

2016-
2017

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING AWARDS WINNERS

REWARDING EXCELLENCE
BY CANDACE HORGAN

THE 2016-17 SKI SEASON SAW AN IMPRESSIVE REBOUND FROM THE PREVIOUS WINTER, AS THE INDUSTRY RECORDED 54.7 MILLION SKIER VISITS, UP FROM 52.8 MILLION THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THERE WAS ALSO AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF OPERATING SKI AREAS WITH 479 TOTAL, UP FROM 464 THE PREVIOUS SEASON. THANKS TO A WINTER WHERE THE SIERRA NEVADA RECORDED MORE SNOW IN ONE WINTER THAN THE PREVIOUS FOUR WINTERS COMBINED, THE REGION SET A RECORD FOR SKIER VISITS WITH 4.4 MILLION. SKI AREAS IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS RECORDED 21.7 MILLION VISITS.

Almost every region recorded longer seasons. One area in the Far West Division was open until August. The ski season in the Southeast lasted 23 days longer, and in the Northeast it lasted 15 days longer.

As National Ski Areas Association President Michael Berry said in the preliminary NSAA report on the season, “One thing always remains true. Even after one or two winters of less than great snow, skiers come back in droves when Mother Nature cooperates, and we consistently see that season after season.”

All of these skier visits and longer seasons kept NSP patrollers busy serving mountain guests. The National Outstanding Awards are given to those patrollers whose service was exemplary and sets an example for all of us.

The 2016-2017 winners and runners-up represent five of the NSP’s 10 geographic divisions, plus the Professional Division.

Each division nominates two judges to vote on the awards. The judges view anonymous nominations, and each one is scored by three different judges based on the criteria for the award. Each judge submits a summary of the points he or she assigns to the nominees in each category, and the results are then tallied from the point scores.

All winners of the Outstanding Awards receive either a Gold Unit Citation for patrols in the Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol, Outstanding Small Alpine Patrol, and Outstanding Nordic Patrol categories, or a Gold Merit Star for the winners of patroller awards.

**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING LARGE ALPINE PATROL
MT. BRIGHTON SKI PATROL**

Division: Central

Year Activated: 1960

Total Lifts: 13 (with rope tows and magic carpets)

When it comes to Outdoor Emergency Care and patient care, the Mt. Brighton Ski Patrol is always looking to improve. They have recently worked with local hospital systems and the local EMS agency to procure a slide board to efficiently move patients. They also worked closely with the local EMS agency to update their spinal splinting protocols, implementing the new protocols that were put in place by the EMS agency and arranging a training on the protocols by the EMS agency as part of the fall refresher.

In 2015, the patrol purchased commercial tourniquets for every member of the patrol. In 2016, the patrol funded the purchase of a Rescue Randy training manikin for use in training for lifts and drags, bandaging and splinting, and other training. The patrol also purchased the latest version of the Outdoor Emergency Care text for every member of the patrol.

Members of the patrol have been offered spots in local EMS classes, with tuition costs waived for the patrollers because of their close relationship.

The patrol is also enthusiastic about training, offering training and testing not just for candidates, but for Senior patrollers, Senior candidates, Certified patrollers, and Certified candidates. Among the trainings offered are Patroller 101, OEC, CPR, Outdoor Emergency Transportation, chair evacuation, ice/water rescue, and rescue vehicle operation.

When the area came under new ownership and management, the patrol took a proactive approach. First, the patrol scheduled a special meeting to develop an information package to present to the new management. Patrol leadership also surveyed the patrol to seek out "safety concerns" to present to the new management, with suggestions for mitigating the issues or improving them. The patrol wanted to emphasize to the new management the patrol's membership within the NSP and how the patrol strives to be a positive representative of the ski area.

Members of this patrol have been recognized with many awards, including multiple Eastern Michigan Region Outstanding



Mt. Brighton Ski Patrol

OEC Instructor awards, multiple Eastern Michigan Region Outstanding Instructor awards, multiple Eastern Michigan Region Outstanding Patroller awards, Central Division Outstanding OEC Instructor, Central Division Outstanding Patroller, 2009-2010 NSP National Outstanding OEC Instructor, and 2015-2016 NSP National Outstanding Instructor.

The patrol is also well-represented in various section, region, division, and national leadership positions, including the previous NSP National Women's Program adviser.

Each year, the patrol hosts an annual ski swap, among other events. The patrol has purchased a tent and banner to host other patrol events.

Outside of NSP, members of the patrol are active providing OEC and other services to a variety of community events. In 2014 alone, members of the patrol worked first aid for 17 downhill mountain bike race events. The patrollers had to develop new equipment and techniques to effectively work these races.

Members of the patrol participated in the Livingston County Disaster Assistance Response Team mock event. One patroller is also a member of the local therapy dog program and visits the hospital and nursing homes with a registered therapy dog. Four patrollers volunteered to provide standby emergency care services at the local REI Freestyle Nordic Race. Other events members of this patrol have volunteered at include the

Meridian Winter Blast and the local county special ministry.

Training staff for the patrol have offered instruction in lift evacuation to the local ski school adaptive staff.

RUNNER-UP: Ski Roundtop Ski Patrol, of the Eastern Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for National Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol.



Ski Roundtop Ski Patrol

Side Note: The Ski Roundtop Ski Patrol has created an innovative training program that results in a candidate pass rate of 96 percent. Candidates first attend an orientation in March, then start an OEC class that meets once a week for three hours from April to June, takes a break, then resumes in August and ends with the on-snow practical in December. After passing OEC, the candidates are assigned a mentor who works with them to teach them on-hill policies and procedures, with twice weekly OEC and OET skills training.

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING SMALL ALPINE PATROL PINE MOUNTAIN SKI PATROL

Division: Central

Year Activated: 1939

Total Lifts: 5

This patrol's motto, "We pick you up when you're down," refers not only to the patient care provided to guests on the hill, but also the rallying cry for the patrol when its long-time leader stepped down and the patrol was left without clear direction, as many patrollers retired from patrolling at that point.

However, with new management at the area and new leadership, and behind that cry, the patrol took the "Disney Method" training for customer service and portrayed themselves as "cruise directors" on the hill, rather than "hill cops."

As part of this effort, the patrol created get-well cards that are sent to all patients the patrol services. They have also created medical ID tags that are offered free to all guests; these cards include space for emergency contact information, medical history, allergies, and medications. The cards are laminated and can be attached inside a goggle strap.

To further the rebuild, the patrol worked with local EMS providers to create a mountain host unit. Between the recruiting there and recruiting among guests, the patrol was able to double its numbers to effectively cover all needed patrol shifts.

Since many members of the patrol live up to 90 miles away, the patrol also created a junior patrol for the children of the patrollers. These junior members assist by doing traffic control at on-hill incidents and offering free hot cocoa coupons to guests whom they see doing something good, such as skiing or riding safely. This junior patrol later sought and achieved certification as an NSP Young Adult Best Practices Program, one of only five in the country.

The patrol also recently hosted a YAP Jamboree to bring in young adult patrollers from other mountains in the region. This event encouraged all the patrols to start recruiting more young adults. The creation and growth of the program also led one member of the patrol to become the North Central Region Young Adult adviser.

In 2015, after a 20-year hiatus from the program, four members of the patrol enrolled in

the Senior Program, with one completing it to become a Senior patroller, while the others are still enrolled in Senior alpine.

Outside of the NSP, members of the patrol have worked an annual ski sale fundraiser at the local YMCA, including hosting a booth to give out NSP Safety Team items, and provided medical support at an Adventure Race fundraiser.



Mt. Baldy Ski Patrol

RUNNER-UP: Mt. Baldy Ski Patrol, of the Far West Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for National Outstanding Small Alpine Patrol.

Side Note: *The terrain at Mt. Baldy requires members of the patrol to have top avalanche awareness and mountaineering skills, as well as OEC skills. The patrol then shares these skills with other patrols in the region, often teaching 3-4 OEC sessions per year and 3-4 Avalanche courses per year. Because the mountain is small and old school, the volunteers of this patrol front the cost for their own medical supplies and radios.*



Pine Mountain Ski Patrol

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE PATROLLER

ROBERT CARPENTER

Patrol: Mt. Brighton

Division: Central

Instructing is at the heart of what Robert Carpenter does for his patrol, region, and division. He is an OET instructor for basic and Senior candidates, an OET instructor for his patrol's annual on-hill refreshers, and teaches chair evacuation for his patrol. He is also an instructor for Eastern Michigan Region Snowsports Enhancement Seminars and Toboggan Enhancement Seminars, and has been the instructor of record for a Senior evaluator prep course.

Under his management, quality assurance for programs he oversees has increased, and he continues to work to improve programs for patrollers. He has updated and maintained the Central Division *Senior Program Manual*, coordinated quality assurance for Senior OET tests, and works with Central Division staff and Eastern Michigan Region Senior advisers to track Senior Ski/Ride evaluators and Senior Toboggan evaluators.

In recognition of this, he was awarded the Central Division Program Directors Award for the Senior Program in 2016. He received his National Appointment Number in 2015, and was named Eastern Michigan Region Outstanding Instructor in 2013.

Carpenter has served in a variety of leadership positions, including as Central Division

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Robert Carpenter

Senior Program adviser and as a member of the Central Division Senior alpine quality assurance staff. He has been a member of his local patrol board of directors, his patrol's assistant patrol representative, and is an accredited Senior alpine examiner for Central Division.

Carpenter has developed a protocol and procured equipment to help with the patrol's ability to assist guests down steep and difficult terrain, conducting a yearly training on the equipment for the patrol's training staff.

Carpenter is also a Professional Ski Instructors of America Level II instructor.

RUNNER-UP: Calvin Goldsmith, of the Wachusett Mountain Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Administrative Patroller.

Side Note: Goldsmith attained Senior after just one season as a patroller, then started to teach



Cal Goldsmith and his wife, Michelle.

both OEC and OET. He is one of the few patrolers in his region to hold a dual Senior trainer/evaluator certification for OEC and OET. As the Eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island Region OET adviser, he suggested the region purchase a trailer for storage and movement of all EMARI Region OEC and OET equipment. He is currently the EMARI Region director and Eastern Division assistant division director.

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING ALPINE PATROLLER

DAVID MOORE

Patrol: Big Bear

Division: Far West

The runner-up in this category in 2014-2015 (for which he received a Silver Merit Star, an achievement earned in only his second year back patrolling), David Moore is the National Outstanding Alpine Patroller for 2016-2017.

After a 12-year break from the NSP and patrolling, during which he used his patrolling skills doing risk management in the film industry, Moore reimmersed himself in patrolling, quickly recertifying all his instructorships and teaching.

Though only required to put in 12 duty days per season, Moore has averaged 32 days in each of the last four seasons. He has attended 29 Certified clinics, first as a candidate, then as an instructor/judge. He has also worked with another patrol in the region on their risk management policies, committing several days to work with the patrol before implementing procedures to mitigate risk and install operations that enhance safety.

In addition to teaching OEC and OET, he is also a CPR instructor and instructs CPR/AED recertification to his patrol.

Moore has received numerous awards, including being named Southern California Region Outstanding Alpine Patroller, Far West

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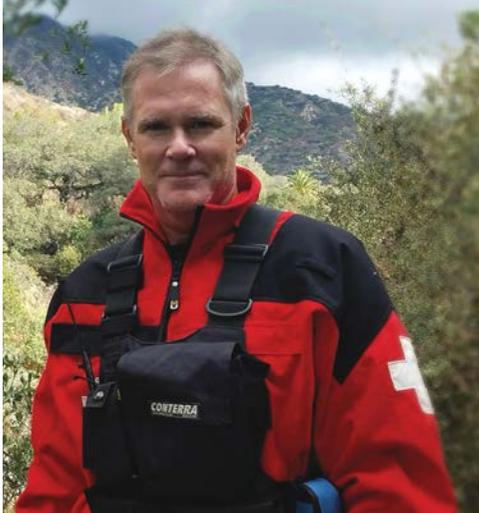
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David Moore

Division Outstanding Alpine Patroller, and receiving Service Recognition Awards.

While away from patrolling and doing risk management in the film industry, Moore still used the skills he learned patrolling, once responding to a serious injury on set. Based on that incident, Moore was ultimately successful in lobbying for OEC to be a recognized first responder certification for entertainment medical personnel.

Outside of NSP, he has been a board member and secretary for the Association of Professional Patrollers, the only volunteer serving in that capacity, and does risk management consulting for multiple ski resorts in his region. He supported his local Cancer Support Community's Winter Getaway program. He is a liaison for permitting activity and risk assessment with the U.S. Forest Service, and a hazmat regulations coordinator that reviews Material Safety Data Sheets



Vern DeHaven

to ensure compliance with the regulations.

RUNNER-UP: Vern DeHaven, of the Perfect North Slopes Ski Patrol in the Central Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Alpine Patroller.

Side Note: A Senior for both skiing and snowboarding, as well as a Professional Ski Instructors of America Level III and American Association of Snowboard Instructors Level II instructor, DeHaven works to promote an enjoyable experience in the sport. He is a member of the Central Division NSP Ski School and often teaches OET at local and region Snowsports Enhancement Seminars and Toboggan Enhancement Seminars. He has also taught skiing and snowboarding to the general public as an employee at a local ski school.

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING PATROLLER KRISTIN HOLMBECK

Patrol: Big Bear
Division: Far West

Holmbeck is currently in her sixth year patrolling and has proven a valuable resource for both the patrol and the

Southern California Region. She works in both the base area and the aid room to treat injured and ill guests at the two areas her patrol serves and works as the room lead on weekend shifts.

When her patrol merged with its sister patrol into one large patrol that serves two resorts, necessitating learning about a new mountain and new aid room, she assisted the members of the sister patrol in becoming acclimated to the aid room and base area at her resort.

She is a strong mentor to patrollers and candidates in the aid room, blending first aid skills with communication skills to help patrollers manage complex injuries, whether they are walk-ins or incidents coming down from off the mountain via toboggan.

Recently, she has loaned her skills to the Southern California Region as information technology adviser to help maintain the region website, recreating it with her skills as a computer programmer and then subsequently mentoring a new webmaster who took over the task.

She was previously recognized as Southern

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Kristin Holmbeck

California Region Outstanding Patroller and Far West Division Outstanding Patroller in 2015.

She does all this while still finding time to return to school for her master's in mathematics and also volunteering for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

RUNNER-UP: LaRaye Rudicile, of the Appalachian Ski Patrol in the Southern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Patroller.



LaRaye Rudicile

Side Note: Rudicile's medical knowledge has proven to be a boon for her patrol. She logged over 160 hours last season, supervising and assisting with care in the first aid

room and mentoring new candidates. She has been the lead OEC instructor for her patrol and teaches an annual CPR recertification at the fall refreshers. She has also completed her Incident Command System 100, 200, 700, and 800 certifications.

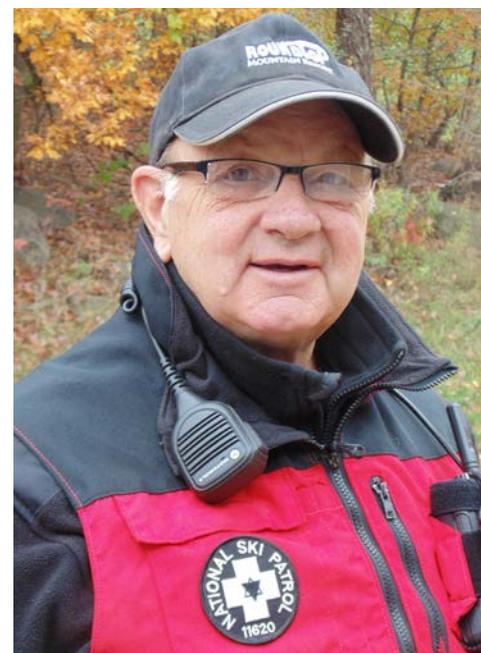
**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING PAID PATROLLER
DAVID SMITH**

Patrol: *Ski Roundtop*
Division: *Professional Division*
— *Eastern Region*

Smith is a Senior patroller who started his patrolling career as a volunteer in 2002 and continues to support NSP members in many different roles. He received his National Appointment Number in 2015.

He currently serves as an active OEC instructor trainer and OEC Module of the Senior Program trainer/evaluator for the Eastern Pennsylvania Region and Eastern Division. He also teaches OET, and his OET courses benefit from his experience as a PSIA Level II instructor, a certification he has held since 1980.

He has served as his patrol's Senior candidate and OEC Module of the Senior Program training leader, in which role he has developed a written curriculum and training and



David Smith

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clinic schedule that has resulted in a near 100 percent pass rate for Senior candidates. Smith often stays after his paid shifts to help assist as a volunteer trainer with the patrol's Senior candidates.

He has encouraged existing OEC Module of the Senior Program trainer/evaluators to improve their evaluation skills as both OEC instructors and trainer/evaluators. Smith even volunteers his time off the clock to help train patroller candidates in skiing skills and works with the paid patrol to improve their skiing skills.

Many members of the patrol, both paid and volunteer, believe that the improved interaction between the volunteer and paid patrols is due to Smith's efforts and experience in both roles.

Outside of NSP, Smith is not only a PSIA Level II instructor, he is a Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance Level 2 instructor. He works with a local Special Olympics athlete to improve his skiing skills.

RUNNER-UP: James Sindt, of the Homewood Volunteer Ski Patrol in the Professional Division — Far West Region, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Paid Patroller.

Side Note: Sindt is currently the patrol director and risk manager for Homewood Mountain Resort, and is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of incident report forms. He manages 14 paid patrollers and works closely with the patrol representative for the 40-member volunteer patrol. As



James Sindt

part of his efforts to integrate the volunteer patrol, he changed the verbiage about volunteers, saying, "We are all professional patrollers. Some are paid, some are volunteer, but we are all professional patrollers."

**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROL
MT. PINOS NORDIC SKI PATROL**

Division: Far West
Year Activated: 1976

The runner-up in this category last season, for which it received a Silver Unit Citation, Mt. Pinos Nordic Ski Patrol is this year's National Outstanding Nordic Patrol.

This patrol covers 20 miles of undeveloped trails and has 36 patrollers, of whom 11 are Senior. Four have National Appointment Numbers or Leadership Commendation Appointments. Six are members of the Far West Division Winter SAR Team that is registered in the state to provide type 1 alpine winter rescue response.

The patrol's management is the Forest Service, and the customers it services come from the Los Angeles area. The patrol is self-sufficient, conducting its own fundraising to stay well equipped and trained. In fact, everyone on the patrol has Avalanche and Mountain Travel and Rescue training.

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Rene Crawshaw lost in Japow, Geto Kogen, Honshu. Photo: Grant Gunderson



Mt. Pinos Nordic Ski Patrol

As part of its annual refresher, the patrol stages a two-day mock search complete with an Incident Command System setup and an overnight bivouac. The patrollers have to conduct the search with map and compass, then verify locations with GPS and Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates, then change to latitude/longitude coordinates for a helicopter response.

All transport must be on skis; Forest Service rules and the boundaries for the winter recreation area prohibit off-highway motorized vehicles.

The patrol also supports events and training in the Southern California Region, often sending instructors to teach Avalanche, MTR, OEC, and OET. The region MTR 1 field sessions and overnight sessions are held in the terrain this patrol services, and the patrol will often provide a hot breakfast on Sunday for the students after their overnight.

As part of its training program, the patrol set a goal that each member of the patrol become an instructor in at least one NSP discipline.

Because the patrol's terrain covers two counties, members of this patrol work on two different county SAR teams. A working relationship has been forged with both teams via joint training exercises, and each year the patrol averages four area searches for lost skiers or recreationists. Because

there are almost 2,000 skiable acres and numerous side canyons and ravines, the patrol has taken the time to identify areas where people are more likely to get lost, which has led to faster searches. The patrol also has two certified search dogs. The patrol's facility has an operations center that is used by the sheriff's SAR teams as incident command during searches.

The patrol has provided instructors for Avalanche training to multiple county sheriff's SAR teams. Through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the patrol offers a one-week winter SAR class at no cost to SAR teams from around the state. This class teaches elements of the Avalanche, MTR, Nordic/Backcountry, and OEC programs to these SAR responders.

At the beginning of each season, members of this patrol help staff the local county ski show and disseminate snow safety information. Four members of the patrol teach a mountain awareness program every year as part of SAR clinics held in the area.

This past season, the patrol set up a remote reporting weather station, something difficult to do since there are no public utilities in the area. The local National Weather Service office learned of the station and, at their request, the station was registered with the Citizen's Weather Observer Program, and its measurements are now used in local forecasting.

RUNNER-UP: Idaho Falls Nordic Ski Patrol, of the Intermountain Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for National Outstanding Nordic Patrol.

Side Note: In addition to the usual OEC and CPR refresher training, the patrol conducts an in-depth on-the-trail refresher that covers helicopter landing zone setup and patient loading into a helicopter. The patrol also conducts annual Avalanche refreshers, and members of the patrol further their education by attending an annual outdoor trauma conference that covers improvised splinting, hypothermia, high-velocity trauma, emergency transport, and high altitude illness.



Idaho Falls Nordic Ski Patrol

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROLLER CASSIUS MURPHEY

Patrol: Mt. Pinos Nordic
Division: Far West

During his long patrolling career, hundreds of patrollers have heard Murphey's line, "We are Nordics and can survive outside." It is something Murphey has taught in many different classes.

This Senior patroller and National Appointment Number recipient has been teaching first aid for NSP since NSP used the American Red Cross Advanced First Aid certification. He became an early Winter Emergency Care, then OEC instructor. He has served as the instructor of record for not only OEC, but Avalanche Level 1 and 2, MTR, and outdoor survival seminars held in the Southern California Region. He has previously been named Southern California Region Outstanding Avalanche Instructor,

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Cassius Murphey

Southern California Region Outstanding OEC Instructor, and Far West Division Outstanding OEC Instructor.

To further improve his OEC classes, each class ends with a better practices and procedures discussion to improve the class and the presentation to the students.

In his classes, he also brings to bear the Nordic/Backcountry experience, saying, "It is not a load-and-go situation, like on an alpine hill, so as Nordics, we need to treat the patient and keep them alive in the backcountry." His 2016 OEC class included not only patrollers, but EMTs and military personnel. In some ways, that class came full circle for the former U.S. Navy officer, who was trained in the Navy in extrication and life-saving response.

He has twice attended the National Avalanche School to keep his avalanche skills up to date, which he then imparts back to his students in his Level 1 and Level 2 classes. His 2016 Avalanche class had over 60 students. In his Avalanche classes, he organizes the burial of rescue manikins and avalanche beacons so that the students can get realistic practice in all the phases of an avalanche burial search, including probing for the victim and digging the victim out.

He often invites patrollers to participate in a day of backcountry skiing, complete with a review of the patrol's first aid facilities, toboggans, and rescue equipment, and ends

the day with a dinner at the base building at 8,300 feet.

Murphey serves as the instructor of record for an OEC refresher makeup in the region for patrollers who miss their patrol's refresher. He is also an instructor and evaluator for the region's OEC instructor refresher and attends region monthly meetings to give guidance to improve skills. He assists not only his patrol, but other patrols in the Southern California Region with on-the-hill refreshers for Nordic/Backcountry skills seminars, such as toboggan construction, rope skills, emergency shelters, and more.

Outside of NSP, he teaches winter skills and avalanche awareness to a local dog rescue association and the U.S. Forest Service Junior Forest Ranger Program and volunteers first aid services at a local long-distance charity run.

RUNNER-UP: Charles Crockett, of the Genesee Valley Nordic Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Nordic Patroller.

Side Note: Over his 48-year patrolling career, Crockett has served as a patrol director and contributed in his region, for which he was an early recipient of a Leadership Commendation Appointment. Over the last four years, he has served as his patrol's



Charles Crockett

coordinator with one of the three Nordic venues the patrol services, which includes acting as liaison with the site manager, organizing preseason trail management, and managing equipment, supplies, and protocols.

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING INSTRUCTOR RENE PEREZ

Patrol: Big Bear
Division: Far West

The runner-up in this category last year, for which he was awarded a Silver Merit Star, Rene Perez is this season's National Outstanding Instructor. Perez, who started patrolling eight years ago, achieved his Senior four years ago and is one module away from completing the Certified Program.

Perez has been serving as the Southern



Rene Perez

California Region OET instructor since 2013. In that time, he has instructed region Snowboard Enhancement Seminars, Senior OET region clinics, OET refreshers, and is the lead snowboard OET instructor for his patrol. He also has instructed as a first-year patroller mentor on his local patrol, and is the Senior Program adviser for his patrol.

He has worked to teach snowboarding skills and toboggan handling to patrollers at five resorts in the Southern California Region, teaching close to 200 patrollers. As part of his efforts, he created the NSP SoCal Snowboard Page on Facebook that he uses to proactively communicate with patrollers in the region about upcoming training events, answer questions, provide information, and share pictures.

Perez has mentored five new snowboard OET instructors under the direction of an OET instructor trainer. He also worked to develop a consistent OET snowboard syllabus in conjunction with an instructor at a sister resort.

He is certified as a first responder for a local city emergency program, which he achieved by completing his ICS 100 certification. He also coordinated with the Forest Service on trail maintenance in conjunction with ski area management and in conjunction with the Forest Service and International Mountain Bicycling Association participates in trail

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maintenance of a local multipurpose trail that was adopted by his patrol. This trail features signage showing that Perez's patrol does the trail maintenance.

Even though he is not an OEC instructor, during the off season he takes time to help with OEC courses in the area, which gives him an opportunity to build relationships with candidates prior to working with them on OET out on the hill.

Outside of NSP, he is an assistant leader for a Boy Scouts troop and helps Scouts achieve their Snow Sports merit badge, including MTR instruction with a winter camping trip.



Peter Holdridge

RUNNER-UP: Peter Holdridge, of the Ski Brule Ski Patrol in the Central Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Instructor.

Side Note: A PSIA Level II instructor who is currently working toward his Level III, Holdridge is very active in the Senior Program, instructing both skiing and toboggan handling, and is an evaluator in both disciplines. He also teaches at his area's annual on-hill refresher and at numerous Ski Trainer's Workshops in the North Central Region. He organizes a region Snowsports Enhancement Seminar and region Toboggan Enhancement Seminar.

NATIONAL OUTSTANDING OEC INSTRUCTOR

NANCY STROMSWOLD

Patrol: Kirkwood

Division: Far West

Nancy Stromswold is often sought out to teach OEC courses in both the Far West Division and the Professional Division. Her OEC refreshers are very popular in the Eastern Sierra Region. They are well organized and feature thought-provoking events to optimize patroller participation and learning. Every year, she is also asked to hold a makeup refresher for patrollers who couldn't make their home patrol's refresher.

As an OEC instructor trainer, Stromswold has mentored many new instructors and has



Nancy Stromswold

encouraged her patrol's instructors to participate in Eastern Sierra Region OEC events, including courses, exams, and OEC Module of the Senior Program exams. Even when not participating as instructor trainer, she works every OEC Module of the Senior Program exam in the region.

Recognizing a need for a program that could satisfy the continuing education requirements for OEC instructors in the Eastern Sierra Region, Stromswold worked to develop an instructor continuing education program. Over 300 patrollers have benefitted from this targeted instruction program.

She also worked to revitalize the Senior trainer/evaluator program in the region, serving on a Far West Division committee that reviewed and made suggestions to the NSP about the proposed OEC Module of the Senior Program. Once the program launched, she helped implement a rigorous training program to meet the requirements for trainer/evaluators.

She was selected as the first Far West Division records adviser, in which role she provided support to program supervisors, region directors, and patrol directors by reporting on OEC delinquencies, instructor completion of continuing education clinics, and Senior trainer/evaluator training and recertification.

While OEC is her passion, Stromswold is also active in other NSP programs, and is an

instructor for Instructor Development and OET. She has attended multiple Senior trainer/evaluator clinics, Snowsports Enhancement Seminars, Toboggan Enhancement Seminars, and Toboggan Trainer's Workshops, and she also instructs at a women-only Toboggan Enhancement Seminar.

As her patrol's social adviser, Stromswold coordinates monthly social events for patrol members that live up to 250 miles away from each other. She served on the Far West Division Awards Committee, helping achieve recognition for several of her patrol's members, including two Purple Merit Stars, five Blue Merit Stars, a Distinguished Service Award, and a Gold Merit Star for Esteban Valle, who was named 2012-2013 NSP National Outstanding Young Patroller, as well as a Gold Unit Citation for the Homewood Volunteer Ski Patrol, which was named 2015-2016 NSP National Outstanding Small Alpine Patrol.

Stromswold herself was named Far West Division Outstanding Administrative Patroller in 2015 and also received the Far West Division Director's Award.

Outside of NSP, she has contributed her OEC skills at multiple endurance events in the region.

RUNNER-UP: Cassandra Proctor, of the Caberfae Ski Patrol in the Central Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding OEC Instructor.

Side Note: As assistant patrol director in charge of OEC training, Proctor organizes and plans each of the patrol's OEC instructor refreshers and OEC refreshers, creating hands-on stations that integrate the NSP refresher requirements. The instructor refresher updates OEC skills for the instructor staff and incorporates a review and feedback process to improve each station in preparation for the patrol refresher. Proctor has also organized OEC Enhancement Seminars in each of the last two seasons that have been completed by half the patrol's members.



Cassandra Proctor

**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING PATROL REPRESENTATIVE
KEITH NEERGAARD**

Patrol: Heavenly Area Ski Patrol
Division: Far West

Neergaard's dedication to NSP is shown in many ways. For one, over the last three seasons he patrolled 55 or more days each year, almost twice what the usual volunteer puts in as a maximum.

Neergaard leads the candidate training program at Heavenly Mountain Resort and instructs toboggan and skiing refreshers. He also works as an evaluator at the Eastern Sierra Region OEC Module of the Senior Program clinic.

In 2014, Heavenly Mountain Resort came under new management, and this new management was unsure about the use of NSP volunteers as patrollers, especially since the resort patrol director came from another resort and the new patrol management had

to justify the volunteer patrollers to mountain management.

Over the summer before the season started, Neergaard had numerous meetings with the new management, planning changes in paid patrol operations and how the volunteers would integrate with the paid staff. He traveled to the resort frequently for these meetings. A new structure was created that fully integrated the volunteers with the paid patrol and resulted in mountain management having positive interactions with the volunteers.

Neergaard also worked with the patrol management in helping create a presentation for the corporate owners that outlined the benefits of a volunteer patrol and advocated that NSP volunteer patrols be established at the corporation's other resorts.

One change Neergaard implemented as part of this effort was a new scheduling system



Keith Neergaard



Iris Lazz, Allie Reed and Cooper Kahlenberg return to WinterTux after a day of Idaho sending. Photo: Fredrik Maimstater

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in which volunteers sign up to patrol several days in advance. The patrol supervisors use this data to assign volunteers to places on the mountain. He also meets with patrol management weekly and then communicates to the volunteers any news or changes in procedures that arise from those meetings.

Heavenly Mountain Resort has hosted an annual Avalanche Level I course; in 2016, the instructor for the course retired, so Neergaard organized a cadre of instructors to keep it going. One-third of the students in the class are patrollers, one-third are SAR personnel, and one-third are the general public.

Neergaard also worked to incorporate the Heavenly Area Ski Patrol into more region and division events, hosting the Eastern Sierra Region Senior evaluation clinic, as well as a toboggan clinic run by a Far West Division staff member. Heavenly Area Ski Patrol has also hosted an Eastern Sierra Region meeting each of the last three seasons. Neergaard works with mountain management to provide comp lift tickets and arrange permissions for these events.

During the off season, Neergaard organizes an OEC instructor refresher, organizes the patrol's OEC refresher, and teaches several modules of an OEC course. He also teaches American Red Cross CPR classes.

Members of the paid patrol at Heavenly Mountain Resort established a nonprofit that raises funds for local charities. The volunteers supported this fundraising effort by selling T-shirts and volunteering at an annual fundraising party. Both paid patrollers and volunteers also participate in an annual "shave your head" event to raise funds for a cancer charity.

RUNNER-UP: Marcia Locher, of the Granite Peak Ski Patrol in the Central Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Patrol Representative.



Marcia Locher

Side Note: Locher has volunteered at two different resorts each of the last several seasons, putting in 100 hours of on-hill duty and more than 150 hours of off-hill duty. She instituted an accident investigation

class and an incident command class for the ski area that was attended by both patrollers and area employees, resulting in improved communication between the patrol and the rest of the departments at the mountain.

**NATIONAL OUTSTANDING YOUNG ADULT PATROLLER
SYDNE VAN ZEELAND**

Patrol: Pine Mountain

Division: Central

As the daughter of a patroller, Sydnie Van Zeeland's involvement with the patrol began when she started skiing at the age of 18 months old. When she turned 11, she joined the patrol's newly formed Junior Patroller Program for children ages 11-15. During this time, she learned how patrollers interact with guests and make their day more enjoyable.

When she turned 16, Van Zeeland enrolled in OEC and ever since has been active with the patrol, working well with patrollers of all certifications, including paramedics. She will frequently return to help in OEC classes, and new patrollers have looked to her as a mentor with patient care, regardless of their age.

In part, that might be due to Van Zeeland leading the patrol in patient contacts her first season. She has helped the male-dominated patrol become better at treating children, teaching them how to put young children at ease when treating them.

Last season, she had a particularly rough patient contact with her grandfather, who fell and hit a tree stump while skiing. He became cool and diaphoretic, and Van Zeeland helped her father transport him down the hill, then rode in the car driven by her father providing patient care until they could hopefully meet up with an ambulance en route. Van Zeeland communicated with 911 dispatch, and because the ambulance was not available, provided care to her grandfather for the entire transport to the hospital.

Van Zeeland is a member of the patrol's Young Adult Best Practices program, and served as young adult representative to the patrol's advisory board, suggesting improvements in training that could benefit new young adult patrollers.

She represented the NSP and her young adult patrol at a local annual YMCA ski sale, discussing skiing safety and giving out items from the NSP Safety Team while promoting



Sydnie Van Zeeland

the patrol's young adult program.

During a two-week backpacking trip to New Mexico with a Scouts group, she treated altitude illness, epistaxis, and strains and sprains.

Outside of NSP, Van Zeeland taught a 10-week first aid class to her homeschool co-op and assisted her father in teaching CPR to a local retirement community. She not only supervised hands-on skill training, she lectured on several topics.

Next season, Van Zeeland will be looking to join a new patrol closer to where she plans to attend college.



Agustin Noriega

RUNNER-UP: Agustin Noriega, of the Big Bear Ski Patrol in the Far West Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for National Outstanding Young Adult Patroller.

Side Note: Noriega enrolled in an OEC class with his father at the age of 16, despite knowing that his local patrol wouldn't allow him to become a full patroller until he was 18. He finished at the top of that OEC class, then enrolled as an assistant in the next two OEC classes to keep his skills sharp while waiting to turn 18. When he turned 18, he celebrated his birthday by attending OET training and beginning his candidate training, eventually finishing as candidate of the year and racking up more duty days than any other candidate and finally becoming an alpine patroller. +

UNIT CITATIONS FOR DIVISION AWARDS

OUTSTANDING LARGE ALPINE PATROL

Sugar Bowl Ski Patrol — Far West
Great Falls Ski Patrol — Northern
Mt. Baker Ski Patrol — Pacific Northwest
Loveland Ski Patrol — Rocky Mountain
Wintergreen Ski Patrol — Southern

OUTSTANDING SMALL ALPINE PATROL

Laurel Mountain Ski Patrol — Eastern
Vicenza Ski Patrol — European

OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROL

Blue Mound Nordic Ski Patrol — Central
Laurel Summit Nordic Ski Patrol — Eastern

YELLOW MERIT STARS FOR DIVISION AWARDS

OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE PATROLLER

Michael Staszewski — European
Ri Chan — Far West
David May — Pacific Northwest
Laura Lambert — Southern

OUTSTANDING ALPINE PATROLLER

Deborah Brown — Eastern
Benjamin Garrison — European
Casey Redder — Northern
David DeVeau — Pacific Northwest
Matt Weitz — Southern

OUTSTANDING PATROLLER

Anna Aldrich — Central
Madeline Nyblade — Eastern
Heather Robinson — European

OUTSTANDING PAID PATROLLER

Norman Onorati — Professional Division —
Pacific Northwest Region
Mark Woods — Professional Division —
Southern Region

OUTSTANDING INSTRUCTOR

Scott Wild — Eastern
Lisa Patmor — European
Ron Wiggins — Northern
James Evangelista — Pacific Northwest
Robert McFarland — Southern

OUTSTANDING OEC INSTRUCTOR

Fred Tim — Eastern
Stephen Oliver, M.D. — European
David Martin — Intermountain
Mel Carnahan — Northern
Marianne Becker — Pacific Northwest
Chelsea Stroh — Southern

OUTSTANDING PATROL REPRESENTATIVE

Steve Sobolewski — Eastern
Christine Garrison — European
Anthony Develice — Pacific Northwest
Ronald Dull — Southern

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ADULT PATROLLER

Carina Hastings — Eastern
Colton Hodges — European



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