

## Eastern Division Focus Group Tackles Member Issues

Mix of young members and veteran leaders brings about insight, ideas

By Michael Mendrick, Executive Director

On Saturday, April 29 a group of 24 members, volunteer leaders, division office and education staff spent a beautiful spring day in a hotel meeting room in Troy, NY working together to discuss how to improve the event experience and membership value for Eastern PSIA-AASI members next season and beyond. With troubling trends of falling event attendance and member recruitment, Division president Eric Jordan called for the special focus group to come together and get to the core of the issues.

The group included members Alicia Dewire, Katie Brinton, Casey Dolin, John Witherspoon, Matt Charles, Darryl Leggieri, Josh Reitze, Eastern President Eric Jordan, Eastern Vice President Ross Boisvert, National PSIA AASI CEO Nick Herin, AASI advisor Brian Donovan, Adaptive Coach Augie Young, National Board Rep Tom Butler, Alpine Education Chair Pete Howard, Eastern Alpine Examiner Coach and National Alpine Team Member Matt Boyd, Eastern Alpine Ed Staff Chair Erik Barnes, Alpine BOE member Dave Capron, Snowsports School Management Chair Doug Daniels, Eastern Board Member Ted Fleischer and Eastern Division staff members Michael Mendrick, Don Haringa, Melissa Skinner, Jodi Bedson and Krista DiCaprio.

**Our objective was to hear from and interact with rank & file members that are our potential future “core” members** and get their feedback (via both survey results and on-site conversations) regarding five key questions:

1. What is the best thing (i.e. “highest value”) you get from your membership in PSIA-AASI?
2. What do you most WANT from your membership?
3. In your opinion, what are the biggest perception challenges facing PSIA-AASI (i.e. “locker room talk”)?
4. What is your biggest challenge to remaining a member of PSIA-AASI in the years ahead?
5. What would you like to see PSIA-AASI doing more of for the members in terms of programming, events, benefits and services?

**Our goal for the day was to work together and with our guests to develop action steps** for addressing and improving the following three key areas of our Eastern operations – all of which are at measurably lower levels than during our previous 15 years (with the exception of the 2015-16 “winter that wasn’t”):

1. Event attendance
2. Membership recruitment
3. Membership retention

We spent the majority of the morning listening to our invited member guest feedback and questions. There was plenty of healthy, candid and open exchange

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## 2017 Eastern Mini-Survey Results

What members value, enjoy, want and need

In preparation for the Eastern Focus Group meeting on April 29 in Troy, NY we developed and distributed a short and specifically targeted Eastern Mini-Survey in late April. The following groups of members were invited to participate in the survey.

- Eastern Focus Group Invited Members (9 responses – full participation)
- Selected 18-39, 10 years or less PSIA-AASI (10 responses of 50 survey invites)
- Selected 40-60, 15-35 years PSIA-AASI (23 responses of 50 survey invites)
- The Community (survey link posted on The Community forum, 90 Eastern member responses)

The following is a summary of “recurring themes” in the responses of the four survey groups. These are amongst the most prevalent statements in the survey results from the four groups (132 total responses):

### What is the best thing (i.e. “highest value”) you get from your membership in PSIA-AASI?

- Recognition as part of a professional organization
- Educational events and training
- Skiing/riding/socializing and building relationships with other instructors
- Opportunities for growth in skills and knowledge
- Discounts on gear, clothing and equipment

### What do you most WANT from your membership in PSIA-AASI?

- More recognition and respect from public as to value of lessons with a certified pro
- More variety of educational opportunities
- More discounts from resorts
- More interaction and opportunities with the National Teams
- Advocacy for instructors/better pay
- Having something to strive for as a long-time member (once “leveled off” on certification)

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## president's message

**ERIC JORDAN,  
EASTERN DIVISION PRESIDENT**



**G**reetings Eastern members, I hope you had an enjoyable and rewarding season! It has been an absolute pleasure serving as your President for the past three years. As my term winds down and I prepare to hand over the reins to

Ross Boisvert at the end of June, I want to take a few minutes to reflect on all the positive things we have accomplished.

- 1. Long Term Divisional Affiliation Agreement with PSIA-AASI National:** This agreement solidified our relationship with the national association and provided us with long term stability to service the membership.
- 2. National Governance Task Force:** Working as a member of this task force allowed us to take a broader view of our governance model across the country and improve the model so that each division was better represented on a National level.
- 3. National CEO Search Committee:** It was an honor to work on this small committee that was tasked with searching for and vetting potential candidates for consideration. This hire was one of the most important decisions our organization has ever made and I could not be happier with the outcome.
- 4. 2014 Ed and Program Summit:** My term started off with assembling a group of our educational leaders throughout the division to look at our educational offerings in order to enhance our core products. That effort produced 28 potential ideas of which we have implemented or attempted 18 over the past three years.
- 5. 2017 Eastern Focus Group:** In an effort to continue moving the needle to meet the needs of our members, we held a invita-

tional focus group meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> of this year (see the cover story of this SnowPro issue) to take a deeper look into areas that we could improve upon. This focus group meeting included rank & file members, educational leaders, professional staff as well as volunteer leaders. The ideas and perspective that were shared during this meeting were extremely valuable and I am confident that the membership will benefit from this meeting.

The above efforts were certainly positive for our division but there remain a number of challenges facing us and there is still much to do. We are seeing downward trends in our event attendance, member retention as well as new member recruitment. These issues were explored in detail during our focus meeting and we came up with more than 20 new ideas to address these key areas of concern. The Eastern Board of Directors will be discussing these concepts in depth during the June meeting and I expect many fresh ideas to be rolled out for the 2017-18 season. Rest assured, your leadership is fully aware of the challenges that face us and we are committed to improving the organization and continuously adding value to your membership.

Speaking of our Eastern Board, I wanted to thank Brian Smith, Jack Jordan and Wendy Frank for their many years of service on our Board that wrapped up on March 31. They have collectively volunteered countless hours and organization is better because of all their efforts. I also wanted to congratulate Tom Butler, our new National PSIA-AASI Board Rep, as well as Joan Heaton and Charlie Knopp who will be joining our Eastern Board and representing Region 6. In addition, with Wendy's retirement Dick Fox is now the new Region 5 Director.

In closing, I wanted to assure you that you are in good hands as Ross Boisvert, who has served as my Vice President the past three years and is now our President elect. I am confident he will serve as a great leader and spokesperson for the Eastern Division over the next few years. Thanks again for all your support over the past three years and I look forward to seeing you on the hill!

Editor's Note: Thank YOU Eric Jordan for your incredible dedication of time, energy and efforts on behalf of PSIA-AASI at both the divisional and national level! <<



**SNOW**



**Volume 43, Number 4**

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*The official publication of the Professional Ski Instructors of America-Eastern Education Foundation*

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Submission of articles, photos or other items for publication is invited. Articles are not to exceed about 1000 words. Receipt of submissions will be confirmed to the writer. Upcoming deadlines are published in each issue of *SnowPro*. Material should be sent to "SnowPro Editor" at: psia-e@psia-e.org as an MS Word document attachment.

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## executive tracks

MICHAEL J. MENDRICK,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Event Attendance Bounces Back; Online Courses Make Big Gains

### Positive member ratings of events & clinicians exceeds 95%

After a historically poor winter season in 2015-16, Eastern members responded by returning to events in 2016-17 to the tune of 5,279 registrations for 390 events. That was up 693 registrations (15.1%) over 2015-16 with 4,586 registrations. Alpine event registrations were up a very healthy 25.8% while snowboard events showed even stronger results with a whopping 70.7% year-to-year increase (from 438 registrations to 748 registrations – the best snowboard attendance year since 2010-11). Nordic (down 7.4%), Children's (down 21.1%) and Adaptive (down 43.2%) all fell in event registrations vs. 2015-16.

While overall event attendance was up significantly vs. 2015-16, it was still below budget projections of 5,600 registrations and below the 2011-2015 five-year average of 5,795. Part of the reason for falling event attendance is that compared to 2007 the Eastern Division has 1,191 fewer members in the “education update pool” (that is, required to take events) due to a large segment of Eastern Life members (343) and Inactive category members (626) we have in 2017 vs. 2007. Essentially, the number of members not needing to take events has more than doubled since 2007. As such, 5,279 event registrations for 9,253 active members in the education update pool is actually a strong showing in relative terms.

One very bright spot in Eastern programming is the number of members signing up for online “e-learning” courses. In 2014-15 this option did not exist. In 2015-16, 126 members registered for e-learning courses. This season that nearly doubled to 203 online course registrations and we anticipate that number to grow each year as more courses are offered (three are currently available).

One thing consistent from year to year are the very positive member reviews of the programs and our education staff. I want to personally thank and acknowledge the efforts of our education staff for working so hard to provide you with an excellent clinic experience. I had a chance to enjoy that myself at events a couple of times this year and left impressed and grateful.

### 2016-17 Event Feedback: (Results of 997 returned event evaluations for Eastern events this season)

- 97.2% “strongly agreed” (79.7%) or “agreed” (17.5%) with the statement: “The course met my expectations.”



- 88.1% “strongly agreed (65.3%) or “agreed” (22.8%) with the statement: “The course fee was worth the education I received.”
- 96.8% “strongly agreed” (81.5%) or “agreed” (15.3%) with the statement: “I would recommend this course to other instructors.”
- 99.4% “strongly agreed” (91.5%) or “agreed” (7.9%) that their clinician “Portrayed a professional image and was well prepared.”
- 99.2% “strongly agreed” (92.0%) or “agreed” (7.2%) that their clinician “Appeared enthusiastic and portrayed appropriate conduct.”
- 98.4% “strongly agreed” (90.9%) or “agreed” (7.5%) that their clinician “Created a comfortable atmosphere/learning environment.”
- 98.2% “strongly agreed” (89.4%) or “agreed” (8.8%) that their clinician “Administered an effective and relevant event.”

Here are a few (actual, unedited) comments shared on the evaluations as well:

“I loved how ideas about progressions/learning and teaching and riding styles were passed around. Everyone was involved giving feedback and opinions. Very informational and inspiring. Makes me want to be L2 & 3!”

“I was very challenged during the event in the best ways possible. I walk away with a better understanding of riding, teaching, and have set new goals. It also boosted my confidence in a few areas.”

“AASI Events are real worthwhile. Really fun.”

“The course was challenging and rewarding, and gave me some great knowledge and activities to use in my future lessons. I'm very proud to have completed this course successfully.”

The quality of our programming and clinicians remains very high and well-appreciated. We will be working hard during the “planning season” over the next few months to follow up on the discussions of the Eastern Focus Group and implement new ideas to help more of you to come out and play (and learn) next season! ☞

## adaptive airtime

### Change Is In the Air

By Kathy Chandler  
Adaptive Advisor

Each spring, as the snow melts, it is time for us to reflect on the season just passed. It was a good one by all accounts. The Adaptive Board of Examiners compiles comments heard throughout the season and has started planning for the next one. Each year we work hard to put together educational events that might spark interest to our members, both adaptive instructors and others who want to learn more about teaching people with differences or teaching people using specialized equipment. In addition, we try to schedule certification exams that span the different regions in the east. It's always a challenge to accommodate all the resorts who would like to host events, and make it as easy as possible for our members to attend. Each year we track all the clinics and exams, the number of attendees, as well as the events that did not run. The number of events that did not run is growing and we are doing more in-house clinics and exams. What does this mean?

Something has to change related to how we are scheduling educational clinics and exams for certification. This is a topic that we, as a Board, are looking at and will discuss at our spring meeting. What once was the norm, like our last exam of the season always being a big exam, is no longer the case. In addition, we originally started doing in-house clinics and exams to try to grow our adaptive membership. That was not the result, yet the number of in-house events grows each year. This may be because of the convenience and cost for the instructors; many of whom are volunteers who want to, or are encouraged to, attend. Alternatively, it may allow participants to work on and learn more about topics that are specific to their program's needs.

I am not sure what the schedule will look like for next season, but stay tuned. If you have any ideas or comments, please take a moment and email or text me. I can be reached at [kcability@comcast.net](mailto:kcability@comcast.net) or my cell is 603-387-6088. Or, contact any member of the Adaptive Board of Examiners and share your thoughts. We are here and want to create educational events and certification that will work for you. ☺

## national report

By Tom Butler, Eastern Rep on the PSIA-AASI National Board



Dear Eastern Division Members,

My name is Tom Butler and I am grateful to be serving our Eastern Board of Directors and all of you as the east's representative to the national board of directors.

The role of a national BOD member as I interpret it is to take a wider-angle view and look at the entire landscape of the industry as to how PSIA-AASI works and grows with other organizations for the benefit of our divisions and by extension, our members. In contrast, during my 4 terms on the Eastern BOD, I always tried to focus on the members of my distinct region with the larger entity in the background. It has been exciting to see and feel the changes that are starting to happen nationally and I feel that my time away from the PSIA-E BOD has been beneficial for it has afforded me the opportunity to gain a wider perspective of our organization and industry.

New growth in connections with people, businesses and ideas will help move us along with the larger industry around us. Questions like; "What relationships and partnerships can be discovered and fostered to help us all grow as an industry?" and "What innovative thinking can be harnessed to help shape our organization into one that reflects evolving national and even global trends?" are being asked and looked at critically.

I believe in the past that we have tried to will the industry to fit into the concept and framework of what PSIA-AASI is and has historically offered. It's an exciting and necessary thought to flip it around and consider how PSIA-AASI can adapt to the rapid change that our industry is experiencing. Not to get too cosmic on you all, but if we take the example of gravity and light, we know that light will bend and be shaped by gravity. In the past it felt like PSIA-AASI behaved as if it were gravity and with the right mix of products and advertising, the industry would bend our way.

We realize that this is not true and that the beam of light (read: ski and snowboard industry) is whizzing by us with barely a ripple in its travel. If we as a national organization dare to think big and differently, and can be honest with ourselves, without the shackles of ego or dogma around our discussions, we can switch positions and view things from the perspective of the beam of light and travel with it and bend whichever way the industry is pulled.

The Eastern Division is facing some serious issues. A decreasing Eastern membership, (acutely with 16-29 year olds) along with an overall decrease in new members and a steady decline in event attendance, are some of the challenges that we face. Another issue is how we work with all ski areas and attempt to further train and promote all instructors to our area and resort guests. I don't pretend to have all the answers but thankfully, one of us isn't nearly as smart as all of us so I welcome any ideas and suggestions that you may have.

Have a great summer and I look forward to serving you and continuing the fine work that Bill Beerman, Steve Kling, Ross Boisvert and others have done in this capacity.

Your humble servant,

Tom ☺

### Education Foundation Donors

The PSIA-E Education Foundation expresses its sincere appreciation to the following members who have contributed at least \$50.00 to the Foundation. Since no dues or program fees go to the EF, contributions are the primary source of support for the Foundation and its scholarships.

Thomas O. Andrews  
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*Thank you!*

## Board Approves Eastern Dues for 2017-18

By Michael J. Mendrick, Executive Director

In compliance with PSIA-E Bylaws (Section 5.1), on February 15 the Eastern Division Board of Directors approved the following dues structure for the fiscal year July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018.

- Regular dues remains at \$72; age range adjusted from 40-74 to 30-69.
- Senior discount (\$60) age reduced five years from age 75 to age 70 and older.
- Young adult discount (\$50) remains unchanged for 16-29.
- Inactive category (\$50 up to age 29; \$60 for age 30 and older).

Dues notices are sent out in late May for the coming year and to avoid late fees we encourage you to pay on time (by July 1) if possible. FYI – we continue to push for our National PSIA-AASI member database to have the capability for ACH incremental payments throughout a year (monthly or quarterly) so that members that want a more flexible and accommodating payment option will be able to opt in to have automatic checking debits (e.g. \$11.50/month vs. \$139 per year). We will keep you posted on progress and hope this is available to you by the 2018-19 membership year. ☞

## Premier Events for 2017 – 2018 Season!

Additional information including cost, lodging discounts, deadline dates, etc. will be posted in late summer

- 2017 Jumping Event at Lake Placid, NY – September 20-21, 2017
- 2017 Fall Indoor Courses: Location and Dates are TBD
- 2017 Snowsports School Director's Seminar at Mount Snow, VT on December 4-6, 2017 (Note: Event begins at 7:00pm on Monday, December 4th with keynote speaker)
- 2017 Master's Academy and Snow Pro Jam at Killington, VT the week of December 11-15, 2017
- 2017 Mini Academy at Killington, VT on December 16-17, 2017
- 2017 Children's Academy: Location and Dates are TBD ☞

## Things to Know Before Leaving for "College"

By Troy Walsh, PSIA-E Alpine Examiner

If you have attended the Level 2 College, you know it is an intense week of coaching and evaluation. Some attendees seem to move through the evaluation with ease, while it may take longer for others. Having been fortunate to work most of the Level 2 College events, below I share some thoughts on how to maximize your three days of coaching with some of the best coaches in the business.

**1) Preparation:** Come to the event with more than a couple days of skiing under your belt. In the past I have seen many candidates make partial changes when under the guidance of their coach; however, when it comes time to perform in front of another examiner, the old movement patterns come back, making it difficult to attain the Level 2 standard. Some mileage prior to the event helps the coaching to *stick* and the new movement patterns to be incorporated into your skiing.

In addition, go to the PSIA-E website and download the Exam Guide. With the Exam Guide, and a trainer or mentor, ski through most of the tasks at home. You should have a pretty good idea on how to perform these activities before you attend the College.

**2) Equipment/Boots:** Bring tried and true equipment to the event. You want to maximize the time you have with your coach prior to the exam. Small changes to your equipment aren't a big deal, but some candidates show-up with new equipment and/or a new boot set-up and making major adjustments, just days prior to an exam, can be nerve-racking. I encourage everyone to visit a boot fitter/alignment specialist well in advance of an exam.

As for skis, the skis you select you should feel comfortable skiing in most terrain. Remember, we will be skiing in some bumps and maybe new snow if Mother Nature allows. With so many ski choices out there it can be overwhelming. If I had to choose a single ski, to tackle a variety of snow conditions, I would choose a ski that is 75-85mm underfoot and a radius of mid to upper teens (14-19 meter radius).

**3) Fitness Level:** Five days of skiing can be demanding and draining, be prepared. Many candidates decide to go after certification in the spring when we feel strong and all the movements are autonomous. Take a moment this spring to run through some of the Level 2 tasks and record how you *feel* doing them. Comment on how the skis are moving through the snow and what you feel your body parts doing. Develop a plan that will keep these sensations alive, and in focus, through the summer months. Work on flexibility and strength along the way. With practice your movements should become more fluid and less cognitive, this allows you to focus more on the sensation of ski/snow interaction and less on the specific physical movements. I have seen, when snow surfaces change dramatically, that candidates focus too heavily on what the body is doing and not what the skis are doing. This can cause a loss of confidence and performance suffers. Do yourself a favor, trust your body and feel what the skis are doing.

**4) Knowledge Base:** When you come to this event you should have an understanding of the Skiing Fundamentals and how they apply to any task. The reason for this is simple, we score to the Alpine Certification National Standard. What we observe in any given performance is the presence, or lack thereof, of the fundamentals. Also, much of the feedback given at the end of the evaluation will comment directly on the fundamentals. All of the fundamentals are in the PSIA-E Exam Guide, on the exam score card, and in the Alpine Certification National Standard.

**5) Reflection:** At the end of each day of coaching, take some time and reflect on the day's performance. What activities were done and how did each activity affect your performance? If, at any time, you struggle to understand what you need to do in a given activity please, please speak with your coach. There are times we do a certain activity to help you develop a sensation and it may be different than the way we actually ski. What is important, is that we keep the ski performance and make sure the body image is what we need to show.

No matter what, please know that we are going to work our tails off coaching your performance to the Level 2 Standard. Some candidates have to come back, and some will be able to move on to the teaching portion; but, everyone that goes through this process comes out better than when they came in. As always, please talk with your evaluators so you know exactly what they observed and what you need to do to become a more skillful skier and instructor. ☞

## Congratulations New Alpine Education Staff Members

**A** special congratulations to the newest members of the PSIA-E Alpine Examiner Training Squad (ETS)!

Matt Dembinski from Jack Frost, PA

Peter Novom from Okemo, VT

Mike Logsdon from Liberty Mountain, PA

The ETS tryout is for current or former Development Team Members wishing to further their career as an Eastern Alpine Examiner. These new team members were selected in a demanding and competitive tryout at Mount Snow in January 2017. ETS Team members are required to attend an annual training event and to understudy members of the Education Staff at various events and exams throughout the season. We wish them luck in their new role on the Eastern Education Staff! <<

## Back by Popular Demand – 2017 Jumping Event Returns to Lake Placid!

**T**he annual jumping event has returned to the Lake Placid Jumping Facility on Wednesday, September 20 and Thursday, September 21! This is an excellent event to begin your freestyle career. It allows you to learn how to become more aware of your body in the air, and what movements affect you during approach, take-off, performing the maneuver, and landing. The basic and simplest maneuvers will be experienced before adding more difficult ones.

This clinic is open to members and non-members, over age 16, in any discipline. Check out the Lake Placid Jump Event Facebook page for photos and videos of previous jumping events. Grab some friends and join us for a fun and educational clinic for any ability level! <<

## To Everything There is a Season. “Turn! Turn! Turn!”<sup>1</sup>

*By Don Haringa, Director of Education and Programs  
PSIA-AASI Eastern Division*

**A**nother winter has come and gone. The cargo boxes that adorned many of our cars have been vanquished to the rafters in the garage, and bicycle and kayak racks have taken their place. Our skis and snowboards have been waxed and placed in their summer storage spaces, and the journeys through the Facebook postings are becoming more summer oriented, although there are still a few posts that feature the amazing skiing and riding that still exists in parts of the Rockies.

Looking back on this past winter I would have to say that Mother Nature was a bit fickle. Parts of the east had a very good year, with mostly cold temps and a decent amount of snowfall, while the resorts south of I-80 struggled with a warmer than normal winter, and a lot of rain. The resorts near me (Northern Catskills and Southern Adirondacks) seemed to be in recovery mode for much of the season. The snowmaking crews would get the hills in great shape and then on Wednesday or Thursday it would rain. On Friday, the temps would drop and the snowmaking would resume. By Saturday, the resorts would have done their magic and the skiing was remarkably good. Sunday's were awesome, and then the next bout of rain would appear in the forecast. A warmer than normal February forced the closure of some of the eastern resorts, but the resorts that were able to stay open were treated to a fantastic March. Our members who waited until the Spring Rally at Sugarbush to get in their PSIA credits were presented with one of the best weekends of the year. Lots of new snow on Saturday and an incredible bluebird day of spring skiing on Sunday!

To all of our members who took PSIA-AASI courses this year, thank you! To all of you who are planning to take PSIA-AASI courses in the coming winter, that's awesome, and we can't wait to ski or ride with you! For those of you who took exams this year, congratulations! Whether you attained a new level, a part of a level, passed a module or two, or discovered a chink in your armor, I hope you left with a new trick for your bag and a yearning to learn more. No matter the outcome, I salute you for getting out there in front of your peers and discovering where you stand relative to the National Standards. If you're planning to challenge the National Standards next year, good on ya, and I hope you've already started to prepare for the exam!

In the Albany office we are still gathering the numbers and reading the reviews from the winter, but we are also in the midst of planning for next season. On Saturday April 29<sup>th</sup>, a group of our members, who represented many of our division's various demographics, met with a group of our divisional employees, board members and national staff to formulate plans for the future that will hopefully excite you, challenge you, fulfill your needs, and keep you engaged with PSIA-AASI. The division and national representatives included members of the Eastern Division Education Staff, selected Board members, many staff people from Member Services and Education and Programs, as well as our Eastern Executive Director Michael Mendrick, and our National CEO Nick Herrin. Many great ideas came out of the meeting and many will be implemented this coming winter! Details of those ideas will be presented to you in the Fall SnowPro. You may even get a sneak peak in the Summer SnowPro, so be sure to check that out.

As I reflect on the season, I am once again reminded and saddened by an event that occurred in early April. As I was riding up a chairlift in Breckenridge, CO, my phone whistled, alerting me to a text. This was one of those moments in life where something changes and you never forget where you were when you heard the news. The text was from Michael Mendrick. It informed me of the loss of one of our Eastern Division Examiners – Rick Metcalf. Rick had suffered a heart attack shortly after a morning hockey game. Unfortunately, Rick didn't survive.

Rick was one of the greats. He was a great skier. He was a great teacher and a caring coach. He was always happy and ready to join in a conversation about skiing, and he was a person you wanted to listen to. In his role as the current coach of the Eastern Divisional Clinic Leaders, Rick was a mentor to many of our present and future examiners. With his great smile and easy laugh, he always made you feel as though he truly cared about helping you to be the best you could be. I was fortunate to be with Rick at several recent Ed Staff exams and to witness how his insightful thoughts and questions brought out the best in many of the exam candidates. He was an integral part of the Eastern Division Ed Staff Coaches group. Whether or not you ever had the opportunity to ski with him, it is likely that his skiing knowledge and wisdom has, or will, play a part in your ski teaching development. I hope you had a chance to meet and to ski with, or to talk with Rick. He made us all a little better. We miss you, Rick.

“Turn! Turn! Turn!”<sup>1</sup> <<

<sup>1</sup> Pete Seeger. Turn! Turn! Turn! 1954

## What Have You Done For Me Lately?

By *Walter Jaeger, Membership & Promotions Committee Chairperson*

**W**hat have you done for me lately? We do not usually ask this question; except of course when it's time to renew our membership! From a belief in open communication, however, I would like to offer the following observations for answers to this perennial question:

1. PSIA-E launched a consumer website (MakeWinterMoreFun.com) providing an opportunity for each member to have a free listing under their resort or a premium listing with an expanded profile. Many hours went into creating the site and a new opportunity for our members. So far the success of the web site is building. Its presence will continue to grow every year and with that, we hope, will be a robust growth and participation from members. We should remember this endeavor was wholly a result of feedback from our responses in the annual membership survey.
2. Through continuing efforts by PSIA-E, and in partnership with National, matching funds were available to PSIA-E for branding, member awareness promotional efforts. PSIA-E for the last several years has been actively promoting the PSIA-E logo, PSIA certification value and the tag: "More Fun Starts Here". Many of the Eastern resorts fly flags with the "More Fun Starts Here" statement. Business cards are available to members with the caption as well.
3. Our PSIA-E online presence was strengthened: we revamped the PSIA-E website, increased the breadth of our Facebook page, and implemented the new PSIA-E consumer web site, [www.makewintermorefun.com](http://www.makewintermorefun.com).
4. PSIA-E started a program of outreach to smaller snow sports schools through the Eastern Tech Team. The goal is to visit and host special introductory educational experiences for underserved resorts. As this is its first year, the reach has been small, but next year will see the benefit of a program fully running and implemented.
5. PSIA-E completed the first Culture Survey of Eastern Schools to better understand what comprises a successful PSIA-E school. The findings reported by schools with a high PSIA-E member participation included: consistent and regularly scheduled training opportunities, compensation for successful exams, pay increases with certification levels, and benefits such as family season passes and significant resort discounts (20 – 40%).
6. First, last and always in any list is PSIA-E's continuing efforts to strengthen the event opportunities for members. PSIA-E has introduced new e-learning classes for members and is committed to quickly expanding this particular class format.
7. Other ongoing efforts include: Board of Examiner (BOE) evaluations, LII College Program, Eastern Training Academy, and more scholarships for members etc.

The question "What have you done for me lately?" cuts two ways. It is always incumbent on the organization to answer positively and forthrightly. President John Kennedy, in his inaugural address in 1961, famously stated: "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." As a member, what have you done with PSIA-E this year? It's a fair question. After all, you have great expectations of your organization. How do you test those expectations? Do you participate in events when an update is required; or are you committed to becoming a better teacher and skillful skier/rider, making it known by taking advantage of the many and varied clinics available through PSIA-E?

Are you sharing your success with other members on Facebook within your school and with your friends? When you experience a satori of growth in your skiing/riding are you conveying to others its impact and thrill? Do you try and communicate what it means to participate in a professional organization that offers so many benefits? At the beginning of the season I took an opportunity to ski with Bob Shostek in a clinic; I experienced one of the best learning days of the year! You can bet I did my best to convey the concepts, so expertly provided to me, to others in my snowsports school.

Do you communicate with your Region Representatives? Do you reach out and offer suggestions on needs, creative programs, or just thoughts on the learning process within PSIA-E? PSIA-E will only be as great as each of us intend it to become. If we are doing something good, exceptionally well, let PSIA-E know. Is the organization failing, how so? Feedback - your feedback, positive and negative, creative and critical, is crucial to PSIA-E's ongoing success.

Imagine what we can offer next year.

Walter Jaeger - [Wjaeger1@mac.com](mailto:Wjaeger1@mac.com) ☞

## Master Teacher Program 2016-17 Graduates

**S**pecial congratulations goes out to the following members who successfully completed the Master Teacher Program this season. The Master Teacher Program provides instructors with an in-depth educational background in a variety of different specialty areas. In order to receive Master Teacher, the instructor must complete 20 days of coursework and pass an online exam for each course. Coursework includes indoor lectures as well as on-snow application. Congratulations!

**Elfi Wieand**, Kissing Bridge, Special Populations Accreditation

**Henri Rivers**, Windham Mountain, Sports Science Accreditation

**Daniel MacPhail**, Wachusett Mountain, Sports Science Accreditation

Members who wish to broaden their knowledge base, may be interested in the new Advanced Educator Program. This certificate based program consists of many of the same courses and upon completion of all required courses, will satisfy the Alpine Level III Teaching portion of the certification process. Learn more about this new offering at [www.psia-e.org](http://www.psia-e.org). ☞

## Backcountry Accreditation Awarded

**C**ongratulations goes out to John Friends from Berkshire East for completing all three Backcountry Accreditation courses. These include Snow Sense and Planning, Collecting Data, and Putting it All Together. John successfully completed the last course this season. Congratulations John!

Members have the opportunity to complete several Accreditation Courses over a six year period to earn an Accreditation Certificate in Sports Science, Special Populations, Backcountry or Coaching Advanced Skiing and Racing. Learn more about these programs at [www.psia-e.org](http://www.psia-e.org). ☞

## around the regions

### Thank you to retiring Board members from Regions 5 & 6!



Holimont (NY) Snowsports School Director and Region 5 Director Wendy Frank proudly displays her service award for her contributions to the Eastern Board of Directors from 2014-2017. Executive Director Michael Mendrick surprised Wendy with the award during the Region 5 Membership Meeting at Holimont on Monday, February 27.



Region 6 Representative Jack Jordan of Belleayre Mountain, NY is surrounded by friends and colleagues while accepting his Board of Directors Service Award for his two terms on the Eastern Board from 2011-2017. Executive Director Michael Mendrick and Director of Education Don Haringa made the trip down to Belleayre to present Jack his award.



Brian Smith did not run for reelection as the Region 6 Director since his season is now focused on Aspen, Colorado and with his duties as a National Alpine Team member (seen here with daughter Teagan).

Thank you Wendy, Jack and Brian for your years of energy, ideas and efforts on behalf of our members! <<

## Region 1 Report (ME & NH)

By Peter Holland

Region 1 Representative

Here we are in the middle of April looking back on a pretty darn good ski season, which began in the East with the World Cup at Killington, and will finish for some with the National Academy at Snowbird. Good snow to begin, then some warm weather and rain, followed by lots more snow. Way better than last season. I hope you all had a good one.

Some of you attended our regional meetings at Waterville in January and Sunday River the end of March. The challenges that lay ahead for PSIA are many and your input at these meetings help us to better understand what the membership is looking for. I think we will be doing some more soul searching as we move into summer with a newly created focus group.

That being said, here are some issues that need to be addressed, and in some cases resolved, sooner than later.

One, is monthly credit card debiting for dues. This proposal has been batted around for some time now and it really needs to get done. Enough already. Another consideration is to move the dues due-date back to October 15 when we all start to think about skiing versus in June when we are thinking of watersports, biking, hiking etc. June is when college students are just beginning summer jobs and paying PSIA dues in full is not a priority.

Two, is that we need to do more to attract new members and retain the ones we have. The \$99 Level 1 Exam/Membership special was reasonably successful and needs to be continued. I am also an advocate of using the Ed Staff to visit ski schools to ski with perspective new members. The Ed Staff are the best salespeople PSIA has and we need to use them to attract new members.

Three, the issue as to whether CS1 and CS2 will continue to be prerequisites for Level 2 and Level 3 Certification Exams needs some resolution.

Four, attendance at events continues to decline with a lot of theories being tossed around as to why. We need to find out why and move in a direction that will be more popular with the membership. Much of our revenue is dependent on events.

Five, we are not attracting the younger generation. Off-piste skiing and the park and pipe are more attractive to many younger skiers and riders than getting involved in teaching. How do we reverse this trend or at least take advantage of it?

Six, a closer relationship between USSA and PSIA may be of benefit to both organizations. The potential needs to be explored soon.

My intention in mentioning these issues is not to leave you with a sour taste in your mouth for the summer; but, to provide you with a realistic picture of some of the challenges that lay in front of us. I can assure you the Eastern Board is working on resolving these but the Eastern Division is just one

of nine divisions and some of the above items are National issues.

Just a reminder that scholarship applications are due October 7. I know that is a long way off but the deadline will be here quicker than you think. I urge you to take advantage of this program. I was lucky enough to participate on the selection committee last year and there were many, many scholarships given out to help people with exam preps, exams, and workshop clinics. Don't think you won't get one, you never know until you apply.

I hope you all have a great summer. I look forward to seeing you all again in the fall. If, in the meantime, you have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact either Peter Howard of myself through the Eastern Office. Thanks, Peter Holland, Region One Representative.

## Region 2 Report (VT)

By Ted Fleischer

Region 2 Director

Whoa. What a season! I think, even as a stand-alone it would stand out, but when compared to LAST season, during the 'winter-that-shall-not-be-named,' it was really outstanding. Our whole region had great conditions. As I write this, at the beginning of May, there are still resorts spinning lifts. Killington and others are still reaping the benefits. Jay was 9" shy of 500" for the year and STILL has a glade open! Our neighbors in the rest of the state fared just as well.

World Cup at Killington, Masters Academy and Pro Jam at Mt. Snow, AASI Trees Camp at Jay and Off-Piste at Smuggs, and Spring Rally at Sugarbush, were just a few of the phenomenal events that were held in our region this season. Numbers were up from last season but still not quite as high as historical markers. We had great interest and participation in early-season Level I Exams. I'm hopeful that offering and trend continues. It's a great value for new members.

The Region 2 Annual Membership Meeting was held at Jay Peak this season. Members at the meeting, from that neck of the woods, expressed appreciation that they could easily attend instead of driving south as in years past. We will try to spread this meeting around from year-to-year for this reason. We discussed a variety of topics while enjoying some traditional Jay Peak fare – Poutine. (If you don't know what that is, you'll have to come up for a visit.) Among the topics discussed were the plan to get back to a dues structure more similar to two years ago and also our work toward a recurring billing cycle, instead of one big dues bill in June. Members were generally happy to see these changes on the horizon.

On the last Saturday of April, I attended a special focus group with many other members of our Division and Region. We discussed current challenges to our association such as event expense,

hurdles for new and existing members, and our organization's relevance to our industry. This was an open forum that was moderated by our President Eric Jordan and our Executive Director Michael Mendrick. These guys did a great job keeping everyone on task and making sure that no idea went unheard in a very open, accepting forum. We had a great sampling of members who were there to express their opinions and views. The group included: new members, decades long members, youth, experience, ski, snowboard, tele, adaptive, instructors, management, and more. The group came up with some excellent action items and we should keep our eyes open for some new programs and policies. Also, look for suggestions on how WE can ALL help contribute and move our organization forward. More on this will follow.

In the meantime, have a great off-season (if you're already done) and enjoy some off-time. I'm exchanging my tuning kit for a tackle box for a while. I look forward to your continued support, suggestions, and participation. YOU are what makes our organization great. Thank-You!

Ted Fleischer – Region 2 Director

Katherine MacLauchlan – Region 2 Representative

## Region 3 Report (MA, CT & RI)

By David Beckwith  
Region 3 Director

I hope you all had a fabulous winter!

### Regional Meeting Notes

Our Regional meeting was held at Mohawk Mt. in Cornwall, CT on January 28. The meeting was well attended and there were two new members who were attending their first regional meeting. Our thanks go out to the new Snowsports Director at Mohawk, Andy Raybould for hosting the meeting.

We started the meeting with the Eastern Division update. This covered our membership trends and demographics, concerns, issues and needs. We also reviewed the financial state of PSIA-E.

The topic of the dues increase, the new structure, and how effective the change has been was discussed. However, prior to diving into that subject, we spent time on what the Eastern Board of Directors (BOD) did to NOT have a dues increase since 2010 and, in particular, American Snowsports Education Association's (ASEA), our National organization's, role in the increases that members have seen. This gave the attendees some valuable insight into what went into the entire decision making process and why it was necessary. Membership is waiting to see how effective the change was in both retaining and recruiting members. We assured them this information would be covered at the spring BOD meeting.

Another topic was what is happening in ASEA at

the national level. We certainly expressed that Nick Herrin is the right person to lead the organization into the future. In addition, we touched on some of the initiatives on the horizon. The new partnership with Volkswagen was well received, as well as, the new pins for CS1 and CS2.

Recognizing the value of PSIA/AASI instructors, at the resort level, was a topic that attendees brought up and discussed at length. We informed the group that PSIA does see this as a key issue and initiatives will be coming to improve the recognition of our value.

When it came time to open it up to questions there were no negative questions. Several comments were made thanking the organization for looking at, and reducing, operating costs and the actions the BOD has taken to keep ahead of our challenges.

We also shared the National report with the attendees. There was lots of lively conversation and many good thoughts were exchanged.

### Other Region News

We have also started some communication with the Connecticut Ski Council (CSC) as an opportunity to bring in new members at a registered level. CSC members are active skiers and riders, and many want to improve their skills. We are in the earliest stages with this promotion.

Many of you may have heard of the passing of Rick Metcalf. Rick was a longtime member of the Ed Staff, DCL coach, and member of Region 3. I'm sure many of you have had the privilege to ski with Rick over the years and will remember his excellent coaching, great smile, sense of humor, and his love of skiing. He will certainly be missed. Our deepest condolences go out to his family.

Both Dave Welch and I are always interested in hearing from you so feel free to contact us at the following email addresses:

Dave Beckwith Sr. (Regional Director)  
davelee26@sbcglobal.net

Dave Welch (Regional Representative)  
dbwelch317@att.net

Have a wonderful summer! Dave Beckwith

## Region 4 Report (PA, NJ)

By Bob Shostek, Region 4 Director  
& Steve Martin, Region 4 Representative

Greetings fellow Region 4 (R4) members. Hopefully everyone is enjoying spring weather and anticipating the upcoming summer months for your non-snow sports activities.

Well, I guess I jinxed us here in R4 when I stated in my winter *SnowPro* report about "WOW" what a weather difference a year makes. I was referring to the great start we had in the region and in the east with the weather, snow conditions, and

most important, business. Unfortunately, mid-February to mid-March R4 experienced a drastic change in weather patterns. We went from some banner temperatures and snow conditions to the complete opposite. Warm fronts, heavy, steady rain played havoc on our region's resorts. In fact, most of the Eastern Division experienced these weeks of abnormal temperatures and conditions. The southern part of our Region and Region 7 were hit the hardest. Many of those resorts tried to recover, but could not, resulting in another early ending season.

Again, this year we send A BIG THANK YOU to areas that hosted our Eastern events despite the challenging weather and conditions! Special THANKS go out to all of the areas who bailed us out at the last minute by hosting events that otherwise may have been cancelled. Also, to our Region 4 members, HATS OFF to you for understanding the challenges of running events in adverse weather and challenging conditions. Altering schedules, jobs, and family obligations due to area event changes demonstrates your dedication and professionalism!

The Eastern Division has just completed another year of Level II & Level III exams with the "banking" system in place. Again, I'm pleased to report that all members participating in this new system are very pleased with the system. Although the success rate of achieving the National Standard in all three skiing or teaching modules in one event has not changed much with the new system, the percentage of members attaining one or two of the modules in the skiing or teaching phases is rapidly growing with success. If we look at banking one or two of the modules/phases, compared to the past system without banking, the success rate for attaining the National Standard at both levels has increased dramatically. So, the banking system is working for Eastern members on the certification track toward achieving the National Standards at a given level.

Congratulations to ALL our region's members for attaining a single module, a skiing or teaching portion, or your Level 1, 2 or 3 certification! A special congratulations to Jon Lyons from Elk Mountain Snowsports School. At age 74, Jon earned his Alpine L3. Jon attends numerous events including Pro Jam. It took Jon several attempts to attain both

next **»»**



Jon Lyons earns his Alpine LIII at age 74!

parts, but the hard work paid off and he completed the teaching portion at Sugarbush this spring. Also, a BIG congratulation to Michael Logsdon, Region 4 Instructor from Ski Liberty for his success attaining a position on the Examiner Training Squad (ETS). The tryout was held earlier this season.

This season the division implemented some new educational events that were well received by our members. These events are part of the new "Advanced Educator Program" (AEP) started this year; however, you do not have to become involved in the AEP track to participate in these events. A few of the events I have received rave reviews on were: Movement Analysis (MA) 101, MA 201, Practical Teaching, and Coaching High End Skiing. The *SnowPro* fall 2016 issue, page 6, has a great article about the new AEP details. Some great positive feedback about the new events came in from participants regarding the curriculum and material provided. Our Education and Programs team and Steering committee will be taking all the feedback (issues, concerns, questions, suggestions) about these new educational events into account when updating the material for next season. On a personal note, it was superb to see so much enthusiasm come to life with these new educational opportunities. It was great to listen to the feedback and suggestions to enhance these events for the future. A primary focus for our June Board of Directors meeting will be how to reverse the trend of less event participation. We would appreciate any insights or ideas you may want to contribute to the discussion.

On a last note, in my calculations we have approximately 200+- days until we are on snow sliding and riding again. NOW is the time to 'START' getting yourself ready for the season! Got your bike dusted off? Running and hiking shoes ready? Paddle board waxed? Skate board tuned? Dues paid-up at the gym? Websites picked out for educational material? Video sites lined-up to watch? Or whatever it takes to get your body/mind in skiing/riding shape? START time should be THIS WEEK!

As always contact me or Steve Martin with any concerns, issues, suggestions or questions about the Region or Division.

Have a great spring!

Bob Shostek & Steve Martin

## Region 5 Report (Western NY)

By Dick Fox

Region 5 Director

Happy spring everyone! Some of us are still out there following the melting snow, closing down ski resorts, or "earning our turns" on our own private patches of snow. Others have started their gar-

dens, are hiking for ramps and sassafras, or maybe (so sad) mowing lawns. It was a good season ... strange, but good.

### News from Holiday Valley

Bob Armour from Holiday Valley reports that the 2016-17 season was one of surprises, most of them complements of Mother Nature. She delighted us with many days of deep powder, but also tricked us with more than our share of warmups. Overall it was a good season at Holiday Valley. Thanks to 230 inches of natural snow, supplemented by five feet of manmade snow from our awesome automated snowmaking system, we had 116 days of skiing and riding.

Several fun events took place throughout the year including the Penguin Paddle fundraiser for the Lounsbury Adaptive Ski Program, the Winter Carnival, the Pond Skimming Spring Party and the old school Mogul Competition on the last day on the Chute. The final day of the season, on April 2, was celebrated with a party on the sunny Yodeler deck complete with a cookout, beer specials and live music with Ellicottville's favorite, Joe Wagner band. Those who were looking forward to spring were also able to golf nine holes on the last day of the season.

We held three PSIA-AASI clinics and two in-house Level 1 exams this season. In March, five of our ski instructors attained their Alpine Level 1 certification and sixteen of our snowboard instructors attained their Snowboard Level 1 certification at the in-house exams.

### News from Greek Peak

From the eastern side of the Region (Greek Peak), Joe Hazard notes that you might think Jekyll and Hyde were managing our weather throughout the past season. Not that it wasn't a great season, we just had to be 'flexible' daily. Our season was a full thirty days longer than last year, we totaled over 14,000 lessons and saw increases in every segment of our lesson programs.

Also, our entire instructor staff took the organizational lead to embrace necessary changes to improve efficiencies and help us better manage the expenses of running a winter resort in this climate. Instructors, at all levels of experience, responded to a multitude of requests to support roles in rental, running lifts, assisting in mountain operations, and still providing the highest levels of customer service as ski and snowboard instructors. At times, we might have an instructor fulfill up to three different roles during any given day. It wasn't always easy, but it was splendid to witness the shared 'ownership' of responsibilities, helping our management team deliver on programs to reduce overhead while still providing an outstanding experience for our guests.

Additionally, one of the highlights to our season was the Spartan Race. Held in March, on one of the coldest Saturdays of the season, Greek Peak hosted over 4000 Spartan competitors in the first winter event in the US. Drawing more than six thousand people to Greek Peak to enjoy the event, every employee was 'on call' for whatever was needed. Snowsports took the lead to insure visitors saw the best of Greek Peak when they arrived and help set the stage for a hugely successful event.

In reflection, we have seen the evolution of the instructor's role to a true customer service representative, demonstrating that the professionalism, experience, and motivation of the individual is crucial to the overall success of the organization. It might be simple to state that providing great instruction is our primary role; but, as we saw this season, our customers value the experienced snowsports instructor who is truly committed to insuring that every guest is having the 'best time of their lives' when they visit Greek Peak.

### News from Kissing Bridge

Debbie Goslin from Kissing Bridge is excited that beginning with the 2017-2018 season, all SnowSports lessons and programs will be held out of the Central Area. A new Children's Center is planned as well as expanded Beginner Terrain! All great news for our guests and for the SnowSports School! She will now have one school (versus a school at the Central and North Areas) which will make life easier as she can move instructors around where needed most. Debbie is staying in her current position to help with the transition as well as designing and developing the Children's Center and new Programs. Very exciting!

### News from HoliMont

And, finally, some HoliMont SnowSports news from Wendy Frank. After a much better season than last year, the slopes at HoliMont had full coverage and many days of excellent deep powder. We probably could have remained open until the end of April with the amount of snow on the hills, but golf and spring gardens were calling. Hopefully, we will have our chairlift on our fantastic new beginner area by Sunset slope for next season. Between HoliMont and Holiday Valley, we had a great five days of clinics with PSIA-E examiners, and we welcomed many new members into our organization. Thanks to all Region Five Directors for making my position as Director easier by submitting your information on your areas for the SnowPro. I enjoyed my time on the Board and look forward to continued participation in all things PSIA-E.

### Region 5 Membership Meeting

Below is Wendy's report of the Region 5 Membership meeting, held at HoliMont on February 27, 2017. There were 77 members in attendance.

1. Meeting opened at 4:30 with welcome, introductions and handouts. Wendy Frank welcomed Michael Mendrick, PSIA-E Executive Director who gave the update on PSIA-E which was well received and followed by a lively question and answer period.

2. Wendy Frank was presented with a plaque recognizing her years of service as Region Five Director.

3. Summary of Questionnaire:

a) One aspect of PSIA-E that you enjoy:

The majority of attendees said they really enjoy the chance for self-improvement through the variety of clinics offered, and the interaction with our well-trained, professional clinicians. Also, the camaraderie and chance to share information with other instructors is high on their list of reasons to belong to our organization.

b) One Aspect of PSIA-E that you feel needs improvement:

Many instructors feel there needs to be more of an outreach to the younger instructors to get them into our organization, and keep them interested. Some felt we need more realistic and consistent guidelines for success at Level 2 and 3 exams.

c) One aspect of PSIA/AASI National that you enjoy:

Most attendees are encouraged by the new leadership under Nick Herrin. They really enjoy the opportunities to ski with National Team members. Also, they like 32 Degrees and its teaching tips.

d) Any aspect of PSIA/AASI that you feel needs improvement:

The primary concern is consistency and standardization of Level 2 and Level 3 exams. Many felt that some standards are subjective, and need to be more black and white. They also feel the need for National to work on getting and keeping the younger generation. Lastly, they do not feel the website is easy to navigate, but they do appreciate the variety of educational materials that are available online.

It was an excellent meeting, and Wendy Frank and I thank all participants for taking the time to attend.

### Thanks to Wendy

We are going to miss Wendy Frank as our Regional Director. She has chosen to point her boundless enthusiasm toward other activities. (I was going to say "more adult oriented" but that could be taken the wrong way.) In any case, she has passed along some of her tricks in collecting newsy information for Region 5, for which I am very

appreciative. I am certain we will still see a lot of Wendy during the winter and I hope that she, and HoliMont, continue to host some of the best events, and certainly the best regional meetings in Region 5 with free beer, pizza, wings and lots of laughs.

Well done, Wendy, and thanks for all of your ideas, input and enthusiasm.

### In Closing

I hope that everyone has a great summer. Full of all the things you do. Stay in touch and pass along thoughts and ideas.

The Wise Old Fox  
dfox@wmf-inc.com

## Region 6 (Eastern NY)

By Brian Smith  
Past Region 6 Director

Thank you to the many people who have communicated and shared ideas, comments and concerns with me throughout my time on the board of directors. Although we have accomplished a lot as a board during this time, there is much still to do.

I would like to welcome and congratulate Joan Heaton and Charlie Knop to the PSIA-E Board of Directors. I am confident that both Joan and Charlie will have the ability to effectively represent region 6 and the division moving forward. I encourage all members of region 6 to reach out to both Joan and Charlie and communicate your thoughts.

All of us who have been long time members have a responsibility to identify and foster younger instructors who show promise and interest in what PSIA is all about. You don't have to look far they are in your schools already, just look around. Find a special younger member and give them a helping hand to get started on the same journey that has been so rewarding for you and me. It's about the long haul, creating a lifetime experience being a member of PSIA.

I have learned a lot about our association while on the board. There have been many board meetings, conference calls and special events over the years that allowed me to meet and work with some great and dedicated fellow board members, for that I am grateful! I will see you all in my travels. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Brian C. Smith

## Region 6 Report (Eastern NY)

By Jack Jordan  
Past Region 6 Representative

I would like to congratulate Joan Heaton and Charlie Knopp on their election victory and new

role as representatives of Region 6 on the PSIA/ASSI-E Board of Directors. I have full confidence they will handle the job with professionalism and in the best interests of those they were elected to represent. To the other members of the Board of Directors, I would like to express a sincere gratitude for their friendship and guidance during the last six years I was a member of the Board. It was a very rewarding experience. Keep up the good work and thank you for all you do to make our organization the best it can be. Jack Jordan

## Region 7 Report (States south of NJ & PA)

By Paul Crenshaw  
Region 7 Representative

The 2016-2017 Season was another marginal season for the south. Most resorts in Region 7 were open fewer days than their average and at Massanutten we never managed to open the entire mountain. At least in Virginia the weather temps did a lot of up and downs. At Massanutten we have started an interesting project this winter. A water line is being run from our water treatment plant to our snow making reservoir, a distance of about three miles. When needed, we will take "reclaimed water," which is presently sent to a river after being processed, and pump it to our resort to make snow. This water has an AAAA rating. Since Massanutten has always been "water poor" this should make a big difference when we have temperatures sufficiently cold to make snow.

In other matters: Snowshoe Resort, in Region 7, has been purchased by Aspen Skiing Company as part of the purchase of Intrawest. Canaan Valley Resort, through Warren Wick, Director, initiated a new Children's Multi-Week Learning Program for local residents and it has met with success. Warren hopes to continue the program next year.

We regret to inform the many members who have supported and awaited with excitement the latest issue of the Peak Performance Gazette, that the current issue (April 2017) will be its last. The Gazette has been published and edited by Dr. Witold Kosmala, a LIII Alpine Coach and Trainer (violinist and mathematics professor). Through 75 issues (9 years) the magazine offered wonderful tips, ideas, and well thought-out articles about good skiing. All issues are archived and available for viewing at [www.peakperformancegazette.com](http://www.peakperformancegazette.com). We will miss the Peak Performance Gazette along with its inspiration for many southern skiers and teachers! Thank you Dr. Witold Kosmala!!! ☀☀

## Regions 5 & 6 Board Election Results

**B**elow are the results of the Region 5 and 6 Board elections as of close of business on Friday, March 10 (voting deadline). The voting period began with an e-mail notification to eligible Region 5 & 6 voters on Tuesday, January 17.

Congratulations to returning Region 5 incumbent Dick Fox and new Region 6 Board members Joan Heaton and Charlie Knopp.

A big thank you to Jack Jordan for his six years of service on the Board as a Region 6 Representative. Also thank you to Region 6 member Darryl Leggieri for his interest in serving.

Also thank you and congratulations to retiring Board members Wendy Frank (former Region 5 Director) and Brian Smith (former Region 5 Director) for their years of service! ☺☺



Dick Fox



Joan Heaton



Charlie Knopp

### Region 5 Election Results

Dick Fox – New Region 5 Director – 77 votes

Joe Hazard – New Region 5 Rep (per Board post-election ratification)

### Region 6 Election Results

Joan Heaton – New Region 6 Director – 119 votes

Charlie Knopp – New Region 6 Rep (Education Staff Employee) – 116 votes

Darryl Leggieri – 87 votes

Jack Jordan – 70 votes

Life IS  
BETTER  
on the  
Slopes

## In Memoriam



Courtney Metcalf enjoying a day on the slopes with her father Rick earlier this season.



Alpine BOE member Rick Metcalf

### Richard A. "Rick" Metcalf

Sandy Pomer, Rick's sister, shared the following obituary with us. She added: "It is a very sad time for our family as his departure was so sudden and he was loved dearly by all of us. Thanks to all in your organization that came to Rick's wake and all the kind things that were said about him. It meant a lot to us to know that he was highly respected in his field."

Richard A. "Rick" Metcalf, age 58, of Acton, project manager for BVH Integrated Services of Newton, member of Wamesit Masonic Lodge A.F. & A.M., examiner for Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Division, passed away at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Boston on Wednesday, April 12, 2017.

Rick has been an active ski instructor since the mid 70's. He began his skiing career at Nashoba Valley in Westford, MA where he joined his parents, Noel and Jean, as an instructor. Rick went on to become a Staff Trainer and eventually became a PSIA-e Examiner. Rick also was a Staff Trainer at Mount Sunapee in Newbury, NH, and most recently at Wachusett Mountain, in Princeton, MA. His passion for skiing, and love of sharing it with others, will be dearly missed. Family dinner discussions about skiing will not be the same without his depth of knowledge added.

Born in Malden on December 26, 1958, he was the son of Jean P. (Nelson) Metcalf of Tewksbury and the late Noel R. Metcalf. Rick was a graduate of Northeastern University with a BS in Mechanical Engineering.

He was the beloved husband of Patricia E. (Weimann) Metcalf. Devoted father of Richard F. Metcalf and his wife Kimberly of Ayer, and Courtney L. Metcalf of Lowell. Doting grandfather of Zander Quinn Metcalf. Rick is the brother of Kenneth W. Metcalf and his wife Mary of Franklinton, NC and Sandra J. Pomer of Groveland. He also leaves numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, and extended family members.

Rick was a mentor to his students, an inspiration to PSIA members, and a dear friend to all of his fellow PSIA-e staff, many of whom share their thoughts below:

"I don't ever remember a time when Rick wasn't smiling, laughing or enjoying the moment. Perhaps that is because, when you peel away all the extra stuff we think about and concern ourselves with regarding our profession, in the end, it is all about skiing, making connections and the love of a sport. Godspeed, Rick Metcalf. You will not be forgotten". Matt Boyd

"The years I've spent coaching with, and learning from, Rick are priceless. Gone but not forgotten." Bill Beerman

"My thoughts and prayers go out to the Metcalf family. Rick was a

great guy, a fantastic ski teacher, and a pro's pro in the examiner profession. He cared about people and just being around him was a good time. He and I made the PSIA Development Team together and came up through the ranks. He was always a good wing man. You will be missed my friend and never forgotten." Pete Weber

"I knew Rick through work with PSIA-e. He had such an infectious smile, was so kind, and he sure could ski! My condolences go out to his family and friends." Maureen Harrington Drummey

"I am so deeply saddened by the loss of one of my closest friends. I've known Rick for more than twenty years and every day we spent together was truly a pleasure. We would spend time together at every event discussing engineering and skiing. We had so much in common. Our shared education in engineering and both of us living in Massachusetts connected us in a very special way being part of the PSIA educational staff. My heart is saddened by his loss and I send my sincere condolences to his family." Steve Cook

"Rick was my coach for my first term on the PSIA-E DCL team. He was always working to make the team better and stronger. Skiing and training with him was always a ton of fun. Rick also gave me great advice concerning my skiing career. He was a great skier and coach but an even better person. Rick touched a lot of lives and he will be sorely missed by everyone. My sincerest condolences to the entire Metcalf family." Art Menichini

"I had the opportunity to work with Rick as part of the PSIA Ed Staff. His passion for the sport of skiing and his passion for coaching will be remembered by many. He will be missed." Lisa Gouwens

**Editor's Note:** We were all very saddened and shocked by the sudden passing of Alpine BOE member Rick Metcalf. We want to recognize and pay tribute to him and I wanted to let you know what we are doing.

The office made a donation to Ability Plus Adaptive Sports as requested by the family.

We will put any donations from ed staff or members in Rick's name into the existing Ed Staff scholarship fund of the EF and specifically earmark those donations to support and subsidize the fees for members submitting applications for Dev Team tryouts in the future. Since Rick was an ed staff coach for Division Clinic Leaders this would seem like an appropriate and appreciated gesture.

We will start an award in Rick's name – like the "Rick Metcalf Rising Star" award for aspiring education staff members. The Alpine Steering Committee will determine the details. This will keep Rick's name and memory alive within the sport and organization he loved.

### Daniel S. Wheeler

Daniel "Dan" S. Wheeler, 66, of Gilford, NH passed away on March 15, 2017. Dan, a New Hampshire native, was born in Plymouth. He earned his bachelor's degree at the University of New Hampshire. Dan owned the Native Sun Studio and was an accomplished glass artisan.

Dan, an avid skier, coached for the Gunstock Ski Club for more than 20 years. He also coached Gilford Youth Sports for many years. Dan enjoyed hiking, snorkeling, scuba diving, listening to music, paddle boarding, skiing and spending time with his grandchildren.

Dan is survived by his wife of 38 years, Irene (Dilkes) Wheeler; his daughters, Sarah Ham and Erin Wheeler; two grandchildren, Emma and JJ Ham; brothers, sisters and many nieces and nephews.

For those who wish, the family suggests memorial contributions be made to the Gunstock Ski Club where the family has established a scholarship fund in Dan's name.

Excerpt from "Daniel S. Wheeler Obituary." *The Laconia Daily Sun* 28 Mar. 2017: p. 22.

### Dave Wales

David Allan Wales, age 57, of Montpelier, passed away suddenly Thursday morning March 9, 2017. Born March 8, 1960, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is survived by his wife and best friend, Martha. They celebrated their 28th wedding anniversary on Jan. 14, 2017. Dave is also survived by as his mother, Gertrude "Tolly" Swanlund, sisters Pat and Kris, brother Steve, niece Shelby and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Dave was a professional gardener working for "Mother Garden" and running his own gardening business, Walrus Works. He created beautiful gardens for appreciative clients who each became a friend, and he happily filled his own land with vegetable gardens and flowering plants. Dave's positive attitude and keen sense of humor was a joy to his friends and strangers alike.

Born into a skiing family, he was raised on skis at Afton Alps in Minnesota. He celebrated the beginning of winter on the summer solstice each year. Dave was a professional ski instructor for 40 years, Level 3 certified in Alpine and Telemark disciplines. Early in his career, he worked for Otto Hollaus Snowsports Academy, a traveling ski school, in addition to working at Afton Alps for many years.

In 1996, he and Martha moved to Vermont and Dave joined the Sugarbush ski school. Dave's love of skiing was legendary. One of his most illustrative sayings was "Ski Like the River." Those words embodied how he skied, and how he wanted everyone to ski. He made lessons loads of fun while keeping everyone safe. He just loved to slide on snow, and to free ski with friends old and new. Everyone is encouraged to think of Dave when skiing Jester at Sugarbush, his favorite run. His locker at Sugarbush will be retired, because no one can take his place.

According to Terry Barbour, Sugarbush Ski and Ride School Director, Dave passed away while putting on his ski boots. A service was held on April 9<sup>th</sup> at Sugarbush, after the PSIA Spring Rally. Terry submitted this excerpt from "David A. Wales Obituary." *The Barre Montpelier Times Argus* 16 Mar 2017.



Dave Wales

### Eric H. Styffe Jr.

Eric H. Styffe Jr., 70, of North Conway, passed away peacefully on Feb. 15, 2017, after a brief illness.

Eric was born in Worcester, Mass., on June 4, 1946, the son of Eric and Clemence (Foster) Styffe. He grew up in Portland, where he graduated from Deering High School in 1965. He later earned a culinary degree from the Southern Maine Vocational Institute.

Eric had a lifelong passion for skiing. Eric was one of the early free-style skiers at Waterville Valley in the early 1970s. He moved to the Mount Washington Valley in 1972, where he worked as a ski instructor at Mount Cranmore for more than 40 years. He was one of the original founders of the Mountain Meisters and also proudly led the Golden Gliders. Eric was a member of the Professional Ski Instructors of America, and he was inducted into Cranmore's Snowsports Hall of Fame in 2012.

When not skiing and spending time with his family, Eric enjoyed golfing and was a member of the North Conway Country Club.

Eric is survived by his children Shannon McCarter and Eric Styffe, his granddaughter Moira McCarter, and several sisters, cousins, nieces and a nephew.

For those who wish, contributions in Eric's name may be made to the Ian C. Meserve Scholarship Fund in Center Conway, NH.

Richard Dawson (40yr member) submitted this excerpt from "Eric H. Styffe Jr. Obituary." *Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram* 24 Feb. 2017 ☞

## » Eastern Focus Group, continued from cover

of concerns, issues and ideas shared. The afternoon began with a breakout into two smaller groups charged with coming up with new ideas to address issues expressed in the Eastern Mini-Survey results (see sidebar article) and focused on improving results in two key areas:

- **Member Education, Events, Certification**  
(Moderator: Don Haringa)
  - Participants: Eric Jordan, Melissa Skinner, Pete Howard, Matt Boyd, Brian Donovan, Augie Young, Dave Capron, Alicia Dewire, Josh Reitz, Katie Brinton, Casey Dolin.
- **Membership Recruitment, Retention, Recognition & Reward**  
(Moderator: Michael Mendrick)
  - Participants: Nick Herrin, Ross Boisvert, Matt Charles, Ted Fleischer, Jodi Bedson, Doug Daniels, Erik Barnes, Tom Butler, Krista DiCaprio, Darryl Leggieri, John Witherspoon.

All attendees then got back together to hear the small group presentations of ideas and assign priorities to those ideas with the greatest potential for implementation.

The group made priority assignments as follows:

- A – Develop for implementation
- B – Explore for potential implementation
- C – Consider for later development

### Member Education, Events, Certification Ideas & Opportunities

1. Name matters (rebadge events to spur curiosity and interest) (A)
2. More “open focus” events such as Spring Rally (arrive and select) (A)
3. “Order your custom event” (Get a group together, name your dates and location for set group fee) (A)
4. Streamline certification path information online (A)
5. Expand e-learning options & partner with other divisions and National (A)
6. Recommend future events to members based on recent attendance (A)
7. Make events more activity and less talk (A)
8. Offer a “National Team Week” in mid-season and open it to all cert levels (A)
9. Create an “Invitational Event” for high achievers in specialized areas (B)
10. Create a “Member-Guest” style event with a member and non-member invitee (B)
11. Offer short-term semi-spontaneous events (e.g. Powder Clinic after a big storm) (B)
12. Consider flexibility in choosing pre-reqs for L 2 and 3 vs. CS1 and 2. (A)

### Membership Recruitment & Retention Ideas & Opportunities

1. Build stronger and more direct relationships with resort management. (A)
2. Develop a “ground up” marketing initiative via a reward program for members that promote the organization via postings of content, photos and video on social media. (B)
3. Develop a member mentor program that would reward current members for sponsoring and monitoring the attraction and renewal of new members (e.g. \$\$ in ed bucks per renewal year up to 5) (B)
4. Create a Freestyle Team to attract a younger demographic (A)
5. Create a Level 1 package with dues, L I exam and follow-up “fun” event the following season. (B)
6. Focus on having more Level 1 exam experiences as in-house programs. (B)
7. Consider eliminating the requirement for school affiliation to become Level 1. (A)
8. “LifeBridge” membership to provide lower cost and lower benefit membership to those that need to be inactive for up to 10 years but want to return (vs. dropping out). (C)
9. Continue to push for ACH incremental dues payment plan option as soon as possible. (A)
10. Offer more flexible combinations to satisfy educational update requirements (e.g. 1-day plus online) (A)
11. Utilize the Alpine Eastern Tech Team for more aggressive outreach to PSIA-AASI underpopulated Snowsports schools via a combination of events (on-hill, fall training, hiring clinics, etc.). (A)

**Executive Summary:** I believe the program was a success on many levels. All EFG attendees participated openly, candidly and frequently. We had ample time for exploring issues and discussing as small groups as well as with all attendees. We were able to identify more than 20 potential ideas (many with implementation potential for 2017-18) that should help us improve our results in the three goal areas of Member Recruitment, Member Retention and Event Attendance.

Many thanks to all attendees for their time, input and energy on April 29! ☞

## » Eastern Mini-Survey, continued from cover

### In your opinion, what are the biggest perception challenges facing PSIA-AASI?

- That the membership is aging out and young people cannot afford it.
- That the cost and time obligations are high relative to benefit of being a member.
- That the public does not know who we are and believes all instructors in a uniform are the same.
- That the industry and management does not recognize or reward certified instructors enough vs. non-certified staff.
- That there is inconsistency in education, exams and examiners.
- That there is too little flexibility in how to ski and teach (must do it the “PSIA way”)
- That is it too technical and not enough fun.
- That the organization is a “money grab” and charges for everything

### What is your biggest challenge to remaining a member of PSIA-AASI in the years ahead?

- Age/fitness (physical limitations)
- Time and cost factors and obligations vs. value of membership and certification.
- Lifestyle challenges (family, college loans, work).
- None – I’m in it for the long run.

### What would you like to see PSIA-AASI doing more of for the members in terms of programming, events, benefits and services?

- More free online materials (training manuals)
- More local and weekend events
- Exposure to and interaction with National Teams and Eastern Tech Team
- Make it easier and less expensive to join and get involved
- More online e-learning courses and video
- More programming geared toward younger members (freestyle, backcountry)
- More brand promotion to skiing and riding public

The Eastern Focus Group spent part of the day reviewing and discussing the survey results and used this feedback as guidance in developing new ideas and opportunities for members (see adjacent cover story). Thank you to all that took the time to share their comments and insight with us! ☞

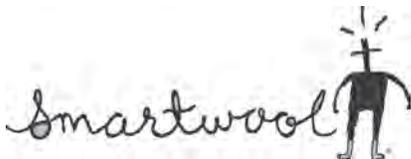
*Skiing is a dance,  
and the mountain  
always leads.*

# 2016/2017 Season Sponsors

Thank you to all of our great sponsors for their support throughout the entire 2016-2017 season!



## Sponsors



# Thank you!

## kids, kids, kids

### My CS1 Experience

By Ingrid Talens Verachtert  
AASI Level 2, CS1

**A**t the beginning of this winter season, while going thru the beautiful *SKI Magazine*, I was trying to make up my mind about my own education and bigger PSIA-AASI goals for this season. I work as a Snowboard instructor at Blue Mountain Ski Resort, PA, where I truly enjoy teaching any student, whether they are newbies to the sport, young, old, or die-hard snowboarders. Like any resort, the majority of guests taking lessons are children. So I decided to go after a Children's Specialist (CS1) accreditation.

During my old job as a Physical Education teacher, I worked a lot with children in many different school settings, but I still wasn't totally satisfied with my bag of tricks regarding snowboard lessons. The fact that I received a PSIA/AASI scholarship, made me eager to go and get my CS1.

The process of working toward a certification is so worthwhile. You really dive deeper into the subject and there is so much to learn! A certification process brings you closer to your colleagues and friends. You work together, share information, and most of all you have fun. With everybody in the same mindset, we came up with new fun games, new ways to present information in a kid friendly way, and we put the theory out of the CS workbook into practice on snow.

The exam I took, was early February in Bear Creek, PA. Like every exam, there is a healthy stress feeling going around. These feelings bring everybody into a ready stance to perform to their highest level. It was a pleasure to work, and share ideas, with our course conductor, Advanced Children's Educator (ACE Team) member, Tina Buckley. Her enthusiasm is contagious and before we all knew it the group was laughing together, sharing great kid-friendly ideas, and we were stealing each other's great ideas to show at our home mountains.

The fact we all worked together as a group made the whole exam stress feeling go away quickly. We had all worked hard to get ready for this event, so all we had to do was show our love for the sport and how to share it with our younger guests.

Back at Blue Mountain, I felt better prepared to take on kid lessons. The smiles on their faces when they feel the first straight glide or when they make their first drop into the mini-pipe is priceless. Thanks to the Children's Specialist accreditation I know that I am on the right track!

Thanks for the scholarship. I am a certified Children's Specialist now, and have a taste for more! ☞

### Is Now Too Soon for Next Season?

By Harold Smith, *Alpine Examiner*  
ACE Team Member  
Attitash, NH

**A**re you thinking you might ski next season? Of course you'll ski next season! Outside of big life changes, it's a silly question for us ski instructors. But, are there things you'd like to do differently with your skiing? Maybe it's something as general as improving in the bumps, dealing with changing snow conditions, joining a race league, or simply skiing 'better'. More specifically, what about some of that feedback you got over the past season from colleagues, trainers or examiners? Sometimes that can be pretty direct: "Turn your legs more than your upper body" or "Engage the edge of your new outside ski before the fall line."

Too often, we think we need the new season to start, and to see some snow, before we can work on changing our skiing; however, a large portion of the adjustments needed to change our skiing involve moving our bodies in new or more efficient ways. Some efficiency can come from general improvements in our athleticism; we ski better when our muscles aren't overtired. For that reason, the aim of the hiking, biking and running crowd is to improve, or retain, general athleticism. There is also great value in identifying more ski-specific training activities. For this, I've found it fruitful to take advantage of the expertise within the Physical Therapy (PT) community.

Most of us only meet a PT in a re-hab situation. After just such a re-hab, for an MCL sprain a few years ago, my PT and I started exploring skier *pre-hab* in the hopes of avoiding more re-hab. More recently, I joined a local training group run by Hilary McCloy. Hilary is a Doctor of Physical Therapy at Mountain Center PT in Conway, NH. Much more interestingly, she was a NorAm and Europa Cup skier with the US Ski Team through 2003. For the past few years, she's run a two-month fall training block specifically for skiers. From that, we've identified and emphasized three activity realms applicable to on-snow ski movements: rotational flexibility of the femur in the hip socket, downward-directed flexing movements of the leg joints (eccentric muscle use), and single leg dynamic balance (see the Spring 2017 issue of *32 Degrees*, pp. 68-70).

Notably these three realms directly correlate with three of the five Fundamentals of Skiing from the Alpine Technical Manual: leg rotation separate from the upper body, regulating pressure magnitude through ski/snow interaction, and directing pressure toward the outside ski. Additionally, in my experience with certification candidates, the two most common inefficiencies are a lack of independent leg rotation and, secondarily, poorly coordinated flexing and extension movements necessary to manage pressure variations through the arc of the turn. Addressing these inefficiencies off snow, by focusing minutely on efficient leg movements and core stability, can be valuable training to incorporate more accuracy and efficiency into your skiing.

Whether or not you add pre-season training to your ski life, there's always the first day of the new season and the first few turns to reacquaint with sliding downhill. This time of rediscovering dynamic balance is a great opportunity to make adjustments to your skiing. In fact, early season might be the best time to ski with a knowledgeable trainer or even better, one of us from the PSIA Ed Staff! Who better to offer on-point movement assessment and tie it into specific on-snow activities?

Although it is too early to sign-up for an early-season PSIA event, let me at least put the idea into your head. If you're looking to make changes to your skiing during the next season, consider using a December, or early January, event to start your skiing off in the right direction. If you, and maybe a few colleagues, can take five days in December, consider joining us for ProJam or Masters Academy. If that's too big of a time commitment, maybe tune-up your skiing, as well as your approach to coaching kids, by joining us for the 2- or 3-day Kids' Academy, also in December. You can get your ski legs underneath yourself and get ready for all those Christmas week ski lessons with some new kids' activities.

While next season doesn't start right now, maybe it should start before there's snow on the ground. Look into using the expertise of the PT community to setup a personal, or better, a group training regimen focused on developing specific movements related to the ski fundamentals. Also, you and a group of ski friends might look to improve your overall athleticism with some pre-season hiking, running or biking. And, finally, if you want to be sure to get your skiing off to a great start, consider using an early season PSIA event to set yourself up with a personalized ski program for an epic 2017-18 ski season. ☞

## xx-ploring

### 2016-17 Nordic Highlights

By Mickey Stone

PSIA-E Nordic Coordinator

It certainly was the season of five winters that decided to visit us in between winter thaws. Fortunately every time it warmed up, we soon received a major snowstorm shortly afterward. Nor'easters hit Maine and the southern tier of New England. Vermont received some snow from them, but our major accumulations came mostly from our standard old "Yankee clippers" moving from northwest to southeast. This year we had several storms over fourteen inches, with two over two feet, and one over forty-two inches. Have you ever tried cross-country skiing in snow up above your waist? Not an easy task.



Sit skis, sliders and frames for Maine Adaptive Cross Country event.

With this winter being on and off again, like I mentioned in over five cycles, it played havoc with event conditions and numbers throughout the season. We had a solid year on the Cross Country side servicing around seventy-five members. Double-digit numbers for the Craftsbury Early Season Primer event; the Jackson NH and Garrett College mid-season events; and the late season events at Trapp's in VT. We also did a special in-house Level I Adaptive clinic for Maine Adaptive this season. We utilized different models of sit skis and sliders to frame the teaching scenarios this group of people bring to a lesson.

Training this season was at the Trapp Family Lodge. We had great snow conditions and lots of diverse trails open. The new *Cross Country Technical Manual* was reviewed and utilized as the technical basis for our clinics this season. This brought a great framework and structure to our sometimes-complicated maneuvers and timing of

the cross country discipline. By utilizing the Cross Country Technical Model which is made up of the Sports Performance Triangle and surrounded by the Fundamental Cross Country Movements we became much more organized for members to understand, teach and analyze cross country skiing. Special kudos to the Nordic team of Randy French, Mike Innes, Hal Westwood, Julie West, Mark Lacek and Dale Rodgers for putting together a short YouTube video of how the Cross Country Technical Manual works. Check it out: <https://youtu.be/1CUGgF791TM>.



Telemark Groups at Spring Rally

In the Telemark arena we had a slightly down year in participation, but not that far off our average mark. We serviced little over one hundred and fifty participants this season. We had fifteen events with only one to five participants. That is very difficult to manage cost effectively, as it is hard to cover expenses with such a low ratio. As a result, we ran some of the events and canceled seven events this season. Pro-Jam, Exam Prep, Bumps and Off Piste events, Windham (Thanks Joan Heaton, now PSIA-E Board Rep.) Tele Exams, Spring Fling and the Spring Rally were all in double-digit numbers and had strong showings.



Mike Beagan on top of Mt Mansfield (4353 ft) looking down Hourglass

dozen participants to hike to the top of the 'Chin' on Mount Mansfield, the tallest mountain in Vermont (4353 ft), in order to ski down Hourglass and the famous Hell Brook gorge. Couple that with an adventure over the backside of Spruce Peak to Smuggler's Notch Resort and back over to Stowe; and top it all off with the ever popular Norwegian Party below the 'Kitchen Table'. The result - one of the finest off-piste telemark clinics in the United States! Big kudos to Mike Beagan, Bruce Hennessey, Matt Charles, and Ali Pirnar for their expert guiding and snow finding abilities.

Telemark training at Killington, in January, served up some fresh snow and great conditions. The groups solidified their accuracy and commonalities in our skiing and teaching tasks for events and exams. We also worked on our movement analysis model in the advanced zone for our off-piste and bump events. Like the Cross Country group we verbalized and intertwined the Telemark Skiing Fundamentals into our tasks, movement analysis, and teaching activities for the event topics we had this season.



Telemark Staff Training at Killington

After participating in the Fall Conference at A-Basin, it was imperative we utilize the new manual, Telemark Fundamentals, and sync-up our Level I/II/III scorecards for exams. The staff did a great job embracing this information, which is not new, but has been differently worded and delivered from year's past. I also would like to thank the Tele and Nordic Staff for their flexibility, professionalism, and the ability to work on the fly according to conditions and topics that did not always seem to align properly this season.

Congratulations to the four Cross Country members who obtained Level II and III certification at the Trapp Family Lodge. The Telemark certification was held at Killington Vermont and had seventeen participants. The successful candidates' names are listed in the Exam Listing section of this SnowPro. Special congratulations goes out to Adam Kline of Timberline, West Virginia, as a new Divisional Clinic Leader (DCL). Welcome aboard, Adam.



Dave Wales, in spirit, at the Top of Mt Mansfield for Spring Fling.

Dave Wales a Level III Alpine and Telemark instructor passed away on March 9, 2017. Dave was a forty-plus year certified ski instructor at Sugarbush VT. The man coined the term "Ski Like the River" and he did. Dave had a dry satirical sense of humor. Technical but simple, he was first on the hill everyday M-F for trail check. He could, and did, teach

» continued page 18

## AASI Update

By Brian Donovan  
AASI Advisor

Think you have what it takes to develop a curriculum and training program to raise the quality of education, presentation, and professionalism for AASI events and exams in the Eastern Division? Do you feel you have the experience and knowledge to coach the AASI-E Education Staff to become better clinicians and examiners? Do you lay awake at night thinking about how to continually improve the quality content the AASI-E Education Staff is delivering to our members? If you're reading this nodding along with every question and excited for the opportunity to mold snowboarding education in the east, then read a bit further because we are in search of a new AASI-E Examiner Coach starting in the fall of 2017. Here are the details:

### Job Description:

The AASI Examiner Coach (X Coach) will be a highly experienced and educated snowboard coach and trainer that will aid in the development and implementation of the educational needs of the AASI Board of Examiners (BOE). The ideal candidate for this position will have extensive coaching experi-

ence in training snowboard coaches and examiners at the highest levels in the industry. It is essential the ideal candidate possess:

- relevant experience with AASI National Standards;
- intricate understanding and knowledge of AASI-E exam processes;
- high-level of snowboard technical understanding;
- superb interpersonal communication skills;
- experience delivering on-the-job feedback and developing continuing training plans to meet personal and professional goals;
- ability to perform snowboarding demos appropriate to all ability levels;
- ability to confidently ride all but the most extreme terrain on the east coast.
- The X Coach reports directly to the AASI Advisor and Director of Education and Programs (DOE&P). The X Coach position is a four-year term with a performance review by the DOE&P annually.

### Objective/Benefit:

The AASI Examiner Coach's primary role and responsibility will be to aid in maintaining and improving the quality of events the AASI-E BOE delivers to the membership. The X Coach will assist the DOE&P and AASI Advisor with the development, co-

ordination, and implementation of the AASI-E BOE training. The X Coach will continually monitor an evaluation process and individual training program for each examiner within a set budget.

As a direct benefit to our members, the AASI Examiner Coach will help to ensure our events and exams maintain a high standard, and that we continually improve the consistency and quality of these products within the framework of the AASI National Standards.

### Compensation & Commitment:

It is expected the X Coach will work a minimum of 10 days per year specific to this job. Work as an AASI Examiner or trainer will be paid under a separate contract or agreement.

It will be important for the DOE&P, the AASI Advisor, and the X Coach to continuously partner, evaluate and determine what projects or work can and cannot be done throughout the year.

### Timeline:

All interested parties need to submit a resume, professional letter of intent, and two letters of professional recommendation from within the industry to Brian Donovan at [mrbbrianadonovan@hotmail.com](mailto:mrbbrianadonovan@hotmail.com) by no later than Friday June 9, 2017.

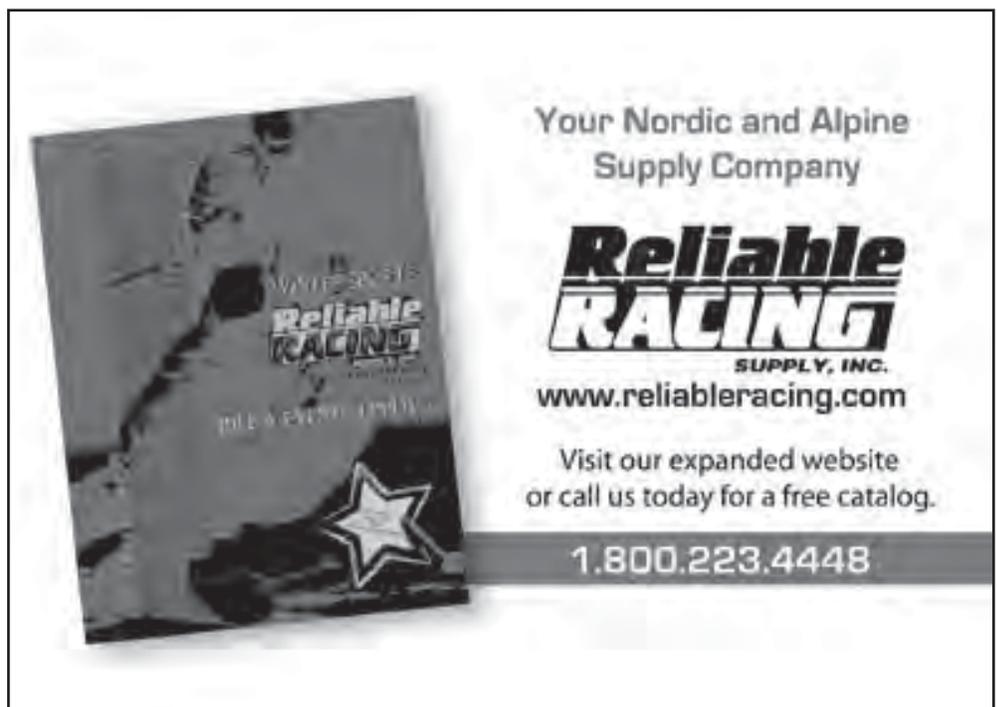
Please feel free to reach out to me with questions. ☞

### » xx-ploring, continued

any level from 3-80 years of age. He was motivating, loved the SnowPros Community blog, and of Scandinavian background. He would always attend Spring Fling to hike to the top of Mansfield to "Ski Like the River" down Hourglass and Hell Brook. Dave and his dedicated wife Martha would always make potato Latkes, a Scandinavian cookie flatbread, for the event. Our hearts, thoughts, memories, and love go out to Martha his loving wife and to Dave's friends.

The Nordic Staff would also like to recognize the family and friends of Rick Metcalf, Divisional Clinic Leader (DCL) Coach and Alpine Examiner. I had the pleasure of being on the DCL squad since the very first exam, and skied and trained with Rick many times. Our thoughts and memories of the times together are sent to his family and close friends.

Enjoy the summer. Take the time to let others know that everyday should be the best day of your life, live it to its fullest! To summer skiing my friends! ☞



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## CONGRATULATIONS!!!

*The winners of the Burton Snowboard Promotions which were held this season are:*

**AASI Level III Member – Joseph Mark Graham**  
from Mount Snow

Joseph attained his AASI Level III certification and also won a Burton CK Nug snowboard.

**AASI Level II Member – Nicholas Block**  
from Blue Hills

Nicholas attained his AASI Level II certification and also won Burton Mission bindings.

**The following new AASI Level I Members won a Burton Kilo Pack backpack!**

*WELCOME to these new members and to all the new AASI Level I members who attained their L1 certification throughout the season!*

### Region 1

**Leif Soederberg from Cannon, NH**  
attained his Level I exam at Pats Peak, NH

### Region 2

**Owen Newton from Killington, VT**  
attained his Level I at an exam held at Okemo, VT

### Region 3

**Dakoda Gallen from Okemo, VT**  
attained her Level I at an exam held at Jiminy Peak, MA

### Region 4

**Hannah Lambert from Spring Mountain, PA**  
attained her Level I at an exam held at Blue Mountain, PA

### Region 5

**Andrew Zenger from Kissing Bridge, NY**  
attained his Level I at an exam held at Kissing Bridge, NY

### Region 6

**Sarah Ponkos from Catamount, MA, NY**  
attained her Level I at an exam held at Hunter, NY

### Region 7

**John Armstrong from Wintergreen, VA**  
attained his Level I at an exam held at Wintergreen, VA

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# Congratulations

Congratulations to the following members who passed their new Level II and Level III certification during this past season! Members who passed their Level I certification are listed on the website at: [www.psia-e.org/new](http://www.psia-e.org/new) - check it out!

## Alpine Level III Certification

Alexander Blossom  
Peter Bregman  
Kathryn E Brinton  
Aleksandr Bunchuk  
Christopher S Carter  
Randolph H. Davis  
Brian C. Eseppi  
Serge Filkin  
Christine L Garbacz  
Eric M Kelley  
Jon C Lyons  
James Marchand, II  
Elizabeth M Matalavage  
Otto G. Matheke, III  
Scott M. Nielsen  
Anthony R Parissi  
John L. Previ  
Douglas Reddy  
Sarah Rogers  
Charles B Roy  
Jonathan J Ryan  
Dr Heath Sharpe  
Elizabeth A Stefany  
Alan Wood  
Bethany G. Yellis

## Alpine Level II Certification

Lauren M Arnold  
Luca Arrigoni  
Keith Barthelmes  
Erin Barton  
Brandon M Bock  
Sandra M. Bohling  
Gerianne M Caruso  
Dino Cattaneo  
Melissa A. Cohen  
Laura M Connors  
Kris F. Constanzer  
Molly E. Convery  
Heather J Cordato  
Elizabeth S. Crouse  
Ralph B. Currey  
Bryan L. Davis

Iseult Devlin  
Elizabeth A. Edwards  
Mr Taylor D Farfour  
Michael R Feulner  
Brian J Fortner  
David Fryzel  
Katherine Y Gallagher  
George Gallate  
Robert Gargano  
Ray Steven Gilmore  
Cristian Dumitru Goina  
Ross L Gregory  
Patrick E Gruber  
Colin Gulley  
Georgia A Hegner  
Adam T Hewes  
Kurt J Hutchison  
Keith W Kaspersen  
Kirk P Kelly  
Matt Klimkosky  
David O Knapp  
Kevin Kulp  
Lauren Evans Lang  
Stephanie G. Langner  
Jon Lantman  
Marc T. Leavitt  
Steve H. Lelito  
Eric J Lichter  
Ronald E Lindholm  
Mark F Linker  
Rich Lucas  
Daniel D MacPhail  
Jean-Philippe Maheu  
Joseph A. Maiorano  
Mr Jamie J. Marcoux  
Christine Martin  
Frank X. Martinez  
Patricia J McMahon  
Christa Miller-Shelley  
Jay Morgan  
Joan Murphy  
Patrick J Newill  
Erroll O'Brien  
Mary P Olmeda

Michael R Ouellette  
Sarah Paisley  
Mary-Ellen Panagrosso  
Vincent Pesce  
Daniel R. Ponsford  
Norella A Roche  
John D Rogers  
Kevin L. Rowe  
Travis V Schoen  
Norman Staunton  
David Su  
Adam J Swank  
Charles S Swart  
Luke A Toritto  
Alexander Washburn  
Kenneth Watson

## Snowboard Level III Certification

Joseph J. Gocek  
Joseph Mark Graham, II  
Ian L. Kendig  
Joseph R. Valley

## Snowboard Level II Certification

Clayton J Ayers  
Nicholas J Block  
Shane P Bryant  
Matthew J. Chandler  
Shannon M DiFede  
Samantha R Dull  
Wyatt G Dyke  
Matthew R. Gibson  
Brittany L. Goodman  
Jacob A Hennessey  
Angelica Horne  
Angela L. Illar  
Kurstun Kelly  
Charissa Klinedinst  
Daniel Robert MacGlashing  
Matthew Markman  
Alexander James McNeish  
Patrick John Morrissey  
Chase Andrew Obarowski

Samuel M Scherck  
Christopher Schneider  
Michael Throckmorton  
Mr Ira J Tillberg  
Zachary T. Tincer  
Ryan G. Tota  
Ingrid Verachtert  
Lacey A Vilandry  
Charles W. Watkinson  
Jackson West  
Eric Winter  
Joshua A Yates

## Telemark Level III Certification

William B Powell  
Charles B. Van Winkle

## Telemark Level II Certification

Roman Ahsanov  
Andrew Garth Bentley  
Joseph Callahan  
Timo Platt  
Marc W Smith  
Stephen P Weglarz, Jr.  
Curtis Witherow

## Cross Country Level III Certification

Lauren M Stagnitti

## Cross Country Level II Certification

Andrew M Gelinias  
Valerio Viti

## Adaptive Level III Certification

Ed Chernosky  
Robert Nagle  
Norman Staunton

## Adaptive Level II Certification

Gary M Cox  
Thomas Farrell  
Elizabeth K Mac Ewan  
Bill Melvin

## your turn

### Coping with Injuries

By Paul Long  
Alpine Level II, CS2  
Mount Snow, VT

If you spend the majority of winters on skis or boards as an instructor, chances are you may have to deal with an injury at some point in your career. Many of us have been there before. The split second before an injury occurs you say to yourself, "This isn't going to end well." If it could have been avoided doesn't matter, it's done and over. Depending on the severity, an injury could take a few days, months, or more to heal fully. In any case, the incident itself is now not as important as the recovery. The mental fatigue is devastating: first anger, then anxiety, then depression, and finally acceptance. At this point, you definitely need to keep a positive attitude. To steal a line from Buddha, "Holding on to anger is like drinking poison and expecting someone else to die." In other words, it's like holding a hot rock in your hands. You're only burning yourself, so why not just drop the rock? Most doctors give you a well organized plan of recovery, including physical therapy, medication and an appropriate healthy diet. It's up to you to implement the recovery plan and stick to it religiously.

Three years ago I was skiing switch, watching my children's group ski down an intermediate trail when my skis suddenly splayed out behind me. I tore the medial meniscus, the medial collateral ligament, and significantly stretched my ACL. The next day I remember looking out the bedroom window at all the snow and breaking down into tears. Fortunately, I decided to forget the past and focus on my recovery plan. At physical therapy I did twice the amount of recommended reps and sets; I ate every food on the planet that would help the healing process; and took the recommended dosage of medication every day. Believing a healthy mind leads to a healthy body, instead of drowning in self pity, I aggressively pursued my recovery plan with a 110% effort. Yes, the process can be long and arduous but having the right attitude makes all the difference in how quickly you recover. Amazingly, I was back on skis in 17 days!

Even during your recovery, most resorts offer alternative working situations so you can continue to earn a paycheck. Many of these positions may help you expand your knowledge and experience in other departments of the resort. In my case, I enjoyed being an ambassador and learned quite a bit working in the rental shop.

Teaching skiing and riding involves inherent risks. Sometimes accidents are avoidable and sometimes they're not. As professionals, we always

center on safety and avoidance. But if you do happen to get injured, your objective, focus, and commitment should always be to execute a well organized recovery plan with a positive attitude. Your director, students, and resort guests depend on it! ☞

### Ellen Post Foster Revisited

By Judi Dixon  
Alpine II, Master Teacher

**T**echnical Skills For Alpine Skiing, by Ellen Post Foster (Turning Point Ski Foundation, 1995) was published more than twenty years ago, but is chock-full of activities you can use today. The suggested drills can build skills or troubleshoot problems you have noted in the movement analysis of your students. Although the book is no longer in publication, you can still get it on Amazon.

In one valuable series of activities; Ellen suggests laying bamboo poles on flat or gentle terrain, in lines (to step over), across the hill (to hop over) or in a wagon wheel shape, to promote and refine diverging or converging step turns. A challenge, however, when I set-up the "course" at my home area, is it significantly reduces the terrain left for beginner instruction and has disoriented novices who must either ski around this area or plow into the poles. Also, as the instructor, I must be out of my skis to constantly reset the poles because they skitter across the snow at the slightest touch. I tried digging a trench in the snow with a garden trowel and then dumping the pole into the trench, but it didn't help much.

One solution, to preserve the visual cues of the activity, without the disruption or maintenance of poles, is to paint the snow. Use water-based spray paint. I've found blue is the best color because it effectively disappears with the next grooming. Spray lines to step or hop over. Spray the wagon wheel or multiple wheels. Anyone, not in your class, can use the area the minute you leave, and there are no safety issues for other skiers. Best of all, there's no maintenance once the lines are on the snow.

Of course, before you set this up, get permission from the appropriate people in your ski school and/or mountain maintenance.

Ellen Post Foster has also written *Skiing and the Art of Carving*, (Turning Point Ski Foundation, 1996), which has many of the same activities. She is a co-author of the current *PSIA Alpine Technical Manual*, and a former member of the PSIA Alpine Team. ☞

## Extolling the Path of PSIA/AASI Certification at Thunder Ridge

By Jeff Black

**T**his fall the Thunder Ridge Snowsports School was quite happy to learn our school had the highest percentage of certified staff – 92% based upon schools that responded to a survey initiated by the Membership & Promotions Committee. The survey conducted by Joan Heaton, Coordinator of the Area Rep Program, to snowsports school directors in the Eastern Division Area Rep Program, was designed to determine what factors help to create a positive PSIA/AASI culture in a snowsports school.

Following the survey, Joan came to Thunder Ridge to talk at length with John (Shep) Shepard and Dave Taylor, our Snowsports School Director and Assistant Director respectively, to ask how we accomplished this very high percentage. She asked why we thought we are so successful in promoting PSIA/AASI's Path to Certification and would we consider sharing what we do in an article for the Snow Pro. The following outlines what we came up with.

At Thunder Ridge there has always been an ongoing continuous education program that Don Taylor, former Snowsports School Director at Thunder Ridge, started over 40 years ago. Today, we pay our instructors to attend a one hour in-house training clinic per week. We offer several clinics per week with varied topics. These offerings are open to anyone on staff and staff members are encouraged to attend as many clinics as possible even though they will be paid for only one clinic per week. We try to make the clinics as fun and interactive as possible while addressing issues deemed worthy of interest and review.

Through our in-house clinic program, we tout the benefits of Certification available through PSIA/AASI and our Eastern Division-PSIA-E/AASI. The benefits extolled by our trainers include:

- experiencing paths to skiing/riding improvement
- experiencing teaching improvement
- creating and sharing great and lasting positive experiences for our clients
- providing information about pro deals on equipment
- realizing opportunities afforded a certified instructor to obtain a job at another area or resort
- offering the chance to become a member of a community that has an absolute passion for winter sports and who love to share that passion

» continued page 22

This section is utilized for the publication of articles from the membership, and we invite your active participation. Content reflects the opinion and knowledge of the writers only, and is not to be interpreted as official PSIA-E information.

Specifically at Thunder Ridge the benefits of certification are:

1. Our pay scale is directly related to the member's PSIA/AASI Level of Certification. Our successful candidates receive an immediate raise in pay the very next day.
2. The exam fee is reimbursed to successful candidates, if they return the next season for a minimum of 20 days.

A final key to our success is that Thunder Ridge has scheduled a Level 1 exam at our area for at least the last eight years. We are sure this helps our instructors lower the cost of attending an exam.

All in all, we believe we do the best we can for our instructors. We have a steadfast belief in our national and our divisional organization. And we must be doing something right, as 92% of our instructors are PSIA/AASI members!

Sliding on snow ROCKS! Thank you from Thunder Ridge. «

## Journey

By Ken Franson  
Alpine Level 2

I got a late start as a snow sports coach. In the fall of 2005, at the age of fifty, I found myself in new hire training at one of the busiest and largest ski resorts in New Hampshire. Surrounded by this new culture of ski and snowboard professionals, I was overwhelmed and inspired to complete all of my training so that I could be issued my uniform and 'go live' for the busy Christmas vacation. And so my journey began. I joined PSIA, and that spring I went for my level one exam and was proud to wear my pin.

It was sometime during that first season that I came to the realization I knew very little about skiing; despite the fact I put my first pair of skis on at the age of five and had skied every season since. I recall one of our in-house trainings where our training director looked at me and said, "You're a good skier, you are just doing a lot of things wrong!" At the time I was totally confused. How can I be a good skier and still be doing things wrong? Today, after many hours of training, studying and participating in the certification process I totally understand what she meant. And she was 100% correct. I have changed many of those bad habits and 'old school' movements, but I am still a work in progress.

For me, the pathway to certification has been similar to taking a road trip with a destination in mind, while taking many side trips along the way. I do not know about you, but there is a point during every exam that I ask myself "why am I putting myself through this stress and aggravation?" I recall the morning of my level two teaching exam, I was standing next to another participant getting ready to click-in and he looked at me and said, "I hope you are not as nervous as I am because right now I

would rather land a 747 than take this exam, and I have never flown a plane before." I smiled at him and said I would volunteer to be the co-pilot if given the chance. Well, we both passed, but the question still remained, "why do I put myself through this?" And yes, failure, or as some would prefer to say, a lack of success, is part of the process.

I recently went for the level three ski exam at Cannon Mountain. It was not my first attempt at this exam so I knew what I was getting into. I worked at learning the tasks and went into the exam knowing I still had more work to do but hopeful that I would enjoy some level of success. By the end of the exam I knew I had not done the best I could, or should. I was frustrated with myself, my lack of ability, and the whole process in general. I was feeling sorry for myself and on the verge of saying the heck with the whole idea of making the most efficient and proficient turn. "Who cares, just ski!"

With time on my hands until the results would be posted, I ventured off to a newly expanded part of Cannon called Mittersill. As I rode the new, slow moving, fixed grip, double chair I was enjoying the peace and quiet, the sun in my face, and the beautiful scenery of the Franconia Notch. It was on that chair ride everything came into focus. I came to the profound realization, the reason I am doing this is not to earn the next certification pin, but rather to challenge myself to learn, improve, and grow as a snow sports professional and as a person. Each time I attend a clinic, a training session or an exam, I grow as a professional and as an individual. It is through the process that I find the sense of accomplishment and gratification. It is through the journey I find the joy and pleasure. The destination is simply the end of that particular journey and the beginning of the next. All I need to do is participate, be aware of the journey, and enjoy the ride.

I returned to learn the results of the exam with a new found perspective and attitude. I was able to accept the results with a new sense of determination and commitment to my journey. I banked one of the three categories and I have begun setting new goals for my next attempt, thankful I am now able to enjoy the experience.

So try to remember, it is the journey that is important, not the destination. May you too be aware of your journey and enjoy the ride. «

## Movement Analysis 101 – Depth Perception

By Kyle Steinmetz  
Alpine Development Team

As snow pros, movement analysis is a very important part of our jobs. What we see in our guests and how we affect change is key. But, where do we start? Bottom up, top down, core out? There are so many things that go through my mind when I work with a guest. I call it the

5,000 point checklist. Yet, how do we REALLY see what's going on?

Some pros attempt to see, and fix, every single ineffective movement a guest has; but, typically do not have enough time to solidify all those changes in a single lesson. Or, they watch their guest ski and come up with an overall picture, but don't know what to tackle first.

One way, which I have been exploring with my training groups, is playing around with depth perception. Try closing one eye and covering your view of the top half of the skier you are watching with your hand. This allows your eye to focus on what the lower body is doing. A short checklist to look for includes: are the ankles flexed; what is the stance width; are the legs moving simultaneously or sequentially; does the ski's tail follow the tip; or, is there a stem to start or finish the turn? By divvying up a skier's body segments we can identify what is really going on and set clear goals for the lesson.

From our short-list of lower body movements, we can deduce the following: are the legs continuing to rotate to complete the turn; are both skis on edge and/or is there enough angulation/inclination from the lower body to meet the needs of the hill?

After getting an idea of what the lower body is doing, and starting to formulate some descriptions, close one eye again and cover the bottom half of the body. What do you see? A short checklist for the upper body may include: is the upper body using both inclination and angulation; is the coat zipper directed toward the new turn; are the arms staying quiet; and is the pole swing moving the skier down the hill?

Now you can come up with some cause and effect. Once again starting at the skis. For example, one effect may be the downhill ski is washing out at the end of the turn. A possible cause may be the upper body is rotating up the hill at the end of the turn. Another effect is a stem movement to start the turn. This may be the result of inclination at the end of the previous turn, resulting in a stem movement to get the body moving in the new direction. These are just two examples of how we can connect the ski performance to movements of the upper body.

Training our eyes to see certain movements is an important part of our job. Not only will this skill help us with our guests; it also helps us to see and understand movement concepts that are vital to furthering our development and pursuing the certification path. «

Snow News  
Is  
Good News

## Skiing in Circles!

By John Santelli, PhD

Alpine Level 1, Campgaw Mountain,  
Mahwah, NJ

**W**e've all heard it, "I can only turn in one direction!" But, there is no need for students to worry; it's just their extreme rotational bias and we can fix that. Indeed, people walk in circles when blindfolded, unrelated to factors like leg strength and length. Contrary to popular opinion, hand and foot laterality is only weakly related to rotational preferences, which are typically overruled by task conditions and constraints, learning, and practicality. Because rotational bias changes with type of sport and specific task, it appears to be a complex process influenced by the perceptual and cognitive functions involved in each sport.

Virtually every beginner skier that I've taught (over 25 years now), has shown spontaneous turns to one side that are markedly superior to attempted turns to the other side. This has become even more apparent as we have moved away from using the braking wedge toward emphasizing turning to a stop. It's equally important for recreational skiers and racers to have balanced turns. In developmental coaching, rotational bias is often apparent in the beginning racer and eliminating it is a crucial part of advanced training. In adaptive skiers, such as students with cerebral palsy, injury or stroke acquired sensory or motor loss, or cognitive special needs, the bias may be more obvious and extreme. Effectively coaching these students to easily turn right and left is even more rewarding.

Because sensorimotor bias is important in both sports activity and neurological rehabilitation, it has been well studied. At the time I began to ski in the mid-1960s, I was a graduate student (Biological Psychology) research assistant in a laboratory that was studying recovery from surgically induced sensorimotor deficits in the rhesus monkey. Decades later, the results of this research program led its principal researcher, Edward Taub, to develop what is now termed Constraint Induced Movement Therapy, or CIMT.

The crux of CIMT (or CIT) was, for example in a stroke victim, the affected limb is neglected leading to "learned non-use." To reverse this progressive deterioration, the patient is forced by restraint of the 'good' limb and positive reinforcement to use the affected limb, thus leading to neural reprogramming (cortical reorganization) and rehabilitation. Traditional CIMT required six hours of practice daily, for weeks; however, the cost of this regimen led to the modified CIT protocol which is equally effective and only requires 30 min/day, for a few days a week, over 10 weeks.

Because rotational bias is a complex process that integrates both internal and external con-

straints, and not simply an expression of laterality, reprogramming techniques are similar to what someone may do for a stroke patient. Indeed, we could look at all biases one brings to a task as forms of brain limitations!

While it would be frowned upon to forcefully restrain a skier's motion options, there are many things we can do to drill the weak turn. Depending on the skier's level we may use garlands, fan progressions, hockey stops, pivot slips, sideslipping, javelin turns, and directing one's gaze -- but all in the weaker direction. Kinesthetically, we can encourage students to identify feelings in a countered stance, creating edge angles, applying pressure, or making rotary movements in the dominant turn and then help them to transfer those sensations to the weaker turn. Our students can observe demonstrations of ideal technique, and we may explain how their rotational bias appears in the phases of the turn and how to correct it. Finally, we may identify habits that continue to engrain their rotational bias and remind them to do the opposite. For example, do they always stop or start with a turn in their strong direction; when they are resting on the hill are their hips and/or shoulders directed toward their next turn or do they twist to point back uphill; when skiing do they always look back over the same shoulder to check traffic and thereby promote over rotation in that direction.

The success of modified CIT suggests that providing the student with level-appropriate specific tasks to drill their weak turn, and encouraging them to add such practice to their recreational day, will soon result in a better and happier skier who can turn equally in both directions and return to the lodge without descending in a series of left or right circles. <<

## "They're on Vacation!"

By Bob Tripi

Alpine Level 3, CS1

Manager Sugarloaf, ME

**I**f a student was looking for a hug and an "atta-boy," they should keep looking past retired Navy pilot, commercial airline pilot, and full-time Alpine Level 3 certified ski instructor, Rocky Freeman.

At first look, Rocky appeared to thumb his nose at everything PSIA/AASI taught us. Student centered? After shadowing Rocky's classes on countless occasions, I had to ask myself, "What is he doing, and how does he get away with the things he says to his students?"



Rocky Freeman

Then I noticed something was happening in Rocky's classes that was missing from so many others, his students were having an amazing time. They smiled, they laughed, and by the end of a class they were a team. A team who were interchanging thoughts and ideas as if they had been together for years.

To say Rocky could be brutally candid with a student is an understatement. And yet, student after student sought him out season after season. Groups as different as the Cape Cod Ski Club and the New York City Fire Department always looked for, and asked for, Rocky. Rocky's secret, he never forgot that our students want to improve their skills, but they DON'T want to go back to school. Recognizing our students are with us to enjoy themselves, and not be subjected to endless drills and tasks.

As Rocky's first-line supervisor, I lost track of how many times Rocky came to me after a class and said: "Well, I really \*#!\*#% up this time!!" I would ask him what he had said, then, even though it was in direct conflict with everything we've learned, I had to laugh at the outrageousness of his feedback. I would ask, "How did the guy and the rest of the class respond?" He'd advise they pretty much all laughed. Hmmm, "pretty much?" I learned quickly over the years and adopted the wait and see policy. Sure enough, as always, Rocky's entire class was back the next day ready to 'subject' themselves to another hour and a half of his coaching.

As I previously mentioned, I often shadowed these classes riding chairs with Rocky's students. They absolutely loved Rocky's candor and outrageous sense of humor. They loved his no nonsense, no warm or fuzzy, approach to coaching. They were learning, and at the same time, ENJOYING themselves.

Now, it's important to note, I am not suggesting we all adopt Rocky's approach to teaching. It worked for him, yet I bet it would not work for most of us. What I am suggesting, is over the summer we need to look at our own teaching style and ask ourselves if it is student or instructor centered. Remembering our students are with us to enjoy themselves and may not care if they can't do perfect railroad tracks. Sure they want to work on something, but not at the expense of going back to school. They're on vacation!

We lost Rocky to cancer this past November. There wasn't a day this past season we didn't tell a Rocky story or a returning guest didn't ask for him. His locker remained locked and there was an unfillable hole at daily line-ups. Of course, our ski and snowboard school goes on and continues to deliver great lessons due to instructors like Rocky who give a hundred and ten percent each and every day.

Thank you Rocky for so much. Thank you for everything you've taught us and for never forgetting that our students are with us to enjoy themselves! <<



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## Time Valued Material

### Thank You Eastern Division Host Areas!

Once again, we extend a big **“Thank You”** to the following areas who hosted, or offered to host, one or more of our events this past season. Their generous support continues to assist us in providing members with quality programs at the best possible value!

Adirondack Community College	Garnet Hill Lodge & XC Ski Area	Middlebury College Snow Bowl	Stowe Mountain Resort
Attitash Mountain Resort	Gore Mountain	Montage Mountain	Stratton Mountain Ski Resort
Bear Creek Mountain Resort	Greek Peak Mountain Resort	Mount Abram	Sugarbush Resort
Beech Mountain Resort	Gunstock Mountain Resort	Mount Peter Ski Area	Sugarloaf Mountain Resort
Belleayre Mountain	Gunstock X-C & Snowshoe Center	Mount Snow Resort	Sunday River Ski Resort
Berkshire East Mountain Resort	Hidden Valley Resort	Mount Sunapee Resort	Swain Mountain
Bethel Inn	Holiday Valley Resort	Mount Van Hoevenberg	Thunder Ridge Ski Area
Blue Hills Ski Area	HoliMont Ski Area	Mountain Creek Resort	Timberline Four Seasons Resort
Blue Mountain Ski Area	Hunt Hollow	Notchview XC Center	Titcomb Mountain
Bolton Valley Resort	Hunter Mountain	Oak Mountain	Toggenburg Mountain
Bretton Woods Mountain Resort	Jack Frost Mountain	Okemo Mountain Resort	Trapp Family Lodge
Bretton Woods XC Nordic Center	Jackson XC Ski Touring Center	Pats Peak	Wachusett Mountain Ski Area
Bristol Mountain Winter Resort	Jay Peak Resort	Peek ‘n Peak	Waterville Valley Resort
Bromley Mountain	Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort	Pico Mountain	West Mountain Ski Area
Camelback Mountain Resort	Killington	Plattekill Mountain	West Point Snow Sports School
Canaan Valley Resort	King Pine Ski Area	Roundtop Mountain Resort	Whiteface Mountain
Cannon Mountain	Kissing Bridge	Seven Springs Mountain Resort	White Grass XC Touring Center
Cataloochee Ski Area	Liberty Mountain	Shawnee Peak Ski Area	Whitetail Resort
Catamount Ski Area	Loon Mountain Resort	Shawnee Mountain	Windham Mountain
Craftsbury Outdoor XC Center	Mad River Glen	Ski Butternut	Wintergreen Resort
Cranmore Mountain Resort	Maple Ski Ridge	Ski Sundown	Winterplace Ski Resort
Crotched Mountain	Maple Wind Farm	Sleepy Hollow Inn	Wisp Resort
Dartmouth Ski Way	Massanutten Resort	Smugglers Notch Resort	Yawgoo Valley Ski Area
Elk Mountain Ski Resort	McIntyre Ski Area	Snowshoe Mountain Resort	