

Old Faithful blows off steam every 90 minutes. Punxsutawney Phil shows (or hides) his head every February 2nd. Berkeley's Rocky Horror Theatre shows the Rocky Horror Picture show every Saturday night at midnight. Every August, the last Saturday in August to be precise, a Man is burned in the Black Rock desert. And most importantly, TNSAR meets the first Monday of every month, except of course summer months and the Monday directly after the GSR (but who's keeping track anyways). So don't get burned, get to the Granlibakken Hut, Monday, January 5th, 6:30pm.

Hard to be Happy as the New Year dawns and so much is wrong in the universe. It gets more and more difficult to look at 2009 with hopeful expectation knowing that the global economic crisis gets worse with every nightly newscast; knowing that deadly bombs continue to fall from foreign skies; knowing that at any moment Santa Claus could knock on the door and then methodically murder everyone in the house; knowing that every day some children die from starvation while other kids die from obesity; knowing that one minute you're out walking in the woods and the next minute you are run over by a freight train; knowing that no matter how you slice it, no one gets out of here alive. But I'm an optimist. I try hard to see the silver lining even when tears fog up my goggles. Winter has finally arrived and with particular gusto this time around. And just in time. Just a few short weeks ago we were out riding our bicycles. (Some of us even managed to stay upright and not fall down and break ribs and puncture lungs. Anybody emulating Doug's pre-winter training regime? Anybody?) Now burger joints are selling burgers. Snow relocation technicians are pushing snow hither and yon. No Vacancy signs are brightly lit. Ski schools are churning out this year's crop of skiers and boarders. Popcorn overfloweth at our humble movie theatres. Our resort community is once again alive and well, at least for now. At least while the white stuff falls from the sky and trumps the lagging economy. It is hard not to wonder, though, as Richard Russo

does in *Bridge of Sighs*, if that what provides for us is the very thing that poisons us? Three Mile Island. Coal sludge. Powder fever. Whether we like it or not, those of us who choose to play outside in the winter wonderland live with the distinct possibility that one day our love of snow may be our undoing. And here we are again, faced with yet another avalanche fatality, mourning yet another local kid who simply loved to ski. Randall Davis. Christmas day, December 25th, 2008. Inbounds of all places, Poulsen's Gully to be precise. The wrong place at the wrong time. Our hearts and prayers go out to Randall's mom Nanci. Ironically, we should all be thankful that inbound avalanche fatalities are statistically uncommon, at least compared to out of bounds avalanche deaths. The last inbounds avalanche fatality in the Sierras occurred 28 years ago on November 29th, 1985. At Sugarbowl of all places. The last out of bounds avalanche fatality occurred on December 27th, 2008. Just a few days ago in the Colorado backcountry. To date, 9 people have died in avalanches so far this season. And need I remind anyone that the season has just begun.....

Scared Straight Ready to off-load your skis and voluntarily surrender your season pass? Not so fast. This is your call to action. This is your chance to call Sara Carbonari after-hours and sign up for TNSAR's third grade winter education program. Go ahead, call her at midnight and sign up. I'll take the rap. Tell her you were inspired to make a difference and couldn't wait until morning. A third grader will thank you.

Heuristic Traps Go ahead, look it up. Hopefully your google search leads you to Ian McCammon's excellent article about how decision making influences out of bounds avalanche accidents. McCammon cites a related article which found that 83% of avalanche accidents were due to decision making errors rather than subtleties of the terrain or snowpack. Indeed, McCammon's study suggests that oftentimes poor decision making negates the benefits of knowledge and experience, especially for skiers with advanced

avalanche skills. That's just downright spooky. McCammon's research suggests, quite convincingly, that we may be our own worst enemy when it comes to making decisions in the backcountry because we tend to fall into these poor decision making traps. Despite knowing better. Despite having skills and training to use those skills. McCammon concludes that avalanche education needs to provide tools for managing these common traps. This is a must read and deserves far more attention than I have space to offer here. Check it out. Pass it on. Do it.

Snowmobile Team Hard at work somewhere in hell. As in Hellhole Reservoir. Sledheads are all smiles now that winter is here.



Bowing deeply to Mother Nature----B. Wright

Team Officers

President	Russ Viehmann	525-6978
Vice President	Brian York	583-0465
Treasurer	Scott Schroepfer	546-2809
Secretary	Pam LeFrancois	546-7393
Board Members	Paul Honeywell	546-8609
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	Jimmy Smith	582-4448
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	Doug Read	583-6381
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Committee Chairs

Cuisine	Debra Schroepfer	546-2809
Dispatch	Terri Viehmann	525-6978
Education	Sara Barrett	386-2751
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Equipment	Brian York	583-0465
Great Ski Race	Doug Read	583-6381
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Newsletter	Bob Wright	546-7273
Snowcats	Scoop Remenih	583-1684
Snowmobiles	TJ Johnson	308-2530
Technology	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
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	Jim Reinstra	546-7188
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The next TNSAR meeting is Monday, January 5th, 6:30pm at
the Granlibakken ski hut.

please keep us informed of your correct address!

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January 2009



SnowLine

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

January Trainings

January 19th ---Monday

Where: Squaw Valley and Beyond
When: 7:45am Garage, 8:15am Tram
building

Contact: Peter York (use current callout list for phone). Pete will be taking folks under the ropes at Squaw Valley. If you miss the tram ride you will be dropped. Please call Pete and let him know you're coming.

January 24th---Saturday

Where: North Star

When: 8am at Team Garage, 8:30am at the trailhead.

Contact: Chris McConnell (use current callout list for phone). Chris will be leading a full day training for skiers, snowmobilers, and snowcats on the finer art of towing. This is a must do training for anyone who ever wants to go out on a search. Practice makes perfect and this is a skill you don't want to mess up on. Some people even think this is fun. Check it out for yourself.

Don't have your OES card yet? Talk to Sage at the upcoming TNSAR meeting. OES cards are easy to get and mandatory to have for all TNSAR sponsored trainings. Don't be shy, sign up and smile for the camera. No background checks required.