

# SPOKANE NORDIC NEWS

December 2014

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## Starting Strong

We're focused on goals to start your perfect season

- by Lisa Sunderman, President

As winter (ever so slowly) approaches, in addition to concentrating on getting the Sundermans in shape and updating clothing and gear, I am focusing on my new role as Spokane Nordic's President. Although new to the work of President, I have been skiing at Mt. Spokane since 1996 and have been on the Board as Treasurer or Vice President for five years.

I love what was started by the founders of these Nordic trails and what together we continue to build. Thank you ALL for how you contribute to this community in your own way by getting up to the mountain to ski and donating your time and money! My job this year is to lead the Spokane Nordic board in our work to protect what we have and bring new skiing opportunities to you.

Thanks for pitching in to support the infrastructure we all enjoy. We're a little different at Mt. Spokane in that we work as a cooperative between State Parks and our not-for-profit user group. Funding allocation decisions were heavily swayed by the summer presentation Spokane Nordic makes to the State Winter Recreation Advisory Committee each year to represent the cross-country skier user group and our needs.

Our trails will be brush-free and huts will have warm fires thanks to many hours volunteered by the Trails Committee and others to cut brush and firewood. Our roads and parking lots will be cleared, new and old trails will continue to be groomed, and we will have serviced outhouses and heat and water in the lodge again this year thanks to Washington State Parks and the funding received from SnoPark and Groomed Trails permits sold. State Parks now has a solid three-bay workshop to house that beautiful new grooming machine we procured two years ago, along with other older machinery. The Nordic area will

have a new warming hut at Junction 11 thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers led by Chris Oxford and Tim Ray and lumber donated by Inland Empire Paper Company and Idaho Forest Products.

Your membership dollars paid for trail clearing equipment, additional materials purchased for the new hut, WiFi at the lodge, the grooming report and new webcam on the web site, advocacy efforts directed toward State Parks and other decision makers, and the work we do to promote and bring community events such as the season opening potluck and Winterfest.



## Pre-Season Checklist

As we anticipate the first day of grooming, take a look at the great upcoming winter schedule and get focused:

- ✓ Renewed Spokane Nordic membership
- ✓ Updated equipment & clothing
- ✓ Purchased SnoPark & Groomed Trails Permit
- ✓ Started get-in-ski-shape training plan
- ✓ Scheduled fun on-snow events
- ✓ Marked calendar to volunteer for or participate in races
- ✓ Registered kids for Nordic Kids or Racing Team
- ✓ Registered yourself and/or a buddy for lessons

# Building Bonds on the Trails

State Commissioners and user groups share vision and food

The late-November meeting in Spokane of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission gained wide local coverage for its approval of expansion of the Mt. Spokane downhill area. It was also an important opportunity for the commission members to visit the other winter recreation areas in the park, particularly the Cross-Country Ski Park.

The commission's seven citizen volunteers spent November 21st with representatives from Friends of Mt. Spokane, Spokane Nordic, snowshoers, the Winter Knights snowmobile group, and the local sled dog association. Trond Liaboe attended as the State Parks' Winter Recreation Advisory Committee Member representing our region.

Spokane Nordic members had a chance to share about different aspects of cross-country skiing on the Mountain: Nordic Kids coaching coordinator Natasha Sharman about Nordic Kids, Spokane Nordic board member Kate Burns about skijoring, and Board president Lisa Sunderman about Nordic skiing in general and the proposed Mountain Education and Recreation Center.

In addition, Cris Curry told about the new snowshoe warming hut and the work of the Friends of Mt. Spokane coordinating volunteer involvement in the Park and raising funds to support Park projects.

Fitness Fanatics also demonstrated their ski rental shop trailer in its new location next to the Selkirk Lodge.

Spokane Nordic members provided hot drinks, salads, chili and cookies, and the Winter Knights provided a barbecue and grilled up burgers.

Lisa recalls that "the best work was done during conversations while traveling in the shuttle with the Commissioners and their spouses" and socializing with people from the other user groups.

The meeting highlights the importance of Spokane Nordic's work building relationships locally and at the State level. Lisa says, "All in all, it was a good day to show the commissioners what a valuable resource and how worthy of investment our park is."

- from a report by Lisa Sunderman

Photo: Lisa Sunderman



The shallow snow base meant a change of plans, and dogsled and snowmobile tours turned into an impromptu dog-quad-wagon ride.

## Nominate a Tireless Contributor

Photo: Brad Thiessen



Last year's Gary Silver Award recipient Steve Christensen (center) poses with some of his predecessors at last year's ceremony.

The Gary Silver Lifetime Contribution Award is given annually to a member of the Spokane community who has made a significant contribution to cross-country skiing. This year's honoree will join 25 previous recipients.

If you know of someone who deserves this recognition, let us know. Nominations should include a description of why the nominee should receive this award, along with the name of the person doing the nominating (for clarification, more information etc), although the nominator may request to remain anonymous if/when the award is given if they so choose. Nominations can be submitted either in hard copy (Spokane Nordic, PO Box 501, Spokane WA, 99210), or via email to [info@spokanenordic.org](mailto:info@spokanenordic.org).

The Spokane Nordic board will review all nominations and determine this year's recipient through a majority of votes.

*Gary Silver was a major contributor to the early Spokane Nordic Ski community in the 1980s, and passed away in July 1998 after suffering from high-altitude sickness while mountain climbing in Pakistan.*

# LIGHTNING on skis

Spokane Nordic's youth ski teams are entering this year with an unprecedented number of skiers, with 24 kids on the Transition Team and another 20 on the Race Team. According to Spokane Nordic board president Lisa Sunderman, this is due in large part to program leadership.

"Coaches George Bryant and Jud Ford are building our strongest ski team ever," she says. "More skiers come out of our solid Nordic Kids program each year. Racers join and stay on the team because what they accomplish while having fun with friends. It's a good parent sport too because you ski and learn with your kids, then you watch with pride as they surpass you."

She adds, "Our coaches are very special. On Thanksgiving at the West Yellowstone Ski Festival, Racing Team kids and parents gave thanks around the table at our potluck. My daughter, Linnea, said that she was thankful for Coach George."

George and Jud are joined by a coaching team that this year includes Paul Fawcett, Drew Schleider, Chris Messinger, Aaron Scott, and Caroline Tareski.

The Transition Team moves kids from a more recreational ski experience, such as Nordic Kids, into more technical, competitive skiing, ultimately leading to the Racing Team. They ski for several hours each Saturday and Sunday, with some training on other days, and attend races throughout the season.

The Racing Team starts at age 13 and follows a rigorous schedule of weekday dryland training and two weekend sessions on the Mt. Spokane trails. Team members compete in four Junior National Qualifier (JNQ) races across the Northwest each season, with the goal of accumulating points to qualify for the Junior Nationals at the end of the season. Last year, three skiers made it to the USSA Junior National Cross-Country Ski Championships: Brett Ford, Ian McCarthy and Lauren Potyk.

Coach George Bryant says while skills are essential to success as a Race Team member, attitude is the first requirement. "More than anything, we're looking for committed athletes with the willingness to work as well as ski."

According to Lisa Sunderman, the ski teams serve a crucial role beyond the kids' skiing skills. "Nordic Kids, Racers and Youth Rangers are the future of our ski community. The kids put down tracks and pick up a lifelong passion for the sport."

So give a wave and a cheer when you're out on the trails and see those kids powering up the hills like they were born with sticks on their feet.



Photo: Darryl Potyk

Race Team member Lauren Potyk pushes to win.



Photo: Lisa Sunderman

The Transition Team enjoys a race at Schweizer in early 2014.



Photo: Tom Schaaf

Ian McCarthy and Liam Schaaf in friendly competition.

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**"Racers, Nordic Kids, and Youth Rangers are the future of our ski community. The kids put down tracks and pick up a lifelong passion for the sport."**

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# Making Tracks

Trail Days volunteers made huge progress this summer and fall

By Brian Hawkins

We've had a good season of trail maintenance. There's a full firewood shed at the Nova Hut, with extra firewood cut, split and stacked at the Selkirk lodge. Volunteers cleared brush and overhanging limbs from over 50% of the trails with major work on Linder Ridge, Tamarama, Wild Moose, Moose Meadows, Abners Way, and a new connector between Junction 2 and Linder Ridge. Art Bookstrom continued work on the backcountry trail system that was started last year.

All told, 39 different volunteers worked 513 hours on trails and wood cutting. I'd like to thank all the volunteers who came out to help this year, with a special thanks to these who volunteered at least 24 hours: Sam Schlieder, Scott Redman, Tom Frost, Art Bookstrom, Len Seville, and Jim Downing. We wouldn't have good skiing on many of our trails if not for the hard work put in by all our dedicated volunteers this summer and fall. Please think of them as you ski on brush free trails this winter.

*A special thanks to Brian for his hard work and dedication organizing and leading Trail Days this summer.*

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## Webcam

Three seasons ago, the grooming report for the Mt. Spokane cross-country trails was added to the Spokane Nordic website. Later that season, Spokane Nordic board member Tom Schaaf adding internet service to the Selkirk Lodge.

The two developments prompted him to ask, Wouldn't it be great to be able to see exactly what conditions are? What about a webcam? The idea began Tom's time-intensive journey of research, purchase and installation leading to the live conditions image now available at [conditions.spokanenordic.org/conditions](http://conditions.spokanenordic.org/conditions).

Skier and professional website programmer Jennifer Hodgdon then donated her time to create the site pages that host the live image and grooming report.

A huge thanks to Tom and Jennifer for their efforts to make the ski experience richer for all of us!

## Website Revamp

This summer, it was time to revamp both the graphic design and the structure of the Spokane Nordic website, so that people can most easily access the varied types of information they seek, such as lessons, events, grooming and conditions, info on the Ski Park, how to get into cross-country skiing, and more.

RIGHT: Michael McKay takes a breather from cutting brush.

BELOW: Sam Schlieder lops branches.



Photo: Ann Torigoe-Hawkings

Spokane Nordic member Audrey Kaplan, a website usability professional, offered to help optimize the structure of the website. Board member Mike Powers also stepped forward to help keep the site correct and updated. Thanks, Audrey and Mike!

## Volunteer Opportunities

As we head into the new season, we are looking for a few key volunteers for Winterfest and the Challenge Loppet.

### Winterfest, January 11

We need a few folks to lead or help with lunch at the Nova Hut, the Donut Dash sprint race, and projects like hauling food, morning setup, etc. Each slot is about 2 hours, so volunteers can still take in other parts of the day.

### Spokane Nordic Challenge Loppet, March 1

Help support this flagship event that saw 150 skiers last year, by filling a 2-hour slot at the food table, registration table, aid station at J1, or finish line in shifts.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, email [info@spokanenordic.org](mailto:info@spokanenordic.org). Thanks!

# Spokane Nordic Calendar 2014-15


*\*all events are at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park*

- Dec 20: First day of adult ski lessons through Spokane Nordic  
[spokanenordic.org/adult\\_lessons](http://spokanenordic.org/adult_lessons)
- Dec 20: Snowball Potluck - celebrate the first Saturday of the season  
[spokanenordic.org/snowball](http://spokanenordic.org/snowball)
- Dec 27- Adult holiday lessons available
- Jan 1: [spokanenordic.org/adult\\_lessons](http://spokanenordic.org/adult_lessons)
- Jan 3: First day of 8-week Nordic Kids and Youth Rangers  
[spokanenordic.org/nordic\\_kids](http://spokanenordic.org/nordic_kids) and [/youth\\_rangers](http://spokanenordic.org/youth_rangers)
- Jan 11: WinterFest family ski celebration with \$5 ski lessons  
[spokanenordic.org/winterfest](http://spokanenordic.org/winterfest)
- Feb 1: Souper Bowl women's ski and snowshoe celebration  
[souperbowlspokane.org](http://souperbowlspokane.org)
- Feb 8: Langlauf 10k ski race  
[spokanelanglauf.org](http://spokanelanglauf.org)
- Feb 28: Mt. Spokane Nordic Sprint Cup, incl. U-14 Championships  
info to follow
- Mar 1: Spokane Nordic Challenge 20/30/50k Loppet  
[spokanenordic.org/challenge](http://spokanenordic.org/challenge)



Spokane Nordic is committed to creating, developing and delivering programs and facilities to foster cross-country skiing within the greater Spokane community.

**Thanks to our season sponsors** Numerica Credit Union, Fitness Fanatics, Elements Massage, Camp Spalding, BeFast Sportgear and Out There Monthly... **and to all of you** for your support and involvement.



Your Spokane Nordic membership is a donation that helps accomplish the mission statement shown on the left. If you have not yet done so, **please renew your membership** this month.

**Sponsorships** of programs and events are also a valuable way for your business or workplace to support Spokane Nordic.

Visit [spokanenordic.org/donate](http://spokanenordic.org/donate) or email [info@spokanenordic.org](mailto:info@spokanenordic.org) to learn more.



## SPOKANE NORDIC MEMBERSHIP FORM

Spokane Nordic Ski Association develops and maintains trails, updates facilities, provides pocket maps and trail signs, organizes races and events, chops firewood, gives a daily online grooming and conditions report, plus a host of other services to make the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park one of the best Nordic facilities in the Pacific Northwest. We are skiers like you, supporting the trails we love, and we can't do it without YOU!

Yes! I want to become a Spokane Nordic member.

*\* Membership runs October - September. Please include payment as directed below.*

___	Member	\$30 (include payment as directed below)
___	Contributor	\$50
___	Friend	\$100
___	Advocate	\$250
___	Benefactor	\$500
___	Champion	\$1,000

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Additional family members: \_\_\_\_\_ Age (children) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In signing and submitting this form, I recognize that cross-country skiing involves strenuous activities, is potentially hazardous, and involves inherent risk. I knowingly and voluntarily assume all responsibility and risk for my actions and my family's actions while cross-country skiing, during travel related to Spokane Nordic activities or during use of Spokane Nordic facilities and equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, falls collisions, effects of weather, conditions of equipment and trails and other areas while skiing or participating in Spokane Nordic activities. I hereby for myself, my heir, administrators, or anyone else who may bring claims on my or my family members' behalf, covenant not to sue, release and discharge Spokane Nordic, its Board and Committee members, and all related organizations or individuals, for any and all claims of liability for death, personal injury, or property damage arising from my or my family members' participation in Spokane Nordic activities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

Make check(s) out to Spokane Nordic and mail your tax-deductible membership contribution with this form to: Spokane Nordic, PO Box 501, Spokane, WA, 99210.

\*Spokane Nordic is a non-profit, 501(C)(3) organization  
Learn more about our programs online at [www.spokaneNordic.org](http://www.spokaneNordic.org).  
Email questions about membership to [info@spokaneNordic.org](mailto:info@spokaneNordic.org)

# Perimeter Challenge: A Season-Long Goal

This winter, experience the Mt. Spokane trails in a new way. Throughout the season, take on the Perimeter Challenge to ski the perimeters of every major trail expansion in the Ski Park's history, starting with the initial 7 km (4 mile) stretch created before 1982 and ending with the current 26.6 km (16.5 mile) perimeter.

The season-long idea was conceived by Spokane Nordic member Jennifer Hodgdon, inspired by the map of Mt Spokane ski trail development that has been hanging in the lodge the past few years. Participants will experience the Ski Park's development first-hand, progressively increase their stamina, ski on most of our great trails (both old and new), and ideally be ready to

ski the 20km, 30km or 50km option in the Spokane Nordic Challenge Loppet on March 1.

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Ski the perimeters of every major expansion, starting with the initial 7km stretch to the current 26.6 km perimeter

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Prior to embarking on the first perimeter, skiers can register in the notebook in the Selkirk Lodge. Trail sheets will be available to take along as a guide. Each skier can then track their progress in the notebook as they complete each circuit, and record reflections as well.

The reward for the challenge? Jennifer's answer: each day is its own reward. But you'll also get a sticker at the end of the season just for trying, even if don't complete all the circuits.

Sign up with a friend, or take it solo, and glide through history this season.

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## Warming Hut Built!

The last few years have seen Mt. Spokane expand to almost 60km (36 miles) of gorgeous trails, making it one of the premier ski destinations in the NW. On a typical Saturday, you'll find yourself among many like-minded folks at the lodge and inner trails; but head to the outer trails, and you'll ski in near-solitude.

In a 2012 survey, skiers expressed interest in a warming hut at one of the farther junctions. At the same time, Ski Patrol and State Parks staff raised concerns of people getting cold or injured.

A plan began to brew and in 2013, a new warming hut project was conceived under the leadership of Spokane Nordic board member Chris Oxford. Architect and skier Kelly Lerner drew up plans for a portable 8x12 warming hut with a porch, wood stove and benches. This past summer, Chris began to put the build into motion. When he had to withdraw due to a back injury, Tim Ray stepped in to move the project to completion. A group of dedicated volunteers lent hands and hammers and by the end of November, the new hut was ready to be pulled out to its winter home.

The hut will be pulled to Junction 11 in the coming weeks. Because of shortened timelines, one wall will be plywood until next year, and the stove and permanent benches will be added next season as well.

The project was a group effort. Paul Buckland facilitated delivery of \$550 worth of beams donated by Inland Empire Paper and \$600 worth of lumber processed by Idaho Forest Products. (Inland Empire Paper Company owns the land where the hut will sit). Langlauf and Spokane Nordic each kicked in \$1,500 for additional expenses, and Parks staff will pull the hut out to Junction 11.

To date, volunteers have contributed over 340 hours. In addition to Chris and Tim, the following brave souls helped with the build: Brian Hawkins, John Hatcher, Dave Weisblat, Sam Joseph, Chris Currie, Kevin Orenstein, Stephen Willis, Tim Wright, Dave Yadon, Mary Duff and Jim Oxford. Thanks to all of you for your significant work on this important new addition to the Ski Park!



Photos: Tim Ray



Spokane Nordic  
 P.O.Box 501  
 Spokane, WA 99210

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**SPOKANE NORDIC WINTERFEST 20 X 15**

- \$5 Adult Ski Lessons
- Cider Trail to Lunch & Cider
- Guided Back-country Ski Trek
- Donut Dash Relay Race
- Skijoring & Waxing Clinics
- Back-country Ski Clinic
- Scavenger Hunt
- Ski & Hok Demos

Sunday Jan. 11, 2015, 9:00 - 4:00  
 Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT [SPOKANENORDIC.ORG/WINTERFEST](http://SPOKANENORDIC.ORG/WINTERFEST)

*\*PLUS: group snowshoe trek to the new snowshoe warming hut!*

**SPOKANE NORDIC SKI ASSOCIATION**