

SPOKANE NORDIC NEWS

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One man's venture into the unknown

by Darryl Potyk

"I'm supposed to do *what?* Take eight five-year-olds out into the cold for two hours and bring them back *happy?*"

I'd seen it done, but now it was my turn. Driving up to the mountain that morning, I was surprised by my rising anxiety. Our twin boys had been involved with Nordic Kids for the past two years, during which time we did our part in terms of checking kids in and out, setting up and ensuring there was enough hot chocolate and cookies afterward.

Now, my daughter was old enough to participate, but she agreed to do so only if I taught her class. What did I know about teaching Nordic skiing? I had spent the last two years pulling her around in a sled and slowly getting to know the trail system.

As we pulled into the parking lot that morning, it dawned on me that not only was I expect-

ed to take them out into the cold and bring them back happy, I was also supposed to teach them something. That anxious feeling I had was quickly becoming a sense of impending doom. There was no turning back. I checked in, got my pin, grabbed as many Skittles as I could carry, identified all the Foxes—some of whom were more enthusiastic than oth-

ers—and away we went.

I had attended the instructor's class several weeks earlier. I had paid attention but honestly, I spent a good deal of the time thinking, "Who am I kidding? I'm an imposter."

Well, out to the learning area we went, with me trying to remember what I had "learned."

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Setting Skiing-Specific Goals

by Matt Halloran

Ten years ago, I attended a lecture on goal-setting given by an Olympic bi-athlete. I will summarize two hours of speaking into one sentence: Goal setting is important if you would like to improve.

This isn't earth-shattering news by any stretch of the imagination. While most of us spend little time thinking explicitly about "goal setting," we still use it with great success every day.

Here is an analogy that makes goal-setting and goal-tracking easier to interpret. Every day I get in my car with the intent of going to work. I take the same route and more or less park in the

same spot and walk the same path to my desk.

The entire time I am on my way to work, my subconscious is keeping track to let me know that I am still going the correct direction and will eventually reach my destination. In goals terminology these are "checkpoints." If, while on my way to work, I come across a traffic accident and am forced to turn off the normal route, I still have the same goal of getting to work, but my path has changed.

Going to work is goal setting, just too routine to acknowledge.

Most people have never considered setting skiing-specific goals, and that makes sense, as

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A Fond Farewell By Tom Schaaf



Tom Schaaf

This is my last President's letter as Spokane Nordic prepares for election of new officers. I have had a great couple of years leading the board and working with (and for) all of you. I have been thinking back on my evolution from someone who showed up for Nordic Kids, Langlauf or for a day of skiing and took for granted that this stuff just happened.

There is a tremendous amount of work that goes on behind the scenes even for a normal day of skiing, and we all need to thank Steve Christianson and his colleagues at Mt. Spokane State Park for

the grooming, plowing, park maintenance and safety work they do.

There are a number of folks who also need to be recognized: Trond and Alison Liaboe for their work with Nordic Kids; Art Bookstrom for his trail work; George, Matt and Jud for their work with the teams; John McCarthy (and many others) for organizing the Group Health Pursuit; George Momany for his work with the WRAC; John Hatcher for setting up the "Selkirk Challenge" every year; all of the folks behind the Langlauf race and Souper Bowl; the SNSEF Board; and a whole slew of folks who started the ball rolling thirty-some years ago.

It is the good work of a lot of people that makes it possible for us to go out and enjoy a day of skiing. Thank them when you see them!

- Tom is outgoing President of the Spokane Nordic Board

Nordic Kids in Full Swing

Almost 140 kids headed up the hill for this year's first Nordic Kids ski lesson day, January 7. Thanks to Trond and Alison Liaboe for all their volunteer efforts running the program, and to all the parents who are helping out on the trails and in the lodge.



Some of the 2012 Nordic Kids instructors

Caught in the Act

> members share their skiing lives

Lou Slak

>First Nordic Experience:

"When I was a ski bum in Vail, CO, I would longingly watch Nordic skiers glide through beautiful back-country bowls. At the time, cross country ski gear could only be purchased in Europe, and nothing was available to buy or rent in Vail. When I moved to Spokane, I purchased my first pair of cross country skis and skied the local golf course terrain. That was before we had this Mt. Spokane cross-country gem."

>Gear:

Classic: Fischer RCS skis, Salomon boots, SWIX carbon poles; Skate: Atomic Beta Race skis, Salomon boots, SWIX Carbonlite poles; Touring: Fischer Nordic Cruise skis, Salomon boots, SWIX Nordic touring poles

>Favorite Trail:

"I enjoy some trails for classic and others for skate, but I love all the trails at Mt. Spokane."

>Most Memorable Nordic Moment:

"When I learned to skate ski."

>Little Known Fact:

Lou and her husband Frank introduced skate skiing to the Spokane Mountaineers. She and four of her grandchildren are participating in Nordic Kids this year.



EVENTS

Jan 14	Nordic Kids ski lessons Adult ski lessons
Jan 15	<i>Gals Get Going</i> women's beginning ski team
Jan 21	Nordic Kids ski lessons Cougar Gulch Ski Race, Schweitzer Mtn. Resort
Jan 22	<i>Gals Get Going</i> women's beginning ski team
Jan 28	Nordic Kids ski lessons Adult ski lessons
Jan 29	<i>Gals Get Going</i> women's beginning ski team
Feb 4	Nordic Kids ski lessons Adult ski lessons
Feb 5	Souper Bowl snowshoe and ski event
Feb 11	*no Nordic Kids ski lessons
Feb 12	Langlauf 10k Ski Race
Feb 18	*no Nordic Kids ski lessons Group Health Pursuit (JNQ) race preparation
Feb 19	Group Health Pursuit (JNQ) race
Feb 26	Selkirk Challenge race
Mar 3	Nordic Kids potluck and games

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

Directions to Mt. Spokane Nordic Ski Trails

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 snowmobile/hiker parking lot.



Spokane Nordic
Ski Education Foundation

The Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation is your very own non-profit group that works with the Mt. Spokane State Park on trail grooming, sponsors Spokane Nordic Kids and the Mt. Spokane Nordic Racing Team, makes facilities improvements and keeps an eye on the future of the Mount Spokane Nordic Area.

Souper Bowl

On February 5th at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Area, women can snowshoe on designated trails, take part in the Poker Ski, and enjoy a hot meal courtesy of the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant. And of course, there'll be prizes!

Go to www.souperbowlspokane.org to learn more and register.

Proceeds support the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant.

Langlauf

Check out the 10k Langlauf classic ski race, February 12 at the the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. It's fun for the whole family! Go to spokanelanglauf.org to learn more and register in the Elite, Fast, Sport or Fun category.

Selkirk Challenge

This 35K 'fun' race on February 26 uses most of the trails on Mt. Spokane. Start any time after 9:00 a.m. Learn more or register at Fitness Fanatics in Spokane or by emailing jphatcher@msn.com.

Adult Ski Lessons

Adults ski lessons are available at Mt. Spokane from 1:15-2:45 on January 14, 28 and 4th. Free for parents of Nordic Kids, \$25 for others. Contact tliaboehotstart.com to register.

Sno-Park pass

A Sno-Park Pass is required to use the parking lot at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. The price is \$20 per day, or \$80 for the season (\$40 pass and \$40 special grooming permit). The passes are good for one vehicle only; you cannot transfer the pass between vehicles. The Sno-Park pass pays for parking lot snow removal and trail grooming. State funds pay for Selkirk Lodge maintenance, rest rooms, etc.

Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation

Membership Form

Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation **teaches** all ages how to Nordic (cross-country) ski, **develops and maintains** the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park (in cooperation with Mt. Spokane State Park, Inland Paper and other agencies), **hosts** ski competitions and events, and **informs** the community about cross-country ski developments. *SNSEF is member-funded.* Consider becoming a member at www.spokanenordic.org or mail this form with your donation to the address below.

Yes! I want to become a member of the Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation.

** Membership runs October - September*

Member: \$30 (include payment as directed below)
 Premium Member: \$50
 Bronze Member: \$100
 Silver Member: \$250
 Gold Member: \$500
 Lifetime Member: \$1,000

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

I want to allocate my support to the following:

New Trails and Grooming Fund: Help fund trail maintenance and upkeep of the grooming machine. Trail expansion is in the works! \$ _____
 Nordic Kids: Your support gives children and their parents the opportunity to learn, develop and enjoy cross-country skiing skill together. Parents and other adult volunteers lead groups of kids in fun activities designed to teach the fundamentals of skiing. \$ _____
 Racing Team: Support the Nordic racing team at Mt. Spokane. SNSEF hosts Junior Nationals trials for aspiring racers throughout the region. \$ _____
 Susie McDonald Fund Student Scholarship: Help provide ski lessons and equipment for families who need a little financial assistance. \$ _____

Date: _____ Total SNSEF 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 Ski Education Foundation (SNSEF) activities or during use of SNSEF 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 SNSEF 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 the SNSEF, 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 SNSEF activities.

Member Signature

Date Signed

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

*SNSEF 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



Spokane Nordic
Ski Education Foundation



State Park Budget Cuts

- update from George Momany

Due to Washington State's fiscal crisis, there has been a substantial cut in State Park funds. In an attempt to raise income, a decision was made in early 2011 to implement the "Discovery Pass" to access Washington State Parks. Though well-intentioned, the sudden new fee was met with confusion by the public—and in some instances,

by park staff as well. Faced with lower-than-expected sales and income from the new pass, further cuts had to be made in park staffing. Officially, there will be a 20% cut in both field staff and office staff.

Unfortunately, many of the field staff (i.e. park rangers) in the 80% remaining will be required to accept seasonal employment to stay on payroll. Many will likely not accept these positions if they need year-round employ-

ment. So the actual cuts in field staff will probably be quite a bit higher than the office staff. At this date, ranger Clayne Perrin's position will be terminated at the end of January. Mechanic Warren Arcano's position is also to be eliminated.

This is a sad time for those individuals who have helped our park so much over the last decade. Furthermore, there has been uncertainty regarding which park rangers would be retained, and in what capacity. This information is current as of January 9, 2012, but has been changing weekly.

Our Sno-Park funds are totally separate from park funds. They pay for parking lot snow removal, and for capital and operational grooming expenses. Unfortunately, there is now pressure to not use general (Discovery Pass) funds to help pay for staff to maintain the grooming machine. We anticipate that the Sno-Park system funds will continue for the foreseeable future. The state may further depend on volunteers to compensate for this decrease in funding.

- George is Past President of the Spokane Nordic Board

ON THE HILL

Langlauf Seeks Volunteers

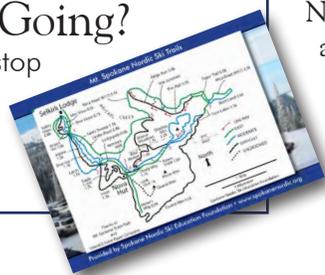
Langlauf, the annual ski race for all ages and abilities, will be held Sunday, February 12 at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. Volunteers are needed for parking, as trail marshals and for event take-down. Volunteers receive a gift, free food, fun, and a day pass if needed. PLUS, they're entered in the raffle for prizes. Learn more or volunteer by contacting Mary Ann Maxson at maxson57@hotmail.com or 509-481-3044.

Spokane Nordic Hats are Here!

Spokane Nordic has designed our very own merino wool hats, machine knit and sewn in an eco-friendly factory in Hailey, Idaho. They have a flat weave and thin fleece lining in the band. Get a storm blue hat with a classic Nordic pattern and "Spokane Nordic" lettering for \$25. Order yours by emailing finance@spokanenordic.com.

Know Where You're Going?

Before you head onto the trails, stop by the Selkirk Lodge for a new pocket-sized trail map, courtesy of Spokane Nordic!



Nordic Dad (continued from page 1)

After a round of simple introductions, we were all "dead bugs," we made a circle putting our ski tips in the middle, we jumped up and down at first loudly then as quietly as we could, we learned poor posture and stood around like gorillas, stomped like monsters going up a slight hill, scootered on one ski and before long we were playing sharks and minnows.

Along the way, most of the Skittles were consumed and somehow we had managed to get to the first junction and back. We had a few flops, a few kids eating snow when they fell, a couple who didn't want to get back up, but we made it back to the lodge in time for those delicious treats.

As I looked around, I didn't see any tears and saw mostly smiles as kids talked about their day. I checked with the desk—yes, thank goodness all the Foxes had returned and turned in their buttons. Only then, as I saw the kids getting ready to go back outside to sled around the lodge, did I realize what a sense of relief I had, but also that I too was smiling.

That was seven years ago. While I taught or assisted in Lauren's class for several more years, the organization had hit a critical mass and there were other volunteer parents who were much better teachers and skiers than I was.

While everyone's experience will be different, as another Nordic Kids season gets underway I hope that it will be a positive experience for your kids as well as yourselves.

Hope to see you out there!

- Darryl is a Spokane Nordic Board Member



Spokane Nordic
Ski Education Foundation

S.N.S.E.F.
P.O.Box 501
Spokane, WA 99210

Setting Goals *(continued from page 1)*

most people are not competitive skiers. However, many of us *have* thought about how we can improve, and just haven't set about the business of actually doing it. So how can we apply the seemingly simple example of getting to work to other areas of our lives...say, goal-setting in skiing?

First, we must define a measurable goal. I might say, "I would like to ski all the outer trails at Mt. Spokane (~15 km) without stopping."

Second, we need to establish a timeline. To establish a timeline, I first have to define when I want to accomplish the goal and work backwards: "I will be able to ski the outer trails by February 18th." That gives me six weeks to build my skiing endurance.

Third, we must establish checkpoints that guide the way to achieving the measurable or definitive goal. Checkpoints can, depending upon the complexity of your goal, be difficult to establish. For this example, they are relatively easy: "Starting this weekend, I'll ski 2.5 km on both Saturday and Sunday. Then every weekend after that, I will increase my distance by 2.5 km until I have reached my goal."

Setting goals can enhance your enthusiasm and make you a better skier at the same time.

Finally, we need to plan for and accept disruptions to our path. Okay, we have our goal, a timeline and checkpoints. Let's get started on our path and fast-forward three weeks. I begin the day with the objective of skiing 7.5 km but the weather is so horrible and I get so cold and tired that I only ski 6 km. Then on Sunday a leaky pipe

needs repairing at home, so I don't ski at all. While these events are frustrating, I can't let them stop me from achieving my goal. Just like if I had to make a detour on the drive to work, I simply have to go around. Solution: add a week to my goal and ski 7.5 km the following weekend. Or, pick up where I left off the next weekend and ski 10 km. The important

idea is that I don't get derailed and give up!

Setting goals, whether they are based on performance, distance or technique, can enhance your enthusiasm and make you a better skier at the same time. Spend some time thinking about why you ski and what aspects of the sport are important to you, and that will help define your goals. Good luck, and hopefully I will see you on the mountain.

- Matt coaches the Spokane Nordic Racing Team