

# P O L A R I S

MONTANA | NORTH DAKOTA | SOUTH DAKOTA | WYOMING



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

I hope you all had a safe and fun filled 2021-2022 season. The backcountry season continues as I write this note and I'll encourage you to participate if you can. Heck, Billings just received 14 inches of snow on Tuesday 4/12 and I'm sure Red Lodge will have some great skiing. Looking forward, just think the 2022-2023 refresher period and following ski season is right around the corner.

The Division E-Board is set for April 30 at the Best Western Grandtree in Bozeman. The format and goals are similar to last year's meeting. We will begin by discussing the past season, what went right and what can we improve upon for next season.

We will also plan for Annual meeting in September and the 2022-2023 season. If you have a concern or topic you would like to have on the agenda, please contact your regional advisor. They are Allan Rabbitt (Region 1, Western) and Ron Wiggins (Region 2, Eastern).



## DIVISION NEWS

The good news is that after canceling our Senior Program

and Powder Rendezvous (Winter Tip Off) events in 2019-2020 we held both this past season. I'm sure Mike Marlow and John Fradette will have something to say about both events in their articles.

Additionally, Steve Porcella was able to hold an Avalanche 1 course at Lost Trail. I'm also sure he will have something to say about that event in his article.

The Division continues to be strong financially and as a result I am NOT proposing any dues increase for the coming 2022-2023 season.

The Division is planning to hold both a Senior OEC/OET clinic and Evaluation this coming 2022-2023 season. We successfully finished up the 2019 Senior this past March at Lost Trail.

# CALENDAR

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## April 29,30, 2022.

Northern Division eBoard Meeting  
Bozeman

## June 3,4,5, 2022.

Nut's & Bolts OET Training  
MT. Hood

## September 2022

Division Meeting and  
OEC Refresher TBD

## Fall

OEC Refreshers  
Each Patrol

## Winter

OET Refreshers  
Each Patrol

## Jan 2023

Winter Meeting  
(Who'd got a good name?)  
TBD

## Feb 2023

Senior Clinic  
TBD

## March 2023

Senior Final  
TBD

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During our April 30th E-Board meeting we will be making recommendations regarding these events, to be approved by the entire Board of Directors during our September meeting, stay tuned.

## NATIONAL NEWS

As you all know the NSP Board of Directors recently hired Chris Castilian as the new CEO. Chris and new Board Chair, Rick Boyce are working on a list of priorities to move the organization forward in a positive way in an effort to better serve our members, both dues paying members and our sponsor and area partners. Be looking for periodic updates in the NSP Sweeps news blasts and other media sources.

For specifics the Board and the four standing committees of Finance, Governance, Education and Planning are working through several items. Note, the listing below is by no means all inclusive. These are just the highlights that I captured during meetings with the Division Director group and the National Board in early April at the semiannual PowderFall event. This year's event was held at Breckenridge resort in Colorado from 4/3-4/9.

## NATIONAL BOARD PROJECT LIST:

**Code of Conduct.** The COC was recently re-written last year and the new version approved by the Board. The current effort includes drafting some guidance on how to file and how to review a COC allegation once filed.

**LMS Rollout.** LMS or Learning

Management System is being developed and being tested as I write this note. During PowderFall, I attended a presentation by the David Hemendinger (sp) the project lead. Needless to say, if the LMS system works as presented by David all aspects from course registration, refreshers, and the learning process will be much more intuitive to all learning methods. We will begin to experience the new LMS platform during our refresher cycle later this summer and fall.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).** NSP hired an outside consultant to provide guidance to NSP. The results are a DEI policy statement recently presented on the NSP website, the Education Committee has included a DEI statement with all educational materials, and there will be a DEI component to this year's OEC Refresher.

**Review and possible updates to both the Bylaws and Policies & Procedures.** The National Board and various standing committees will be reviewing both documents in an effort to simply the operations of running the organization.

**Brand Awareness.** The NSP Board and NSP Office will be looking at ways to strengthen marketing, communications, and NSP brand awareness by use of media.

These are just highlights of what's going on at the National level from my notes. If you have a question on a topic not specifically mentioned or one you feel should be addressed, please reach out to me.

Stay in touch and stay safe during these ever-changing times.

Karl Uhlig  
Division Director





## AVY DIRECTOR NORTHERN DIVISION STEVE PORCELLA

Lost Trail held a 'super' Level 1 Avy class March 5/6th. Twenty

Happy spring skiing everyone! Moderate temps are helping the snowpack in the Bitterroot while elsewhere, intercontinental in particular, loose, wet snow avalanches are occurring. To date, there have been 15 Avy fatalities in the US, with 4 in MT, and 2 in WY. Out of the 15, 5 were skiers/boarders, 6 were snowmobilers, and 3 were snowshoers. This total of 15 is far less than last year's total of 37, which was a 70 year high.

Most snowpacks are isothermal this time of year, meaning that the pack is very close to its melting temperature of 32 degrees, across its entire depth. This means, when the melt starts (on any given warm spring day) non-skied slopes could go fast and wet, and loose snow avalanches in the upper parts of the pack are likely. In addition, it is possible that deeper, more destructive wet slab avalanches can occur. The key is to get on the snow early and get off it before the upper crusts break down into bottomless slush. Also watch for high elevation north faces where buried weak layers can persist late into spring.

one NSP students from our Division were involved. From Lost Trail: Doug Lilly, Darla Lilly, Adam Deutchman, Harrison Stone, Kurt Werhane, Matt Amick, Mike Rieder, Morgan Throckmorton, Hamp All, and Joe Kirkland. From Snowbowl: Kathleen Heiskell, Alex Frizzell, and Megan Eandi. From Antelope Butte: Kurt Ilgen, Christina White and Adam Cherni. Four additional students were non-NSP backcountry skiers. Photos from the class are shown in this Polaris article.

Many thanks to our Avy 1 instructors; Chris Gaughan (LT), Steve Thompson (SB),

Matt Galiher (LT), and a big thanks to our new instructors, Heidi Ando (LT), Jeff Judkins (SB), Bret Rhinesmith (AB), Mark Westerdoll (LT), Marea Kuehl (SB), and Joe Messina (SB) for becoming new NSP Avy instructors and helping teach this class. A big, special thanks to our volunteer Instructor Helpers; Nate Olson (LT), George D'Angelo (WMAF), Shane Coolidge (IND), Bob Griswold (LT), and Haocheng Wang (LT).

For all other Northern Division (ND) Avy instructors, please know that Lost Trail will hold an Avy Level 2 class next season in late Feb. I'll be in touch about traveling and helping teach that class. All Northern Division Ski Patrollers are welcome that have had the NSP Avy 1 class or an equivalent class within the last 10 years (please contact me if you have questions).



Other Avy News; become a AAA member if you have not already done so. In addition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Avalanche World, is posted to the Avalanche Review Online. The ISSW will be held in Bend, OR, October 8-13, 2023, and in Tromso, Norway, Oct. 2024.

Last but not least, Patrick Stanton, the National Avy Director is working with the National office to get Avy education online (think of OEC online), to help instructors and provide continuity across Divisions. An Avy LIMS is in progress and efforts will be made to gather presentations, instructional materials and ideas on how to make everything work in the future. It's slow going for such an effort, and I will help keep folks aware once actions are requested. In the end, it should help make Avy teaching more field-focused and less classroom-intensive.

As always, let me know if you need anything. Ski the steep and deep and stay safe.

[sfporcella@gmail.com](mailto:sfporcella@gmail.com)



## SPRING POLARIS OEC UPDATE:

Well, it was a busy 2021-22 season. Several patrols held OEC candidate classes and I was able to attend several of the finals starting with Great Divide in October, Beartooth in December, Casper in March, and Lost Trail in April. I still have Snowbowl's to attend in May.

The biggest event this year was the OEC Module of the Senior. We had 11 Senior OEC candidates. This is a huge undertaking by the Division and requires a lot of coordination of people and logistics. The Training event was held at Showdown in February 12 and the Final was held March 19 at Lost Trail. In order to run each event, it required 20 Training Evaluators, up to 9 patients and helpers, 3 station managers, and several behind the scenes coordinators to do moulage and organize the stations. As you can see it takes a lot of resources. Both Ski Areas involved were great to work with and provided us the support we needed, such as meeting spaces and the use of areas of the hill for the scenarios. Hats off to Showdown and Lost Trail. I had a great group of evaluators and they were responsible for objectively evaluating the candidates. Thanks to that group of dedicated OEC TE's. I would like to thank the host patrols who helped get patients, helpers, coordinated with hill management, etc. A big shout out to the behind the scenes coordinators at both events, that kept me from going crazy with "herding cats". Depending on interest our current plan is to hold the Senior evaluations annually. So if you are interested look for sign up information this fall.

I just recently got back from the OEC National Committee meeting at PowderFall. The big topic is the new Learning Management System (LMS). A couple of things to note about it. First it is not going to replace the current OEC Online course through Navigate (our OEC textbook publisher) at least in the short term. However, the Online OEC refresher will be there as well as much of the content that is stored as instructor resources will be on the new LMS. Not all at once, but content will be migrated over time. The biggest impact is that the "course tools", i.e. registering and enrolling in courses, will be moved to the new LMS and training will be coming out soon.

## STOLEN TRAILER

SnowBowl Ski Patrol has a trailer with all our training equipment. We always park it outside of the classroom during our candidate class. It was stolen. As per the surveillance video:

3:02 am March 26: Two men were seen breaking the security lock off the hitch of the trailer outside of the City Life building on Benton Avenue in Missoula.

3:12 am March 26: An older white Ford Explorer is seen leaving the scene of the theft with the trailer in tow.

5:53 pm March 29: The instructors arrive for the OEC candidate class to find the trailer missing intending to use the equipment for back boarding scenarios.

6:02 pm March 29: The security tape is reviewed revealing the March 26th theft.

6:12 pm March 29: Called 911 to report the theft.

6:43 pm March 29: Missoula Police Officer Kooper Guay arrived to take the report.

7:28 pm March 29: A fellow ski patroller, Danielle Petry owner of Flight or Fight EMT school, called to ask how my day was going. I told her that we were teaching a candidate class, but our training trailer had been stolen. She announced that 'SHE KNEW WHERE IT WAS' and shared the phone number of the finder.

7:33 pm March 29: Called the finder. Turns out he was raised in Seeley Lake, my town, and I knew him. I called him to confirm the story. He lives in Ronan and picked up a social media photo post from a gal about a trailer parked in a funny location in Arlee. He recognized the trailer and asked her to describe the contents to confirm. She was able to do that since the suspect(s) had broken the lock off the trailer. YEP it was our trailer. He offered to pick it up in Arlee and take it to Ronan for safe keeping. What a good Samaritan. Sounded good to me.

7:37 pm March 29: Called 911 trying to find Officer Kooper Guay to report the finding of the "missing trailer".

8:40 pm March 29: He returned my call, but advised us not to move the trailer. Since he had reported it stolen, it was now on the National Stolen Registry List. If anyone moved it and was sighted, they would be arrested and maybe even taken to jail.

9:45 pm March 29: Got a call from the Samaritan and he was still standing by the trailer waiting for Lakeside Sheriff to make contact and let him move the trailer to safety.

10:00 pm March 29: Contact made and the trailer on the move to safety.

11:00 am March 30: Retrieval in process. Bill Bucher and Marty Merwin head to Ronan to pick up the trailer and determine what is missing.

12:04 pm March 30: Photos taken and it appears only the two trauma packs are AWOL.

6:04 pm March 30: Made contact with Officer Guay and updated the incident report.

## GREETINGS FROM POWDERFALL 2022!

The Medical Committee of the NSP met in two intense days of discussion regarding multiple topics including: OEC 7 (Yes it's coming!), Roles of the medical advisor at all levels, the new Learning Management System, On Hill CPR, Spinal motion Restriction and a host of others.

Oh, and we went skiing too...

Then on to Powderfall 2022, multiple educational events and a lot of great networking with ~800 NSP folks from around the country. There were a host of topics including Avalanche Rescue, OEC6 Updates, Bike Patrol and Certified Patrol. And toboggans, many, many toboggans. If you haven't been, I strongly recommend you consider attending the next Powderfall. It is well worth your time and effort.

Oh, and there was skiing.....

Take home messages:

1. Review the NSP website and, specifically the Errata for OEC6. There are currently 4 of them and they are corrections to the text, as an OEC provider you are responsible for this content
2. Look for the new LMS (Learning Management System) going live in ?June?
3. **Patrol Directors!** Look for an email from me (if you haven't already gotten it) regarding meeting with you, attending your patrol meetings and visiting your mountain in the coming seasons
4. **Anyone....** Feel free to reach out with questions!

Did I mention skiing.....?

I suspect the winter season is mostly over (except for you backcountry folks) and summer will soon be upon us. Stay safe, stay aware of your surroundings, and look forward to the flowers.

Michael Jasumback, MD  
Medical Advisor, Northern Division NSP

## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL GREAT FALLS SKI PATROL WOMEN'S EVENT AT SHOWDOWN

Yoga. Skiing. Toboggans. Ropes. Beacons. Camaraderie. And so much delight. The 2nd Annual Great Falls Ski Patrol Women's Event at Showdown was two days full to the brim of learning and laughter. Female patrollers from across the Northern Division traveled to Showdown to participate: Antelope Butte, Eagle Creek, Huff Hills, North Absorka, and Snowbowl.

Last year's feedback was that the event should be two days; so, this year we expanded the Women's Event to Friday and Saturday. We spent much of the day on Friday running toboggans, sharing our knowledge and what works best for each of us. We wrapped things up on Friday at Top Rock with important lessons, a resiliency and mindfulness clinic from Christine Lustik, and some shenanigans. On Saturday, patrollers participated in an ascending/descending lesson, a beacon search, and of course skiing.

So many great people helped to put this event together. Thank you to the ladies of Showdown, Great Falls Ski Patrol, the Northern Division, and of course all of the wonderful women who participated! We can't wait for next year!

Bridgett



## NORTHERN DIVISION YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM

There are many wonderful opportunities for the youth of today. Belonging to the National Ski Patrol is one of those opportunities. The skills that are learned withing this program are numerous. Please make sure that if you have Young Adults on your patrol they are listed as such. This will help us to correctly identify all of the young adult patrollers throughout the National Ski Patrol System. If your patrol has a Young Adult Program, please make sure that everyone involved with those Young Adult Patrollers have taken the ARMATUS training. This is accessible through the NSP's insurance company. Here are the instructions:

To Enroll:

Please use this link to enroll and create your username and password:

<http://website.praesidiuminc.com/enroll>

Registration code: skipatrol

To login:

Use this link to log in with the username and password that you just created:

1. Go to <http://website.praesidiuminc.com/login>
2. Enter your login and password
3. Click the orange Login button.
4. On the next page, scroll down the page a bit until you see the courses listed.
5. Click the title of the course to open and review it.

Once you have received this training you need to send me a copy of this certificate. My email is [motleyv@icloud.com](mailto:motleyv@icloud.com)

The Northern Division Young Adult Program will be awarding two of our young adults with a \$500 scholarship. These scholarships are offered to young adults that are 19 years of age or younger, that are looking to further their education. These (2) scholarships will be awarded in June 2022. Scholarship information will be emailed out to all members through an eblast email. If you have any questions, please email me.

Vicki Motley  
Young Adult Advisor  
[motleyv@icloud.com](mailto:motleyv@icloud.com)



## OET UPDATE

# MICHAEL MARLOW

It has been a busy OET season! We signed off 10 new Instructors in Region 2, and added an additional IT in Casper, and look forward to adding more OET Instructors and IT's in the Region . Watch out for the RISE UP of Region 2!

On a National note, the National OET Team taught 30 different classes during Powderfall to hundreds of happy participants. After Powderfall we spent a couple days recording hundreds of hours of video to distill down to a few minutes of skills to be available on the National website and in the new LMS (Learning Management System) We started out with skills that are s=the same and similar across all divisions, with additional videos forthcoming that show nuances of skills between divisions.

The thought in patrollers minds to remember: what are we trained on as a division, what gets a patient down safely and are we safe in performing said skill.

We are looking forward to having a Winter (Tip Off, Blast, Rendezvous, Blizzard, insert suggested new name here...) next January, as well as another Senior Clinic (February) and Senior Final (March).

Dates and locations of on-hill events will be announced at the fall division meeting, as well as registration information.

Have a great summer and as always, let me know if you have questions, concerns, or different ideas for the OET program. I'm here to listen!

See you on the Snow!  
Michael Marlow



## NORDIC/ BACKCOUNTRY

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Well the big news among all the different NSP programs is the adoption of a new Learning Management System (LMS). Theoretically, it will make teaching courses in a large geographic area easier. At the moment the N/BC and MTR committees are working to consolidate what has traditionally been classroom learning sessions to an online, interactive, enjoyable format. I think it will take a while to get up and running, but I look forward to it. The other big news is a new/renewed Joint Statement of Understanding between the NSP and the National Park Service. It seems tailored to the mission of N/BC patrols. You may view the document on the NSP website, somewhere.... Or you can contact me and I can email you a PDF.

Now on to spring....the skiing season is just getting started for a lot of folks. Longer daylight hours, warmer weather, solidifying snowpacks. This is the time to get out and take a bigger tour, just don't forget the sunscreen, avy sense, and your complete kit of gear and knowledge. Introduce some one new to spring skiing after the lifts quit running. It's also a great time for introductory snow camping experiences. So, get out there and get after it, but be safe.

Dan'l



## WHAT WERE YOU DOING 55 YEARS AGO??

I know that a lot of you were doing nothing, since you hadn't even been conceived, but there are a lot of you out there who were present, possibly doing things you weren't proud of but still doing them. Think back to an even more specific time - Feb 24 - 26, 1967. Where were you and what was going on in your life? It was a Friday through Sunday.

I was in the USAF, stationed in downtown Manhattan (that's a whole other story), we had base housing on a U.S. Army chaplains' post at Fort Hamilton (which is another, other story) in Brooklyn and we were patrolling at Hunter Mountain in the Catskills, upstate NY. Cheri had just joined NSP and we were "adjusting" to east coast skiing. Friday night we would drive our VW Bug through Manhattan and up the NY Thruway to Hunter Mountain, patrol Saturday and Sunday and then reverse the route Sunday evening back to Fort Hamilton, stopping along the way for Dunkin' Donuts to share with our friends on base.

2400+ miles west of where we were, there was a ski race being held. It was the 1967 U.S. Alpine Championships taking place at Montana SnowBowl Ski Area outside of Missoula.

A little back story on SnowBowl: "In 1960 a local printer, Dave Flaccus, and a local grocer, Bob Johnson, leased a patchwork of land from the USFS and the Northern Pacific railroad to start a ski area called Missoula Snowbowl. It was a true community effort: local businesses chipped in funding, a logging company owner donated use of his heavy equipment, and townspeople helped to build the first runs.

In 1966, Johnson and Flaccus won the contract to make Snowbowl the site of the 1967 U.S. National Alpine Championships. It proved to be the area's undoing. They hoped that fees from television coverage would allow them to recoup the thousands they invested in preparations for the event. But the coverage never materialized, and for the first time Snowbowl teetered on bankruptcy." (Skiing Magazine, Feb. 1993).

Over the next 21 years Snow Bowl moved among a number of owners and FINALLY IN 1988, with a new name, Montana Snowbowl, the current owners, Brad and Ronnie Morris, took hold of the reins and have been guiding the area ever since. As with all ski areas, there are good times and "less good times" but the overall positive attitude of the Missoula ski community has enabled SnowBowl to continue to serve the skiing community.



MARK Schart



JOHN Bone



Tom Thomas  
Chief of Training



FRED KLEIN  
Alpine Patrol Chief

The ski patrol covering the race was composed of a number of Northern Division patrollers, many of whom came from the Missoula area.

Fred Klein was on the Casper Mountain Ski Patrol, served as the Division Director and was the Outstanding NSP Patroller in 1970. He patrolled for 30 years and passed away in 2010.

Tom Thomas joined NSP in 1960 and patrolled at SnowBowl until his death in Aug 2003.

John Bone was a member of the Beartooth Patrol for 27 years and passed away in May 2006.

Mark Behan joined NSP in 1952 and patrolled at a number of ski areas, most recently at Marshall Mountain and Discovery Basin. Mark passed away in 2008.

As you look at the above picture, note the "solid anchoring system" being used to insure that the akja did not run away!!!



We will assume that the belay practice was in the event some racer wound up in the trees. Fortunately, there was no need to utilize this practice. .

The 'Missouliaian' picture covered a hard luck case of one of the Canadian racers and no, she did not end up in the trees.

\*\*Note that whoever was labeling the pictures, never read the rule of 'i' before 'e', except after 'c' or when it has the sound of 'a' as in 'neighbor' and 'weigh'.

Hope you are all having a great season and stay safe,  
steve



**BAD LUCK PLAGUES RACER**

Sheila Balshine, center, from the University of British Columbia, lost one ski when about half-way down the slalom course Saturday. She got underway again, only to tumble after she crossed the finish line. The ski

patrol was on the scene immediately to give first aid and take the racer down the mountain. Helping the skier are, from left, Rudy Honkala, Brenda Baney, Ron Normandeau and Liz Richman.