

SPOKANE NORDIC NEWS

Volume 9, Issue 2 November, 2013

Gary Silver Award Honors Parks Staff

by John McCarthy

Each year, Spokane Nordic considers individuals or entities who have made significant contributions to Nordic skiing in our region, and picks one to receive the Gary Silver Award. This year, as with all years, a number of very worthy names were up for consideration. We are very pleased to announce that the 2014 Gary Silver Award goes to Steve Christensen and his crew at the Mt. Spokane State Park.

Steve and his team have made a huge long-term contribution to the Nordic experience. Steve has been at Mt. Spokane as Park Manager for twelve years; Ranger Jerry Johnson joined him eight years ago. Chad Sellers has been head mechanic for over ten years, and Nathan Dronenburg is entering his third year operating the groomer.

Their contributions have been both very visible and sometimes markedly subtle, and frankly, I and maybe you have come to expect them. There's the day-to-day work, like plowing, grooming, enforcement, shoveling, vehicle battery-charging, dealing with vehicular accidents, and summer trail work.

There's all the effort they put into helping make events happen, like Langlauf, Souper Bowl, JNQ, Selkirk Challenge and for the first time this year, WinterFest.

Then there's the behind-the-scenes activity: going to the state Winter Recreation Advisory Committee (WRAC) on our behalf to get a \$250,000 trail groomer, collaborating with

Inland Empire Paper (last year's Gary Silver recipient) to add more trails, and sitting on the grooming committee and the all-trails committee to ensure all voices are heard.

It's easy to become frustrated the odd time the lodge is not open, or there's been heavy snowfall in the past hour and the lot isn't plowed yet, or the trails that were groomed overnight have since been covered by snowfall. If there are trees down, we are inconvenienced and wonder when things will get fixed.

We have come to appreciate amenities that go beyond the \$80 per vehicle we pay for a year of optimal skiing. (I just checked and the cost for my family of four in the Methow, the only comparable ski area in the state, is \$88 for just one day—almost \$1,000 per year.) It's good to reminded of all the amazing things Steve and his staff do with such finite resources.

In short, Steve Christensen and his crew have helped make invigorating,

health-promoting winter activities available to literally thousands of skiers. The next time you see Steve or any of his crew, let them know how much you appreciate all their efforts on behalf of all of us.

The Gary Silver Award will be presented to Steve and the rest of the Mt. Spokane staff at WinterFest on January 19.

John is President of the Spokane Nordic board



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Catch the Spirit at Winterfest

by Brad Thiessen

Book January 19 on your calendar and head up to Mt. Spokane for a celebration of skiing, snow and (hopefully) sunshine. The first-ever Spokane Nordic WinterFest will be a day of fun events for all ages and ski abilities. Pick your favorite event, or take in the whole day.

Registration is free, but necessary for most activities. Go to spokanenordic.org/winterfest to see the schedule, full details and registration. Register by December 1 and you'll be entered to win an REI Flash 18 Pack!

Events are structured throughout the day so that it is possible to participate in all of them, and include:

Donut Dash

A fun-filled two-person relay sprint race featuring frequent prize drawings and "frosting" of racers by bystanders. Sign up for either the lighthearted or competitive category. Teams of mixed ages and genders will add to the fun. Every team is guaranteed at least two races.

Cider Trail

An easy-going "folk ski" from Selkirk Lodge to Nova Hut, with bowls of soup and mugs of hot cider waiting at the destination.

Back-Cider Trail

A guided moderate-difficulty "backcountry" trail route from Selkirk Lodge to Nova Hut, with bowls of soup and mugs of hot cider waiting at the destination.

Back-Country Skiing Clinic: This 3-hour morning clinic will cover a number of back-country skills and topics including ascent and descent techniques, with an ascent to the summit of Mt. Spokane. Participants can use either AT (alpine touring) or telemark gear. Rentals are available at Mountain Gear in Spokane.

Ski Lessons: Free 45-minute ski lessons will be offered throughout the day for all levels, classic or skate style.

Gary Silver Award Presentation: Join in thanking Steve Christensen and Mt. Spokane Park staff for their outstanding contribution to Nordic skiing in Spokane.

Discounted Ski Rentals: REI Spokane is offering a \$15 discount on ski rentals for WinterFesters, bringing the cost down to \$20 for the day. See spokanenordic.org/winterfest for details.

Plus a ski patrol demonstration and display of the groomer.



Nothin' Half-Baked About It

- by Karen Momany

A big thank you to our Spokane Nordic bakers, who continue to outdo themselves at the 5th annual Banff Mountain Film Festival Bake Sale! We had a wonderful variety of bars, brownies, cookies, and even homemade dog biscuits. If you haven't been to the Film Festival, Spokane Nordic is positively promoted by Paul Fish, owner of Mountain Gear, before the films start. This venue is a great way for people to hear and learn about Spokane Nordic. He encourages everyone to "dig deep" for our cause. So we are really proud to display the wonderful trays of goodies that are quickly snatched up by hungry folks! Over the three evenings, we made \$2230.11 and to date, the bake sale has raised \$10,924.77 for Spokane Nordic! And rest assured, the cookies that were left over didn't go to waste. Many went to the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant to be given out during their shopping day, and four big trays were delivered to the children of the Hutton Settlement.

Thank you for continuing to respond to our call during this time of year for a very important fundraiser for Spokane Nordic! Whether you are a seasoned Banff Baker (and we have a lot) or a new recruit, we couldn't do it without you!



A few of the many bake sale volunteers: (l-r) Karen Momany, Corinn Bryant, Haley Momany, Alison Wiener, Steve Weinberger and George Momany

Step up to the Nordic Kids

by Alison Ljaboe

Weren't we all surprised and excited recently to look out our windows and see SNOW so early in the season?! I know my kids and I were definitely thinking about getting our skis on when we saw those first powdery flakes.

Another terrific ski season is upon us and for Nordic Kids that means new "snow eaters" entering the program. I feel this is going to be a banner year, especially with the new three-hour Saturday Youth Rangers program, for kids 10-15 years old. I'm incredibly excited about this new program, which is a next step for those who are looking to use their Nordic skiing skills as a base for wider experience in winter survival, ski patrol, ski instruction, and other aspects of Nordic Skiing.

One of the challenges we've always had is making sure students are placed in the right classes from the beginning. With only seven lessons, we want to reduce the number of class changes as much as possible so the students become comfortable with their coaches and have enough time to make friends with the other students in their class. In JK Rowling's ski world there would be a "Sorting Hat" located in a place of honor in the Selkirk Lodge. Once placed upon a child's head the Sorting Hat would cry "Chipmunks!" or "Foxes!" and there the child would be placed.

Without the magic of Harry Potter, we do our best to place children with friends and according to age and ability.



Sorting Hat

In an effort to continue to grow and improve the Nordic Kids program, Chris Oxford had a terrific idea to hold an Orientation Day prior to the beginning of the season. **The Orientation Day will take place on Dec 14 at 1 pm up at Mt. Spokane.** It will be a fun time of ski activities, a chance for kids to warm up their ski legs and get excited for the season. It's also a chance for the kids to be evaluated by the instructors, to help ensure they are put into a class that will match their level of skill and comfort.

So do your best to make it to Orientation Day. If the early snow is any indication, this is going to be a fantastic ski season and the kids will have a lot of fun getting to know their classmates and coaches before the season!

Alison is a Spokane Nordic board member.

December 14
at a ski park *near you*

YOUTH RANGERS > new kids' program debuts!

Check out Youth Rangers, a next step for kids 10-15 years old who are looking to use their Nordic skiing skills as a base for wider experience in winter survival, ski patrol, ski instruction, and other aspects of cross-country skiing. **Sessions (subject to change):**

- ◆ Back-country skiing ◆ Orienteering
- ◆ Alpine Safety and Survival Skills
- ◆ Introduction to Ski Patrol ◆ Skate Skiing
- ◆ Intro. to State Park Rangers ◆ Ski Instructing

The class is already half full, so head to spokanenordic.org/youth_rangers to learn more and sign up!

Cost: \$125 per Ranger
Dates: Saturdays Jan 4-Feb 22
Time: 9 a.m. - noon, plus helping at up to 3 Nordic Kids sessions

Adult Lessons Start December 1

- by Lisa Sunderman

Want to get your season started off right and ski with like-minded adults? Spokane Nordic Ski School's Adult Ski Lesson Program begins in December! Whether you're in it to relax, get fit, or race, you can grow as a skier this year. Take part in skills and drills, intervals, games and camaraderie. All lessons feature a small participant-to-coach ratio. Sign up for all-

The first 40 women who sign up for Gals Get Going lessons receive a BeFAST sport headband.

women (Gals Get Going) or mixed gender, by ability level, and skate or classic style.

Saturday adult lessons are from 9:30 to 11:30 Dec. 7-28 and the cost is \$25 each. Gals Get Going women's lessons will meet for two sessions this year. December lessons will be Sundays 9:30-11:30 starting Dec 8. The second session will run 4 weeks in February. The first 40 women to sign up will get a BeFast headband! Meet for all lessons at the Selkirk Lodge at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park.

Sign up and get more info at spokanenordic.org/adult_lessons or by contacting Lisa Sunderman at (509) 808-3706 or lsunderman@numericacu.com.

And don't forget the free 45-minute lessons at WinterFest January 19—perfect for that friend, spouse, co-worker or family member who talks about how they've always wanted to give cross-country skiing a try. Send them over to spokanenordic.org/winterfest to sign up!

- Lisa is a Spokane Nordic board member



Summer Volunteering, by the Numbers

- from a report by Brian Hawkins

An impressive amount of work was accomplished through the summer Trail Days, with extra work by a few die-hards on the side.

- Total number of volunteers: **72**
- Total number of volunteer hours: **925**
- Kilometers of trail cleared of downed trees, brush, alder and limbs: **55**
- Cords of wood cut and split for Selkirk Lodge and Nova Hut: **4**
- Number of lodges caulked, painted, and stained: **1**
- Trails added: **1** (Outer Limits trail, 8.5 km)
- New equipment added from Spokane Nordic funds: **6** Pruners, **1** Gas powered brush cutter, **1** chainsaw.

A big thanks to key leaders of this summer's efforts: Sam Schlieder, George Bryant and Brian Hawkins. In addition, eight people donated more than 24 hours of their time this year: Sam Schlieder, Art Bookstrom, Carl Sunderman, Lew Seville, Scott Redman, Tom Frost, Alan Hodgdon and Gwen Pentecost.

Brian is a volunteer on the Grooming and Trails Committee and led the Trail Days program this summer.



Scott Redman lops overhanging limbs on the new 8.5 km Outer Limits trail.



EVENTS

Dec 1	First official day of grooming (snow permitting)
Dec 14	Orientation day for Nordic Kids & Youth Rangers
Jan 19	Spokane Nordic WinterFest ski festival
Feb 2	Souperbowl
Feb 9	Langlauf 10 km Race
March 2	Selkirk Challenge Loppet 20/35/50 km ski tour

Area Races

Jan 4	Cougar Gulch 5/10km, Schweitzer Mtn
Jan 4-5	Race of the Methow
Feb 1	Chewelah Peak Challenge, 49 Degrees North

Nordic Kids Lessons: Main Program

Saturdays Jan 4-Feb 15, NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

Nordic Kids Lessons: Sunday Program

Sundays Jan 5 - Feb 16, NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

**enrollment is limited*

Youth Rangers Program

Saturdays Jan 4-Feb 15, 9:00 am - noon;

assist with NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

**enrollment is limited*

Adult Single-Day Lessons

For men and women, all skill levels, skate or classic style

**Can be taken as a progressive lesson program*

Saturdays Dec 7-28, 9:30-11:30 am

9:30-11:30 a.m. or 1:00-3:00 pm

Gals Get Going December 4-week Session

Available for all skill levels and skate or classic style

Sundays Dec 8-29, 9:30-11:30 am

Gals Get Going February 4-Week Session

Available for all skill levels and skate or classic style

Saturdays in February. More details to follow.

Spokane Parks and Rec. 1-day Beginner Adult Lessons

**all lessons 10:00-2:00. More info at spokaneparks.org*

Dec 22 & 28; Jan 4, 12, 19, 23

**unless noted, all events are at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park*

Sno-Park Permit

A Sno-Park Permit is required to park within Mt. Spokane State Park, including the Cross-Country Ski Park parking lot. The price is \$22 per day, or \$84 for the season, and can be purchased locally at Fitness Fanatics, Mountain Gear or REI. Each permit is good for one vehicle only; you cannot transfer it between vehicles. The Sno-Park Permit pays for parking lot snow removal and trail grooming. State funds pay for Selkirk Lodge maintenance, rest rooms, etc.

Directions to Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park

Mt. Spokane State Park has one main entrance at the end of State Road 206, otherwise known as Mt. Spokane Park Drive, about 15 miles east of U.S. Hwy 2. The Park office is just inside the boundary on the left. This Nordic area is a little over 3 1/4 miles up the paved road from the main entrance. Follow the main road to the top where the summit road goes left (often gated and unrecognizable in winter) and the road to the alpine ski area goes straight and downhill. The road leading up to the Selkirk Lodge and Nordic Ski area is on the right, running through the large snowmobile/hiker parking lot.



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



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.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Member	\$30 (include payment as directed below)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributor	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friend	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advocate	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/>	Benefactor	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/>	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.
Email questions about membership to info@spokaneNordic.org

BRING ON WINTER!

from newly-pro skier and Spokane native Annie Pokorny

We've all heard it. We've read it in status', seen it on Instagram and heard it in Tweets. We're printing it on t-shirts and writing it on signs. The Farmer's Almanac, NBC and my Dad have all uttered the eager warning made famous by the fur-clad supermodels of HBO. You know what I'm talking about: Winter is coming.

Or is it?

Here's the thing. After a few shabby winters filled with snow-chasing, I'm less and less inclined to believe it when someone tells me that this is it, the winter we've all been waiting for. I'm not trying to be pessimistic here—I'm usually annoyingly optimistic. I just can't ignore the science behind warnings of global warming. Stats like you'll find at <http://350.org/about/science> brought me to commit to skiing this year, because it told me that the option might not be there much longer.

My commitment to facts and rationality being stated, I can't altogether deny that I believe in luck. Really, I believe in making my own. Some people call it superstition, I just call it proactivity. Far be it from me to claim command over the metaphysical current of the universe, BUT, every fall, when I intentionally underdress for the season, it snows. Ankle socks in October? Snow. T-shirts and thin layers? Snow. Not saying, just saying.

So, just a couple weeks out from our first races of the season, I thought it would be prudent to research what others have done to hurry winter along. I found some interesting results. Below is a list of my favorite methods, chosen from the advice of ski bums, Norse medicine men and small children everywhere. If you want to pitch in and help me recover from my environmental pessimism, try a few!

Because, you know, teamwork.

1. **Dress inappropriately for the weather.** My own personal method. Mother nature always falls for reverse psychology. Don't overdo it, though. Nobody likes pneumonia.

2. **Place a spoon under your pillow.** I can't say I've ever

tried this technique, but I have close sources that affirm its effectiveness. Something about the spoon stirring the worlds of dream and reality to create a snowy gap in the space-time continuum. Or something.

3. **Wear your PJs inside-out.** This one is particularly popular on the little kids' blogs. I do wonder, what if you sleep naked? Asking for a friend.

4. **Flush ice down the toilet.** "All drains lead to the ocean!"

5. **Chant "Heikki Lunta" over and over.** And over. Chanting the name of the Finnish snow god got a bunch of snowmobilers in Michigan enough snow to run an important race. Hey man, if it works fer da' UP, it works for me!

6. While we're appealing to the gods, a **sacrifice to Ullr** wouldn't kill anyone. Well, other than the animal/person/object being sacrificed, but I think it's worth a shot.

7. **Karma.** Whether you believe in it, or just believe in skiing, a donation to keep this aspiring pro skier stocked up on Raman noodles and Lycra couldn't hurt.



Bow and arrow biathlon?

Sign Me Up.

That's all I got. Don't slip during your snowdance!

You can support Annie at anniespokorner.wordpress.com/support/.

SNOWBALL POTLUCK

Celebrate the first Saturday of grooming at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park by sharing a meal with your fellow skiers. Bring your dish to the Selkirk Lodge at noon. The first possible day is December 7, and with the early snow we've had, will likely be the date. We'll keep you up to date by email and Facebook as the day approaches. Put it on your calendar!



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

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First Choice Health
Healthy Employers. Healthy Companies.

SPOKANE NORDIC WINTERFEST
20 X 14

- Donut Dash relay race
- Cider Trail to lunch and cider
- Free 45-minute ski lessons
- Back-country ski clinic
- Back-Cider trail trek

... and more!

Sunday Jan. 19, 2014, 9:00 - 4:00
Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT SPOKANENORDIC.ORG/WINTERFEST