

# SPOKANE NORDIC NEWS

February, 2014

## Spokane Saves the Day

- by Darryl Potyk and Ann Torigoe-Hawkins

### Inside

#### The Giving Mindset

- John McCarthy

#### 3 Of Our Own

Ski Team teens qualify for US Nationals

#### Langlauf Glides Along

#### Souper Bowl Fills Up Again

#### Inaugural WinterFest A Hit

#### Ski Team Season Ends Strong

Who would have guessed? Mt. Spokane has the best Nordic ski conditions in the state. These ideal conditions earned Spokane Nordic Ski Association (SNSA) the honor of hosting The Mt. Spokane Nordic Cup, the season's third Junior National Qualifier (JNQ) on February 15 and 16. The race was originally scheduled at

Photo: Darryl Potyk



Three Spokane Nordic Ski Team members including Lauren Potyk qualified for the Junior Nationals (see article on page three).

the Cabin Creek Nordic ski area in Cle Elum, Washington. However, with a snow base of only four inches, the Kongsberger Ski Club asked Spokane Nordic if they could host the race on short notice.

The event's move to Spokane was announced at the second JNQ, in Bend, Oregon January 25-26. Race Director John McCarthy says that "there was excitement expressed by many of the racers, because the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park is one of the best in the Northwest. Our races are fun and the atmosphere is great."

Once the challenge was accepted to host a short-notice race, the call to action was taken up with vigor. A dedicated army of volunteers sprang into action – Dawn Schaaf stepped in as the logistics coordinator, her husband Tom assumed the role of chief of timing, and Alison Weiner marshaled and organized willing volunteers.

In short, it was an amazing weekend. We were blessed with good snowfall and great grooming. Recognizing that racing is only a small portion of what Spokane Nordic does, the race organizers' goal was to put on a great classic race on Saturday morning but not to interfere with Nordic Kids in the afternoon. Volunteers were up at the mountain at 6:30 Saturday morning, getting ready for the arrival of teams from Mount Bachelor, Bend Endurance Academy, Methow Valley, North Shore (Whitefish, MT), Snoqualmie, Sandpoint, the Bush School in Seattle and Whitman College in Walla Walla. Start/Finish areas had to be defined, power run out to the starting and announcing crew, crowd control needed to be defined along with amenities of drinks and food for the athletes. The classic race went off without a hitch, the course was torn down in time for Nordic Kids and everyone seemed pleased.

After a mix of snow and rain on Saturday night, the groomer did a phenomenal job getting ready for a super-fast skate race on Sunday. Once

*continued on page 6*



Photo: Darryl Potyk

Local adults such as (l-r) Sam Schlieder, Steve Weinberger and Drew Schlieder joined in the action.

# Who Gives? - by John McCarthy

Sometimes I break the world into two groups, “givers” and “takers.” This classification makes my life simpler and for me, simplicity is good. I am impressed with how Spokane Nordic is comprised of “givers.” These are people who realize they can add to the world in a fashion that is creative and enriching.

I recently have been impressed with this when I watched the Langlauf team function. Because my wife Kate was part of it this year, I saw the amount of “pre-work” that was done to make this event happen. I have always been impressed by Tim Ray and the well-oiled machinery that he has honed to put together an excellent winter event. Tim has given a huge amount to our Nordic community; he is high up on my “giver” list. At 200-plus people a year, this thirty-seven-year old event has given upwards of 75,000 race starts.

This year, I had the opportunity to ski part of Langlauf with a young woman who had only been on classic skis once before. This was a quite an accomplishment for Nichole—

---

We need to create other great leaders for this mountain—more “givers” walking in to help out.

---

more than she had bargained for—but what a great thing for her to write about to her friends back in Berlin!

Other examples of “givers” include Art Bookstrom and Mark and Jane Bitz. For years on end they have helped with Nordic Kids. This year there are 140 kids on a cross country skiing trajectory. How cool is that? The opportunity to introduce this many kids to winter sports--and with them, friends and parents. I would contend that all of us have benefited from their work with kids and on the Spokane Nordic Board, creating the trails that we know and love. They are the epitome of people who give for the benefit of the greater community.

How about another example of a “giver,” Robin DeRuwe and her team at Fitness Fanatics? They have supported everything on this mountain for years with unwavering support for the races, the team, rentals, adult lessons, and the kids’ endeavors. This is all critical to the mountain’s success, trail system, and grooming.

These people, and many others, are tied together in inseparable fashions: the teams that put Nordic Kids and Langlauf together, put skis on your feet, plan the grooming, and patrol the trails work together to make our skiing community function well at minimal-to-no cost to you. I look at our Gary Silver Award recipients and they remain the backbone of all that is good on the mountain.

At the same time, as with all of what goes on in this world, Tim Ray will not be able to run Langlauf forever, Nordic kids is constantly undergoing change and there needs to be succession planning for all of what we do. We need to create other great leaders for this mountain—more “givers” walking in to help out.

Sometimes this giving is accomplished with time, sometimes this is accomplished with money but our program has grown (as all of us who have been around for a couple of years know from the parking lot) and Spokane Nordic is maturing as an organization. We need to adapt to the cycles of people moving in and moving out; and our growth has increased our needs for resources.

I am reminded that many who use the hill take it for granted. Eighty dollars a year for parking for one car with four occupants doesn’t cover all that is happening on the mountain, and so I have an ask for all users of the Nordic trails: Figure out how you can give back to the mountain ski trails for the use you get. Maybe that is encouraging a donation, maybe working to clear the trails, maybe standing at a race station and cheering on the skier who is finishing her first ski race. My simple ask is that if you have received some benefit from Nordic skiing, you figure out how you can be a “giver” to the future users of this mountain.

- John is President of the Spokane Nordic board



Photo: Joe Korus

John reaches the finish line at Langlauf.



---

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

---

# 3 of our own

- by Ann Torigoe-Hawkins

Spokane Nordic Ski team members Brett Ford, Lauren Potyk and Ian McCarthy earned spots on the Pacific Northwest Ski Association (PNSA) team that will go to the 2014 USSA Junior National Cross-Country Ski Championships in Stowe, Vermont on March 1-8. The announcement was made following the Mt. Spokane Nordic Cup and Junior National Qualifier (JNQ) on February 16.

Brett Ford, 15, was the first to qualify for Junior Nationals at his fifth race in Soho, Utah. He went into his two races at Mt. Spokane knowing he'd already qualified for the team, yet he earned two additional qualifying results. Brett says, "It took a while for (the fact that I qualified) to settle in, and after that, I really didn't want to think about it, but instead focus on my upcoming races. It was exciting, because this was something I had worked towards for two years, and had been in the back of my mind almost every time I trained." His goal for the Junior National Championships is to be in the top two thirds of the field for at least one of the races. "I am looking forward to all of it, the races, and getting to meet the other skiers."

Lauren Potyk, 14, qualified for the team at her last two races at Mt. Spokane. She says, "This is my first year and I'm new to all of this. I just want to get some experience under my belt and race hard, regardless of how well I place. It is so surreal to see all of my work finally pay off. One of my main goals is not so much for myself, because I am not racing as an individual here, but I'm representing the

Pacific Northwest and I hope I can represent them well." Lauren is also looking forward to racing with some of the best skiers in the nation.

"Seeing such good skiers like this is something I have only seen on TV and I couldn't be more excited to be racing on the same course as them."

This is the third time that Ian McCarthy, 16, has qualified for the PNSA team. Ian needed one more qualifying result to make the team as he headed into his

last qualifier race at Mt. Spokane. As he crossed the finish line, the overwhelming feeling he experienced was relief. "Based on how I felt during the race I felt like I had qualified, but I've learned that all you can do is race your best and see how the results play out. I was very excited to make it to Junior Nationals after all the work I had put in." Ian says, "For Junior Nationals my goal is to simply place better than I did last year. However, I'm also hoping to just have a good time while I am in Vermont. This year will be especially fun because I have teammates from Spokane to travel with."

Each year, a series of three JNQ races are hosted in venues across the Pacific Northwest, along with a Super Qualifier race in Soldier Hollow, Utah. The results determine which skiers, ages 14-19, will join the PNSA Junior National team. The qualification process that goes into selecting the team is highly competitive. George Bryant, the Spokane Nordic team coach says "this year the standard is 7 % back of the average time for the top three skiers; this will give you a qualifying result." Coach Bryant was chosen to coach to PNSA team this year in Stowe, Vermont.

A big thank-you to George and fellow ski team coaches Matt Halloran and Jeannie Nelson for all their hard work spent with the ski team.



Photo: Tom Schaf

**Brett Ford, Lauren Potyk and Ian McCarthy qualified for the USSA Junior National Cross-Country Ski Championships**

# Langlauf

- by Tim Ray

At this year's 36th Annual Langlauf ski race February 9, Mother Nature wasn't too mischievous for a change. We were greeted with a light snowfall, and it stayed cold for the duration of the race. Nathan our groomer turned the snow into perfect tracks which were lightning fast.

Thanks to the participation of 261 skiers like you, we were able to put on a true family event. Of special note was the participation of twenty-nine skiers in our 1-10 age group, giving us continued hope for our skiing future.

Rune Harkestead set a speedy pace of 30:12.782 to win the 10 km course. Full results are available at [www.spokanelanglauf.org](http://www.spokanelanglauf.org).

As I mentioned at the awards ceremony, Robin Redmond and Megan and John Roland have stepped down from their positions on the Langlauf board after many years of hard work. We welcome Sean and Jayne McLaughlin and Michelle Townsend in their places.

We would like to thank some of our sponsors for the support that makes Langlauf such a successful event. Because of their generosity, we gave away over \$6000.00 in prizes.

Several long-time sponsors provided particularly valuable services that were exactly what we needed. Toko and Swix Ski Wax sent their wax gurus to apply the correct wax at the free wax tent. It was a Blue hard wax for a change and the crew from Fitness Fanatics got it perfect.

The chef of Europa restaurant stepped up and fixed a choice of homemade vegetarian or chicken soup that more than satisfied the hungry crowd. Participants also welcomed the pastries and bread from Rocket Bakery and Great Harvest, which were a huge hit as a pre-race snack and a post-race dessert, washed down with either Fair Trade Coffee from Roast House or Apple Cider from Walters Fruit Ranch. Thanks to Charlie's Produce, fresh fruit was also available.

Of course we could not have gotten all the equipment and prizes up the mountain if it were not for the generous loan of a brand new Ford F150 truck from longtime supporter Gus Johnson Ford.

A big thanks goes out to all our Langlauf sponsors, who will be highlighted in the March newsletter.

See you next year!

- Tim is Langlauf President



Photo: Joe Korus



Photo: Joe Korus



Photo: Teresa Gort

# Ski Team Season Ends Strong

by Ann Torigoe-Hawkins

The Spokane Nordic Ski Team has nineteen skiers on the roster this season, all of whom have worked hard to be competitive. George Bryant, the team coach, says “Our skiers are doing six to ten workouts per week with three or four of them on snow. It can be hard to juggle school, family commitments and the workouts and still get the snow time needed to be competitive. Training is year-round

but is easily incorporated through other sports as well, typically cross-country running and track.”

This year the ski team traveled to Winthrop, Leavenworth, Bend, Oregon, and Soldier Hollow, Utah for races. The last race of the season, which was

people from different teams. I’m disappointed that it was our last race of the season but I’m glad I got to spend time with my team and others as well,” says Grace Ralston.

For Corinn Bryant, who graduates from high school this year, racing in Spokane last weekend held special meaning. “It didn’t really hit me that it was my last race until I got flowers from Colin McCarthy (who graduated last year), and the tears started flowing,” said Corinn. “I’m happy to have raced my last race in Spokane because it turned out to be my best race of the season and to end on a best note on my home course meant



Photo: Tom Schopf

Sameer Powers (l) makes his move.

so much more to me than racing well somewhere else. It was so fun to be able to see the whole team there racing and watch how much potential the team will have the upcoming years. I’ll miss everyone a lot!”

Ski Team coaches include George Bryant, Matt Halloran and Jeannie Nelson.

Photo: Tom Schopf



Ski Team racer Grace Ford at the season’s first Junior Nationals Qualifier in Methow Valley January 4-5.

re-scheduled for Spokane, made some ski team members very happy. “It was a ton of fun to race with friends and meet new

Photo: Tom Schopf



Hanging out between races.

## Mt. Spokane Nordic Cup (cont’d from page 1)

again, that army of volunteers went to work early in the morning to ensure everything was in order for an on-time start at 9 am. The set up was great, the timing crew was humming, announcing was terrific, course was challenging, warm soup for athletes and volunteers in the lodge, timely awards – you would have thought we had months to prepare! We knew we were doing it right when athletes from visiting teams spontaneously stopped to thank volunteers.

Hosting a JNQ with short notice and bringing in 150 skiers and their families from across the Northwest should attract good publicity for Spokane. With nearly sixty kilometers of groomed trails and reliable snow conditions, the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park’s reputation as a premier Nordic ski area continues to grow. Among the JNQ community of race organizers, officials, parents and skiers, Spokane might also be remembered for saving the day.

*- Ann and Darryl are Spokane Nordic board members and were on the race committee*

Photo: Darryl Polyk



An army of volunteers made the event flow smoothly. (l-r) Laureen Wagoner, Chris Oxford and Chris DeForest made sure everyone found a parking spot.



## 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](http://www.spokaneNordic.org).  
Email questions about membership to [info@spokaneNordic.org](mailto:info@spokaneNordic.org)

# Souper Bowl Fills Up Again

by Karen Momany

The snow came just in time to kick off the 9th annual SouperBowl Snowshoe and Cross Country Ski Sunday. 274 women came up to have fun on skis or snowshoes and support the Women and Children's Free Restaurant by raising almost \$13,000. To date this event has raised over \$83,000 for the Restaurant.

An event this size is not possible without the numerous volunteers that make it a safe, fun event. Most of these volunteers are part of our Nordic skiing community and we send a BIG thanks to you! We also value our partners Spokane Nordic, Spokane State Parks and staff and the Spokane Nordic Ski Patrol. It is wonderful to see our community come together to support the WCFR!

A big thanks to our sponsors, who will be highlighted in the March newsletter.



Photo: Teresa Gort



Photo: Teresa Gort



The inaugural WinterFest on January 19th was a hit! In all, over 150 people took part in some or all of the activities on a warm, sunny Sunday.

A special note of thanks to Spokane State Park Manager Steve Christensen for his decade-plus spent working with skiers to build up the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. Steve was given the Gary Silver Lifetime Contribution Award at WinterFest. (top left, with previous award recipients)

The Donut Dash relay sprint race was a lot of fun, with participants of all ages sprinting hard, winning prizes, laughing and of course, eating plenty of donuts. (center)

After setting out from Selkirk Lodge (top right), there was a warm conversational vibe out at Nova Hut, where we served about 100 bowls of soup from Women and Children's Free Clinic. (bottom right)

Almost 60 people took in the free lessons, about a third of whom had never skied before! (bottom left) The back-country and Skijoring clinics maxed out as well.

Looking back on the event, Spokane Nordic board members felt that it accomplished its goals of building community and helping people encounter cross-country skiing at a new level. Discussion is underway of how to grow and improve the event for next season.

A big thanks to WinterFest sponsors, who will be highlighted in the March newsletter.

Photo: Brad Thiessen



Photo: Brad Thiessen



Photo: Jayne McLaughlin



Photo: Tom Schaaf



Photo: Tom Schaaf





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

*There's still time  
to register!*

# Spokane Nordic Challenge

**20/30/50 km Loppet**  
 SUNDAY MARCH 2, 2014  
 MT. SPOKANE CROSS-COUNTRY SKI PARK

*and register*  
 learn more at  
[spokanenordic.org/challenge](http://spokanenordic.org/challenge)

SPONSORED BY

AND

elements massage

FITFANATICS.COM

CAMP SPALDING  
KIDN RESORTS HERE

BEFAST Sport Gear

JUNIOR BAR

WILLY E. WALKER