



# SnowLine

The Official Newsletter of the  
**TAHOE NORDIC SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC.**  
 Lake Tahoe • Truckee • Donner Summit

**E**lections to the Board of Directors; awarding the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team Member of 2002; the latest Team news and views; and a complimentary dinner: these are but a few of the reasons you'll want to attend the final Nordic Team meeting of the 2001-2002 winter season. It happens Monday night, May 6, 6:00 PM at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut. The year-end Team meeting is always entertaining—the warm weather and long days get everyone in a loose and giddy mood. So, program your VCR to tape those *Dukes of Hazard* reruns you might miss, then make your way to the Granlibakken ski hill. Bring your appetite, some slides of past adventures (there'll be a projector and screen ready to go), and the good spirit that gives the Nordic Team such a lively pulse. See you there!

## Searches/Rescues

During a stormy March 16, Truckeeite Gerrard Cash, 46, managed not only to get himself lost, but to bog his snowmobile down in the deep powder snow. He went missing from his camp near Webber Lake, north of Truckee Town. Early the next morning, along with search crews from Sierra, Placer, and Washoe counties, Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team was dispatched to search for Gerrard. At 10:00 AM, Gerrard rode back into camp, surviving the powdery night in fine shape despite his less-than-adequate cotton clothing (he was wet to the knees). Food vans from the Salvation Army and Washoe County supplied the searchers with much fare, including doughnuts and sushi, thrilling the searchers and drawing bears from hibernation.

The next weekend (another stormy one), snowboarders Michael Perin and Kyle Declercq, both 21 and from the Bay Area, traveled with friends up to Sugar Bowl to ride the steep and deep. On March 23, during the low visibility of the storm,

Michael and Kyle managed to ride through the ski area boundary and enter the Onion Creek watershed—the stage of so many search

At the end of the previous day, Michael and Kyle's friends finished their ski day and headed back to the Bay Area without them.

They reasoned their friends had hustled another ride back to the Bay—and hey, the fact that Michael and Kyle's street clothes were still in the car is something that even Sherlock Holmes could have overlooked, right? Anyhoo... their buddies eventually put two and two together and alarmed the authorities.

Eight Team skiers, two Team snowmobilers, and two Team snowcats (and yes, their drivers) descended on the scene. The previous day a CHP helicopter had spotted two errant snowboard tracks. That's where the Nordic Team searchers started.

Michael and Kyle's tracks were obvious enough in the deep powder snow, but as the searchers followed them they were drawn into a maze of criss-crossing and circling trails that only a fractal mathematician could love. The boarders' first-night bivouac was located, complete with candy wrappers, a spent lighter, and half burned dollar bills—a legal tender testimony to a failed campfire. At 11:00 PM Michael and Kyle were found. They were dressed well, but cold and hungry and ready to end this adventure. Nordic Team Vice President Steve Twomey commented on how unconcerned the two

were about their predicament. Panic was not the vibe. Michael queried the Team as whether



*Team skier Jeff Rieger about to swing 'em into the central couloir on Castle Peak.  
 Photograph by Randall Osterhuber*

dramas before them. On the evening of March 24 Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team was called to search for the two young men.

**Next General Meeting is Monday, May 6, 2002, 6:00 pm at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut**



"You guys always work this late?" All were back at Ice Lakes Lodge by midnight.

These were the Nordic Team's eleventh and twelfth searches of the season.

## Gratitude

As the winter winds down it is time to give thanks to all the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team members who have donated countless hours of their busy lives so that others can live. This is an all-volunteer effort and if you've done anything to further the Team's enterprise and goals you are to be congratulated. Special thanks to: Jackie Thomas and her dispatch crew, tying up the phone lines for the good cause; Mark Johnson, and Roman Fall—two of our three webmasters-at-large—who keep the virtual search world alive; Dick and Deena Schoonmaker for traveling every year all the way from Ohio to help with The Great Ski Race; and all the skiers, snowmobilers, snowcat drivers, Education Committee members, Team directors, and Great Ski Race volunteers who have supported—directly or indirectly—the Team's search efforts (so far) this season.

A couple more Team members need to be singled out. Holly Beatie, Jim Coffey, Mike Kennett, Dirk Schoonmaker, Peter Sporleder, Terri Viehmann, and Bob Wright have all been nominated as Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team Member of the Year.

Holly Beatie totally rallied this year by taking over the prize acquisitions for The Great Ski Race. This job alone takes much time, organization, and tenacity. Holly made it work.

Jim Coffey has stepped up to the plate more than once. From running Team trainings to repainting all The Great Ski Race signs (no small job), and as a key player of the Winter Awareness program, Jim is always there.

Mike Kennett—"Mikey" to all on the Nordic Team—has become a stalwart of Team trainings and searches. As a lead skier for the Team, Mikey is prepared, knowledgeable, and

a valuable asset to the rescue community. His dry, quick wit always leavens the moment. Gearing up at the start of the Evan Matteo search last December, Team skier Doug Read slipped into one of the Team's bright-yellow Patagonia parkas. "Just call me Bumblebee", Doug joked. Mikey looked at him, responding, "I already do."

Dirk Schoonmaker has his fingers in every slice of the Nordic Team's pie. The Education Committee, The Great Ski Race, the Team truck and equipment, and searches and trainings have all been bettered by the skill and energy of Dirk. There's no obstacle that will slow Dirk down.

Peter Sporleder—Team banjo player (*What do you say to a banjo player in a three-piece suit? Defendant please rise.*) and computer guru—revived the Team's web site and made it practically a real-time affair. Peter posts accounts of our searches up on the web site before the ice melts off your ski bindings. Peter was also instrumental in making on-line Great Ski Race registration a reality this year.

Team Secretary Terri Viehmann is a one-woman whirlwind of energy and efficiency. The Team's business has grown increasingly complex as the Team has grown and matured. Terri handles the writing of countless letters, meeting minutes, keeps the Team's callout list updated, and when no one is bugging her, can enter Great Ski Racer data at better than 90 per hour. Terri *actually* returns phone calls and email messages too. In today's business world that's no small idiosyncrasy.

Bob Wright, born and bred on Tahoe's North Shore, single-handedly launched the Team's Education video project—a significant step for the Team. Bob then walked the talk by writing and securing several grants to support the project.

Thanks Holly, Jim, Mikey, Dirk, Peter, Terri, and Bob!

## One More Time

Another reminder... We're redoing our roster, so if you'd like to stay on the mailing

list for *SnowLine*, please mail us (PO Box 7703, Tahoe City, CA 96145) the address panel of this newsletter no later than July 1, 2002. If we don't hear from you we'll assume you want to be removed from the mailing list.

If you've already responded, not necessary to do it again—and thanks!

## It's Never Over

This is the last issue of *SnowLine* until late September, but by no means is that indicative of the Team's activity. Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team is a year-round rescue group. Just because the ski areas are closing doesn't mean our work is done. As long as there are mountain adventures and mountain adventurers the Nordic Team will remain taut and ready to roll.

In the meantime, my unsolicited advice: Ski faster, drive slower, and fight that weakness for the cheating side of town. Have a great summer!

—Randall Osterhuber

## Team Officers

President	Joe Pace	583-1806
Vice President	Steve Twomey	525-7280
Treasurer	Scott Schroepfer	546-2809
Secretary	Terri Viehmann	582-1695
Board Members	Karen Honeywell	546-8609
	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
	Randy Sharp	587-2877
	Russ Viehmann	582-1695
Directors-at-large	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Douglas Read	583-6381
	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376

## Committee Chairs

Cuisine	Debra Schroepfer	546-2809
Dispatch	Jackie Thomas	587-2687
Education	Karen Honeywell	546-8609
Equipment	Russ Viehmann	582-1695
Great Ski Race™	Douglas Read	583-6381
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
Newsletter	Scoop Remenih	583-1684
Snowcats	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Snowmobiles	Paul Honeywell	546-8609
Training	Bernie Mellor	546-2238

All phone numbers area code (530).

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