



National Ski Patrol System, Inc. Northern Division

To: All Patrol Representatives, Program Supervisors, and Northern Division Board Members

From: Karl Uhlig, Assistant Division Director

Date: January 17, 2018

Subject: National Board Meetings 1/4-1/6 in Denver

Hello everyone. I was able to attend the National Ski Patrol Board meetings earlier in the month with John Larson to learn how business is conducted at the National level and begin to understand how different Divisions interface with the National system and their local ski areas. The meetings were very interesting to say the least. I hope to hit some of the highlights in the paragraphs that follow.

Division Directors Meeting

Each Division Director (DD) was given an opportunity to highlight their Division accomplishments and difficulties. In general all divisions are having difficulty establishing or maintaining the alumni and women's programs. One suggestion was for each Division to start a facebook page to communicate with patrollers. Even though the NSP is aging the 20 and 30 year olds will follow facebook posts more frequently than reading emails such as this one.

Many OEC class are underway. For example in the Far West Division there are currently 155 OEC students and because of class time commitments it's a bit difficult to maintain instructor continuing education requirements. Another strain on resources is providing adequate IT's to cover refreshers. For example, in the Far West Division there were 57, OEC refreshers all within a short time period this fall.

Several DDs voiced hearing concerns from area owners about the value NSP brings to ski areas. These owners are viewing NSP patrollers as skiers who get free skiing for little service. In their minds each patroller represents lost ticket sales for the day. The group thought the message should be clear to the area owners that NSP personnel are basically off balance sheet employees doing much of the labor that regular employees would be required to do without NSP volunteers. In addition, NSP brings OEC to the table which means the area is not paying any annual organization fees like EMTs are required to do.

More and more areas are now offering summer recreational opportunities. Many have mountain bike trail systems and zip lines to attract visitors. For example, Grand Targhee is now ranked #2 in the USA for mountain bike trails and as a biking destination. Metro Denver now has a "bike park" engineered and dedicated to all things bicycle. It's inevitable that if your ski area offers summer activities such as bike trails that they will come to your patrol asking for advice or help providing emergency care. Discussions are happening at the National level on how to establish an NSP Bike Patrol starting with a mission statement. I'm sure we will be hearing more on bike patrols in the future.

Joint meeting with the Board of Directors and Division Directors

Meegan Moszynski our new Executive Director spoke about several topics she sees as priorities for NSP.

1. Programs: NSP needs to continue to provide quality programs by revising and bringing current information into existing programs. NSP needs to keep programs affordable to NSP members.
2. NSP needs to enhance our value to our customers such as ski areas and our members. She asked if we need to create an advisory board made of both members and non-members. We currently have between 30-31 thousand members. We acquire about 2000 new candidates per year and lose about the same
3. Brand awareness. NSP needs to do a better job of marketing our brand to both our ski area customers and the general public.
4. IT system. Even though our current NSP, IT system is still being tweaked after the recent rollout with ongoing new programming and work arounds for specific issues, we need to be looking toward the next platform. What will the next platform look like and where will it be housed? Do we continue to tweak the existing system, do we update with an entirely new system in 3-5 years? Do we push the IT platform to the Division level? These are all good questions and I'd love to hear your input.
5. Look for ways to protect the independence of OEC.
6. Expand
 - a. NSP needs to modernize, collaborate with industry partners, and look ahead
 - b. NSP should be addressing concerns for the future now. How do we maintain and grow our membership?
 - c. NSP needs to remain relevant to our customers. How we do it in the future may be different than how we do it today.
7. Challenges
 - a. Climate change is happening, what's NSP's position?
 - b. Leadership, is NSP organized correctly today, how will it look in the future?
 - c. Membership value. How do we as an organization remain valuable for our membership?
 - d. Ski area relationships. How do we improve relationships with ski areas, the skiing public and industry partners?
 - e. Internal challenges include, dues, grants, scholarships, recruitment, other incentives.

It has come to the attention of the Board that there are about 450, NSP members who are not OEC certified. I believe this came about when professional patrols registered members with EMT and other credentials who are active patrollers. The Board is in the process of deciding how to handle these individuals. This week the NSP legal team is meeting and this issue is one of the topics.

The Board is looking into revising the Patroller Code of Conduct and the National Board Election Process. These two topics are now in committee with reports due to the Board at the June meeting.

Members attempting to print their membership cards from emails sent from National are a disaster. Printing directly from the National email produces lame results. National IT is aware of the issue and working on fixes for next year.

Over the course of the next several months the Board will be looking into how to handle affiliate members such as mountain hosts, EMTs, Mt Bike patrols. At the moment the National Mountain Bike Patrol wishes to join NSP. Is this possible with our current By-Laws and P&P? I'm not sure at this time. Stay tuned as I'll know more in the coming months.

The 5th edition of our OEC text is currently under chapter by chapter review. The review team is scheduled to meet in April to go over each chapter from a medical perspective.

Medical Direction—There is a continued push by National Emergency Medical System (EMT) to put the NSP under the direction of the EMS system. There was some recent legislation passed in Idaho that stalls the effort but patrols, ski areas, and patrollers need to be aware that those running the National EMS system are watching NSP. One

thought for helping NSP and local ski areas to be less vulnerable is for Patrol Representatives to work with area management in an effort to seek out a Medical Director/Advisor. The person filling the role of Medical Director/Advisor should be a practicing MD affiliated with a local hospital. The idea is that the Director/Advisor would review cases and offer suggestions to the Patrol Representative on how to provide better/more efficient care to patients. As a side note, it is encouraged for all Patrol Representatives to have an agreement with area management that volunteer patrollers are covered by the area's insurance policy.

Guest Speakers

Kelly Pawlak, CEO and President of the National Ski Area Association (NSAA) spoke about the path to growth. Currently there are about 52 million skier/boarder visits across the USA annually. This number has been more or less steady nationally for several years. What he sees is the skier visits are concentrated where the good snow is. For example, currently Utah and Colorado are short of snow but the Northwest and east have lots of snow resulting in more skier visits where the snow is good.

Learn to ski programs have a typical conversion rate of about 15-18% meaning that 15-18 individuals convert to skiers leaving 75-82% of potential newcomers not converting to frequent skier/riders. This is a very poor conversion rate and the industry needs to take steps to improve.

Dave Byrd, Director of Risk and Regulatory Affairs for NSAA. Dave spoke on how dangerous the ski industry is for workers. There have been 11 employee industry related deaths within the last 16 months with three last month. The ski industry has double the injury rate of the construction industry. Recently four areas were cited and fined by OSHA for not having mandatory helmet mandates.

Dave spoke of a current law suit filed by an adaptive skier whose service dog was not allowed on the ski lift at one area. It's only a matter of time before a customer shows up with a service dog at your area. Are you equipped to handle the situation? Patrol Reps may want to have a conversation with area management on how to handle a skier with a service dog. There is a good article in the latest edition of the Ski Patrol magazine covering patrol dogs and lifts.

John Rucker, Senior Vice President, Head/Tyrolia, USA. The ski/ride industry is changing rapidly. In the Denver metro area there have been more outdoor retail stores closing in the last 18 months than closed in the past 18 years. John attributes these closures to on line shopping. Major ski industry owners, Boyne for example, are purchasing ski areas large and small. Frequently the smaller areas are closed in an effort to consolidate skier visits to the larger resorts.

On the retail side the same trend is occurring. Head/Tyrolia is challenging the industry trend and has doubled in size within the past 5 years.

The ski/rider population is declining. The industry needs to increase efforts to introduce new skiers/riders to the sport and retain those that enter for the first time. The 15-18% retention rate is poor and needs to improve for the life of the industry.

Note to Patrol Representatives. Feel free to share any or this entire memo with your local patrollers during a monthly meeting or via email as you think best.

Best Regards
Karl Uhlig