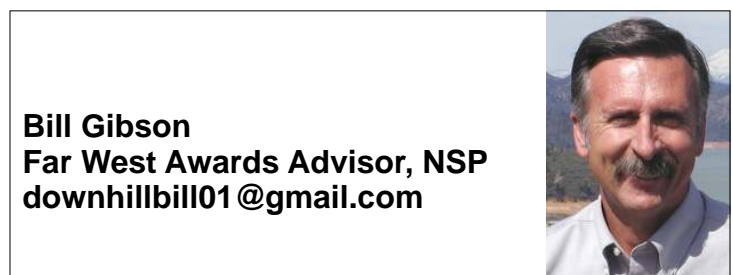
Time is getting short for a submission this year. They need to be to your Region Awards Adviser by March 1st.

If you have not written up an award before, please refer to the NSPP&P Chapter 12. Plus you need to be sure to use the current version of the submission form. All of this can be found on the NSP web site or your Region Awards Adviser can provide them for you.

You need to use the current form. Here are guidelines to keep in mind:

- **Officers and advisors above the patrol level are not eligible for Outstanding Patroller (formally Auxiliary Patroller), Nordic or Alpine Patroller Awards.**
- **Careful about the Outstanding Instructor OEC Award vs. the Outstanding Instructor Award (non OEC) The OEC nomination should focus on OEC, the non-OEC should not.**
- **National Outstanding winners are ineligible for any national outstanding awards for the following four years**
- **Failing to follow the instructions may result in an award being disqualified**
- **Careful about bending facts... Nominations must be accurate.**
- **Make sure the facts match the NSP records**
- **Do not use outdated forms**
- **Do not include information dating back more than four years**
- **It is imperative that nominations not refer to a specific name of a person, place, or thing. Failure to comply with this request may result in the rejection of a nomination.**

Thanks for taking the time to write up your fellow members for these Outstanding Awards and remember all other awards can be written up and submitted any time.



Bill Gibson
Far West Awards Advisor, NSP
downhillbill01@gmail.com

Make headlines...We want to hear from you!

Your Far West News and Views newsletter is actively seeking news and photos of the patrols and patrollers of the Far West Division.

FWD News and Views is published three times yearly, in September, December and February. Deadline is the 25th of the month prior to publication; NEXT deadline is August 25 for our September, 2018 issue!

Features, photos welcomed, please submit items with the

“Five W’s: Who, What, When, Where and How, and, if sending photos, please include an identifying “cut line” noting the photo’s content. If you are mailing photos and want them back, please enclose self-addressed envelope.

Send submissions to FWD Communications Advisor Tim Viall, suggested is electronically submission to: fwd-newsletter@farwest.org. Or by U. S. mail to 5854 Turtle Valley Drive, Stockton, CA 95207.

Join other Far West ski patrollers April 19-22 for first-aid, marshal service at US's largest cycling event!

Huge Sea Otter Bike Classic centered on Laguna Seca Raceway, CA, April 19-22, 2018

For the 13th year, 50 Far West Division ski patrollers, family and friends will provide first-aid service, non-emergency transport and course marshaling at the Sea Otter Classic at Laguna Seca Raceway near Monterey, CA, the USA's largest outdoor biking event.

This four-day bicycling extravaganza attracts 10,000 participants ranging from world-class pro riders to serious amateurs and recreational cyclists. Over the four days, riders take part in circuit racing, cross-country events, wild downhill and dual slalom racing and citizens road and cross-country rides. Each year, NSP members provide first-aid care to over 200 riders, from incidents of road rash and exhaustion to more serious trauma-induced injuries.

Over 50,000 spectators crowd the huge venue, which spreads out from Laguna Seca Raceway into the scenic back country of the Ft. Ord National Monument and, for the road races, along roads through Monterey County. 600 trade show vendors make for the largest market in the country for cycling equipment and accessories.

The Dodge Ridge Patrol led in volunteer numbers in 2017, with 27 members and friends/family (providing

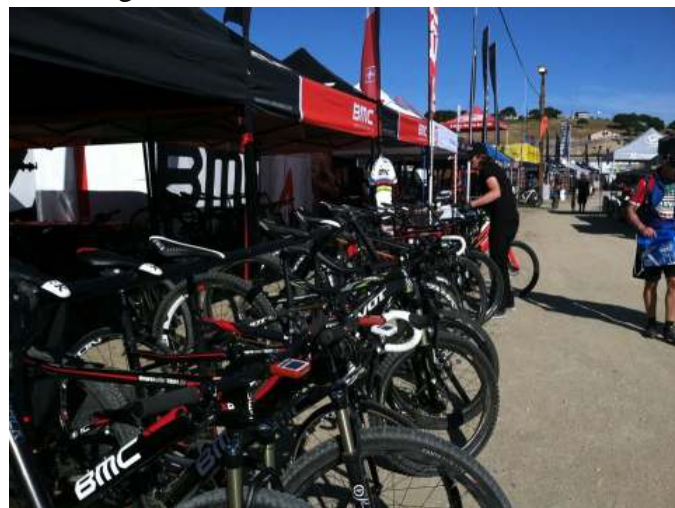
marshaling services), joined by patrollers from Bear Valley, Mt. Shasta, Sugar Bowl and Heavenly ski patrols. Each year our NSP contingent pairs with members of the Friends of Fort Ord and members of a back-country first-aid unit, as well as Monterey County Fire and Emergency Services.

NSP members and friends camp at "Ski Patrol Central" within the event, enjoyed Friday and Saturday barbecues, found time to ride their bikes, attended the huge trade show and made new NSP friends! For their volunteer service, the Sea Otter Foundation donated almost \$4,700 to patrols of the NSP volunteers.

Patrollers, family and friends are offered free camping right in the Laguna Seca paddock at Ski Patrol Central as well

as and free admission. Motorhomes, camping trailers and tents make for cozy accommodations and Friday and Saturday barbecues add camaraderie and fun to the experience!

The Far West Division invites members of additional patrols to join us for the next huge event! **Mark your calendars, April 19-22, 2018; to volunteer or for more info, call or email Tim Viall, Coordinator for NSP Volunteers for the Sea Otter Classic, at tviall@msn.com, or 209.969.3875.** For more insight into the event itself, go to seaotterclassic.com.



Clockwise from top left, the FWD first aid crew for the backcountry courses prepare to depart for assignments, hundreds of vendors display bikes and everything for the cycling sport at huge trade fair; NSP and BETA team members (Bicycle Equestrian Trail Assistance volunteers, in orange vests/shirts) and tents, motorhomes made for cozy evenings at "Ski Patrol Central". Join the NSP team in April for NSP service and fun!



Sign up... for Sea Otter!

Sharpen your NSP first-aid skills at America's largest bicycling event, April 19-22 – and earn some money for your service for your patrol! In addition to providing either first-aid or course-marshal service, you get:

- Free admission to this huge, four day event (\$50 value),
- Free camping for motorhomes, fifth-wheels, tents in heart of the action,
- Free lunch and snacks
- Two NSP Barbeques, Friday and Saturday nights
- Make new NSP friends, with members from 6-8 other NSP Patrols
- Family members, friends can also serve (as course-marshals), too!

To Sign up: Send your name, patrol, email, cell phone #, days available, and if you need trailer, 5th wheel or tent space to Sea Otter Coordinator Tim Viall, tviall@msn.com. For best volunteer opportunities, sign up today!

Bear Valley NSP Updates:

A bit of news to share: Bear Valley's new 6-pack chair is now open and operational with just over a 3 minute high speed ride to the top of the mountain. (Pictured at right). Operationally it has gone without a hitch. The high-speed chair by Leitner-Poma is an excellent addition to the area's portfolio of 8 chair lifts and 2 surface lifts. (You can access pictures from the Bear Valley website: bearvalley.com.)

Additionally, we have just minted 2 new NSAP red coat patrollers, Matt Carter and Tom Pierucci, having completed their on-the-hill OEC training and scenario completions. (Picture at right).

Wish there was more to report, however, with the low snow year this is all she wrote.

Best regards, **Andy Rich**, Bear Valley Resort Patrol Rep



Mammoth Nordic Patrol celebrates OEC staff!

Our Outdoor Emergency Care staff is made up of the best we have in our region. Nordic & Alpine alike is what makes our class so unique, it's the dedication of each one of them that creates a team like no other. Avalanche, Mountain Travel & Rescue, Outdoor Emergency Transportation Instructors and Patrol Representatives make up this core group.

We continue to produce one to two new OEC Instructors a season for the past ten years. Our core values are tied to giving back to NSP as well as to our Region. Helping those who are in need is a gift like no other. These individuals stick together as a family would, stepping up to the plate when the need arises.

Yours, **Wayne Wong**, Mammoth Nordic Patrol Director



Top row from left: James Pruett, Peter Fischer, Scott Goodman, Wayne Wong, Steve Newman, Austin Regg; bottom row: Ofelia Fisher, Jenney Lo, Cash Murphy, Natalie Regg, Cindy Dugger, Not pictured : Diana Osterhues, Tina Choi-Nelson.

Alumni Celebration Day shaping up for this season!

Details on the coming March “Alumni Celebration Day” are in the works. In 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Eastern Sierra Region graciously hosted visiting alumni at Sugar Bowl, Heavenly and Sierra at Tahoe resorts. If you are an alumni member, watch for an email with details about the March, 2018 event, coming to Northstar.

Typically, the resort hosts a lunch, the NSP patrol offers a tour of the mountain, and veterans of FWD patrols can catch up on alumni news and swap stories about their past NSP service/adventures!

At right, Eastern Sierra and MLR alumni who gathered to ski, share old patrol tales, catch up and remain involved in the NSP at Heavenly Valley Resort in March, 2016. Thanks to Heavenly, and Sierra at Tahoe Resort for hosting in 2017!



Ski Patrols of the Far West Division:

Here are the stellar patrols of the FWD:

Arizona Snowbowl
Alpine Meadows
Alta Sierra
Badger Pass
Big Bear
Bear Valley Ski Patrol
Boreal Ridge
Buckhorn Ski Club
China Peak
Coppervale
Diamond Peak
Dodge Ridge
Donner Ski Ranch
Heavenly
Homewood
June Mountain
Kirkwood
Lake Alpine Nordic
Lee Canyon
Lassen Volcanic
Mammoth Basin Nordic
Mount Lemmon
Mountain High
Mt. Baldy
Mt. Pinos Nordic

Mt. Shasta
Mt. Waterman
Northstar
Pinecrest Nordic
Reno Ski Patrol
Sierra Ski Patrol
Snow Valley



Soda Springs
Squaw Valley
Sugar Bowl
Sunrise
Tahoe Backcountry
Tahoe Donner
Tahoe Donner Nordic Center
Have you skied them all?

Simplifying course enrollment and rosters for you and your students

The new NSP website with the new course registration and closing procedure has been around now for over two years. Under the old system, you registered your course in advance, students sent you an RSVP (hopefully), showed up for your course, signed a course sign-in sheet which usually collected the data you needed for your course roster, and at the end of the course or class, you filled out a course completion roster and sent it off to the national office to close your course.

Now under the new system, as most of you know, you register your course in advance as in the past on your "Course Tools" page, but students must also enroll in advance for your course on the NSP website through their home page. This is the only way they can get on the roster to receive credit for the course. The staff at NSP do have the ability to add someone before the course is closed, but this method is discouraged because the instructor does not have the student listed on the roster before the course and may not know they will be attending, and it creates additional work for the small NSP office staff that we as instructors should be handling.

I find after teaching many courses and refreshers under the new system for the past two years that some students still find it difficult to understand and follow the enrollment process. One thing that I have done that has seemed to help, and maybe you have done this also, is to put very explicit step-by-step directions for the enrollment procedure in my course announcement which goes out by newsletters and e-mail blasts to the region and patrols.

The course announcement of course includes all of the basics regarding the course, such as course name or type, location, starting and ending times and dates, prerequisites required, costs if any, equipment and dress required, and any other pertinent paperwork or information they need. But I also include a statement such as the sample below to help them with the enrollment procedure:

"You must sign-up for this course in advance on-line at nsp.org. Log in to your NSP member page, go to Member Resources, and on the pull-down menu, choose "Course Schedule." In the box that says "Course Number Equals", enter the Course Number #F05018000 and hit the "FIND" button. Click on the course title and it will give you the option to enroll in the course. Click where it says "Register Myself" and it will put the course in your cart and show you the cost if any. Purchase or confirm the item in your cart and it will take you to a confirmation page. NSP will send you a confirmation e-mail to the e-mail address on your member record page, and you also have the option at the bottom of the page to copy another person such as the course instructor with the course enrollment confirmation."

Putting step-by-step instructions such as these has lessened the confusion, inquiries, and calls I receive regarding enrolling in the course. I have found that if these instructions are followed and the student still is unable to enroll in the course, it usually is a problem with their registration not being up to date. They must call the national office and the Customer Care Department can usually help solve the problem.

Now hopefully all of the students are now enrolled before the course date. The new system has made it very easy to manage and close your course rosters. On the night before the course begins, I go to the NSP site and from the enrollment tab on my "Course Tools" page, I export the student enrollment for the course to an Excel spreadsheet. I delete any columns I do not need, and I add two columns to the spreadsheet. One column is added next to the student's name to use as a sign-in or check-in for the course. One column is added on the far right of the spreadsheet to indicate to me and the staff at NSP any students or instructors that were enrolled but did not show up. I highlight those names and comments in a color before electronically sending the roster to NSP for closure. Keep in mind that you add any instructors that are helping teach the course on the "Register A Course" tab for your course. This can be done after the class is completed but before closing the course, so you can account for all the instructors who helped.

I hope this will help you with registration and closing for your next course. If you have any questions on course registration and closing, you may contact me at the e-mail below or you can contact the Customer Care Department at the NSP office.

If you are not currently an NSP Instructor and have thought about teaching in one or more of the NSP disciplines, take the challenge and begin your NSP teaching career by enrolling in an Instructor Development Course in your region. You can change patrolers' lives, and I think you may change your life as well.

For more information on the Instructor Development Program, or if you would like an Instructor Development Course offered to your patrol, contact the Instructor Development Program Administrator in your region, or e-mail me. If you have questions or comments regarding this article, or ideas for future articles related to the Instructor Development Program, you may contact me at fwd-id@farwest.org.

Doug Hill, FWD Instructor Development Advisor, fwd-id@farwest.org.



TRANSPORTATION NATION

All the Sled news that's fit to print – and occasionally worth reading.

Editor's note: With the delayed start to our 2017-18 ski season, this article reprinted due to public demand (and, Daryl did not get me a new article!)

In last season's mid winter issue I wrote an article for News & Views *The Evolution of Toboggan Driving*. That article was followed, in the N&V issue, with *The Evolution of Tail Roping*. Several folks have to me on both articles, many indicating that that the articles were thought provoking, worthwhile, and a topic of discussion among the OET in their local patrol room – heady praise, indeed!

**Daryl Whitcher is FWD OET Supervisor,
fwd-oet@farwest.org**



A few also mentioned that it would be most effective to merge both concepts into one article – a single reference document to spur discussion during instructor training. So, Lets take a look at ...

The Evolution of Toboggan Driving

Like all good Toboggan Trainers, my instructors instilled upon me the necessity to get the patient down the hill in the safest manner possible. Of course, being ski patrollers, they also wanted to prepare us candidates for the worst case scenario, and so we trained on the steepest slopes often under the most marginal snow conditions, and clearly many instructors seemed determined to “grind” the newbies into exhaustion. Fatigue is currently seen as detrimental to improved skiing performance, and it most certainly leads to heavy wear and tear on our rescue toboggans. The inescapable conclusion is that NSP Toboggan Instructors have a long history of emphasizing the need for control - often at the expense of sled operators, and also at the expense of our equipment. In short, for a long time we have taught our students how to 'over drive' the toboggan.

There are some notable characteristics to indicate when a patroller is 'over driving' the rescue toboggan. When observing a patient evacuation, you may note the evacuation route is straight down the hill with the driver in a wedge or side slip; while this is very appropriate in steep or difficult conditions, it is not often needed or appropriate on more moderate slopes. The constant braking action required can prove to be very taxing on the sled driver and thus driver fatigue may actually compromise patient safety. Turns, when required, often feature an abrupt transition followed by an extended fall line component before the traverse segment begins – the prototypical “box” shaped turn. The shape of the 'box turn' is unique to sled driving and is not a turn shape that occurs in any natural movement pattern seen among skiers or boarders on the mountain. As such, it is a move requiring the operators to expend significant amounts of energy and should only be used as appropriate for the terrain or traffic conditions.

Contrast the box turn with the natural, flowing motion of the advanced skier or boarder moving down the mountain in the typical “S” shaped turn pattern. While in a balanced, athletic stance, the advanced slider is constantly making minute adjustments while moving at speed – characteristics which directly relate to driving a rescue toboggan. The board/ski edge, or control surface, is constantly being pressured in different locations - from the tip at turn initiation, to the tail at termination. The entire length of the control surface is being utilized for each turn sequence, resulting in a smooth change of direction and a generally greater speed while maintaining optimum control. The advanced toboggan driver uses the same concept, pressuring the entire toboggan sequentially as appropriate, with “up” pressure on the handles providing effective directional control to the fins at the stern of the sled, and “down” pressure providing influence upon the chain brake under the bow of the sled to effect speed control. A synopsis of performance indicators for operators at each level includes the following -

Basic Performance

static, front of handles
symmetric, at front of handles
fingers wrapped, palm down
tight grip, down pressure
fall line, box turns
hard pressure – downforce
not pressured
slow to moderate

DRIVER POSITION
HAND POSITION
FINGERS
GRIP PRESSURE
ROUTE
CHAIN BRAKE
FINS (CONTROL SURFACE)
SPEED

Advanced Performance

middle of handles, & active
split, forward & aft
palm to midline, fingers loose
light grip, neutral pressure
fall line, “S” turns
neutral to light pressure
light pressure
moderate to fast

Please see Sled Commander, continued page 19

Sled Commander, continued from page 18

aggressive

CONTROL

passive

As Outdoor Emergency Transportation instructors our goal is to provide proficient sled drivers to our ski patrol and outstanding rescue services to the skiing public. With emphasis on the efficient utilization of the control surfaces provided by the toboggan, we give our patrollers the tools to understand how the sled works, and how to effectively maneuver it while maintaining complete control. The modern rescue toboggan is engineered to be driven efficiently, and effective training will help our patrollers get the most out of their rescue equipment.

The Evolution of Tail Roping

At every clinic that I teach, I ask the patrollers in the group for some sled driving and tail roping “absolutes”. The reasons for this are twofold - First, it gives a revealing insight into the training protocols at that particular resort and, well, the responses are often very entertaining. After all, sled drivers have a well-earned reputation as being the skiing equivalent of Neanderthals.

Invariably one of the responses - or, more likely, several of the responses – which relate to tail roping, or Tailing, is “the Tailer shall NEVER vary twelve...) from the fall “the Tailer shall nose of the sled”, or the past there have been mostly DON'TS) than you will find in must recognize that the unidirectional analysis environment simply enough information to all surface conditions litany of NEVER DO DO THIS's - I tell the absolutes remain in all that later.



more than 15 degrees (or ten, or line directly uphill of the sled”, or ALWAYS be directly uphill from the some variant of those statements. In more DO'S and DON'TS (well, associated with toboggan training most blasting handbooks. We all instructional mindset which leads to for problem solving in today's does not give our sled drivers ensure that they can be successful in and terrain. So, after listening to a THAT's and a couple of ALWAYS students that only TWO clear the Sled Head Kingdom - more on

Another important indicator to the effectiveness of OET training is the distinction between the amount of tension required for successful tailing. In the Far West Division, our terrain requires a 'lead hand' on the tail rope in front of the body and a 'belay hand' behind the body for anchoring. Training protocols in the past have specified the amount of 'belly', or sag, which can be allowed in the tail rope between the tailer and the sled. Some resorts prefer no sag, while others allow a minimal amount of belly, while some ski patrols attempt to approximate the measured amount of sag that is allowable; most sled trainers indicate that a tail rope dragging on the ground is a clear failure. Today's evaluation standards require a more practical solution than an attempt at physical measurement.

Understanding that the Tailer's primary responsibility is functional control over the rear of the sled when the Driver is at risk, the Tailer is tasked with maintaining a functional tension on the rope. Two concepts apply for evaluating success in this endeavor: a clear understanding of when the Driver is at risk, and understanding what the term “functional tension” means. The Driver is always at risk during transition (change of direction) maneuvers – regardless of slope or surface conditions – and MAY BE at risk at all times on steep slopes (30% plus), or even on moderate to flat slopes while operating on very hard snow (icy) conditions or under very poor (sloppy) surface conditions. Traffic conditions may also require that the Tailer operate with functional tension even when the Driver is running straight to the base facility on a very flat slope.

Functional tension may be defined as only that amount of sag in the rope that can be reduced – with effective tension employed - IMMEDIATELY by the Tailer when required. Generally, this means that the tail rope can be brought to tension (zero sag) with only a roll of the ankle – whether from a wedge or a side slip. Any belly or sag in the tail rope that requires more motion than that to bring tension does not permit immediate functional braking. Here are a few other comparisons to illustrate the evolution of tail

Please see Sled Commander, continued page 20

Sled Commander, continued from p. 19

roping:

Basic Performance

fall line predominant
box turns

fall line, above sled
at all times

palm up
grip rope, fingers wrapped
hands heavy, down
tight – no sag
medium to hard
slow to moderate
aggressive

ROUTE
TURN SHAPE
TAILER POSITION
Steeps (30%+)
Moderate (20-30%)
Flat (0-20%)
LEAD HAND POSITION
FINGERS
BELAY GRIP
ROPE TENSION
SLED BRAKING
SPEED
CONTROL

Advanced Performance

fall line if necessary, avoid obstacles
“S” turns

Fall line above sled
“S” turns, follow sled
assist with pull on flat terrain

thumb up
fingers out, guide rope
palm down, thumb forward
functional when driver at risk
neutral to light
moderate to fast
passive

The evolution of OET training presents an advanced training protocol which will result in more increased operational efficiency and longevity for our toboggan operators, while at the same time increasing the operational life span of our rescue toboggans. Today's rescue toboggans are designed exceptionally well and can be operated with much more speed and less muscle than ever before, and our resorts are opening new lifts to service more terrain than ever before - and it is now imperative that we provide our patrollers with the tools to work smarter and not harder during the already stressful evacuation process so that our guests will enjoy a safe, controlled ride down the mountain!

Oh, yes - the Two Absolutes chiseled in stone at the entrance to the Sled Head Kingdom?

1. NEVER say never
2. Never say ALWAYS

That's what the flag says....





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 Eastern Sierra Director
 Mother Lode Director
 Northern California
 Professional Representative
 Southern California Director
 Legal Advisor
 Registrar
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Alumni Advisor
 Awards Advisor
 Avalanche Supervisor
 Certified Advisor
 Community College Advisor
 Communications-Newsletter
 Communications-Webmaster
 Conferences Advisor
 Historian
 Instructor Development Super.
 Mountain Travel/Rescue Super.
 Nordic Supervisor
 Outdoor Emergency Care Super.
 Outdoor Emergency Trans. Super.
 Recruitment Advisor NorCal
 Recruitment Advisor SoCal
 SAR Liaison NorCal
 SAR Liaison SoCal
 Woman's Program Advisor

Name:

Lance Vaughan
 Nancy Stromswold
 Richard Wilson
 Andrew Youngblood
 Katie Dumont
 Tony Atkins
 Sam Lanier
 Rich Bailey
 Diana St. Clair
 Geoff Hutcheson
 Peggy Jamison
 Janice Waits
 Keith Dickens
 Tim Viall
 Bill Gibson
 Keith Church
 Lance Vaughan
 Steve Thorsted
 Tim Viall
 Rye Livingston
 Sonja Kively
 Chuck Herbert
 Doug Hill
 Karl Chulski
 Jeff Gurrola
 Sue Dennison
 Daryl Whitcher
 John McGuigan
 Sonja Kively
 Roger Yang
 Mke St. Clair
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