THE POWER OF V2
Summer Reflections

By Susan Boyle, President, PSIA-AASI Central Division

I recently got a call from some friends who are members of Intermountain Division. They’re heading to Argentina for InterSki. My first reaction was envy, but that call started me thinking about how we (skiers and snowboarders) spend our summers. Some of us lament the fact that summer keeps us away from what we love, while others embrace the respite summer provides. Most of us in Central Division are part-time instructors who teach all winter, and count on having a little breathing room once the season ends to catch up with our ‘real’ lives, focus on our ‘real’ jobs, and spend more time with our families.

I used the summer to review events of last season and prepare for the August board of directors meeting. The August meeting is traditionally when the board sets the budget, and this year the budget meeting was held in Chicago because it was a more central location.

More fun and learning

As I look back at various events, I realize that while we must always seek improvement - especially when things don’t go as well as planned - there were in fact many fun, rewarding, and successful events held last season, and I’m confident our Central Division education staff will have more fun and learning in store for us next winter. So, if Mother Nature will again provide the sunny days like those we enjoyed at Wilmot and Afton Alps, I anticipate another good season. For those of us who didn’t go to New Zealand, and aren’t heading to South America for an extra bit of winter, we’ll leave next season’s weather to our collective imagination and relish what remains of the warm weather.

I await the Minnesota Indian Summer and the spectacular colors that only deciduous trees can muster.

We might as well put the snow-free streets and sidewalks to good use by biking, running, walking, or doing anything that gets us or keeps us in the kind of shape necessary to enjoy long days of skiing, boarding, and teaching. Ski racers say that off season (and pre-season) fitness training is the key to high performance in winter, and that inspires me, though I’m guilty of spending too many hours at my computer focused on all the moving parts of Central division.

Like other readers of The Central Line, I always love to hear your stories about skiing and boarding, and especially your teaching escapades. We have much to learn from each other, so I’m asking you to share your experiences. Just send them to the editor of The Central Line, Gary Evans. You’ll find information about when and how to submit your articles on the inside of the back cover. I look forward to reading about you!
When most PSIA Central Division members think about skiing, they think ski resorts, professional instructors, expertly corduroyed slopes, freestyle parks, youth racing and an après ski bar.

For a growing part of our membership, and the skiing community in general in the Midwest, their perception of skiing is quite different. In their world, many of the ‘members ski schools’ are clubs. Often, their ‘areas’ are parks and golf courses. The ‘instructors,’ and coaches are volunteers, and frequently parents. The trails are groomed with expertly corduroyed lanes for skating and a set double track for classic skiing. The equivalent of freestyle parks are steep ups and downs negotiated on super narrow skis without edges, and driven by soft-flexing boots. Youth and adult racing is enjoyed by a huge percentage of the devotees, and après ski is more likely to consist of raisins, energy bars and water, than beer and pizza.

I’m talking about the world of cross-country skiing. It’s growing and it concerns a young generation! These folks are hooked on human generated speed. While a large percentage of cross country skiers engage in citizen racing, the majority pursue the sport because they enjoy the life-time fitness aspect. Cross-country skiing is a lifestyle. It can be pursued in the back forty as easily as on state park trails, and ‘wedged’ in at any convenient time throughout the week.

One of the big players in this growing sport is the Minnesota Youth Ski League. MYSL was started over twenty years ago by Anne Rykken and Steve Gaskill, following the national discontinuation of the Bill Koch Ski League. Ms. Rykken worked with Dr. Bridget Duoos, a sports physiologist from the University of St Thomas, to develop a curriculum for use by volunteer coaches. The curriculum is formatted with easy-to-use plans for every day and skill level, and is still in use today.

Anne Rykken and Dr. Duoos based their ground-breaking work in part on Laurie Gullion’s Ski Games (now out of print). The basic idea was to teach kids to cross-country ski through the use of games. In cooperation with parents who wanted to pass on their love of the sport, MYSL facilitated the formation of local clubs, run by volunteers. Its eight-week curriculum allowed skiers to progress through six levels of proficiency as they matured.

The Minnesota Youth Ski League is a volunteer organization that offers children between the ages of 4 and 15 and their parents the opportunity to learn, develop, and enjoy cross-country skiing skills together-as a family. The
League is a collection of neighborhood clubs, administered by a board of directors, offering leader training, festivals, and outreach programs that build interest in cross-country skiing. MYSL clubs meet in many locations in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, greater Minnesota, and Wisconsin, for approximately eight weeks beginning in December or January. Programs emphasize fun, fitness and the development of a life-long love for outdoor activities (especially cross country skiing) as the primary focus of this family organization. Parents are strongly encouraged to come and participate with their children. Skiers of all skill levels are welcome.

Children must have their own equipment, though there is equipment rental available through some MYSL clubs and at many MYSL club locations. Local clubs are run by a Leader, and often a parent committee that deals with the administrative details. Each ability-specific level has a Lead Coach and at least one Assistant Coach. Many clubs also utilize junior coaches. These are generally teen-age high school athletes, many of whom are MYSL alumni. As you would expect, kids pay very close attention to skill demonstrations by a hot shot 16 year-old racer, and they don’t want to lag too far behind on a group tour!

Clubs vary in size from a dozen to well over one hundred skiers. The clubs meet one afternoon a week for eight weeks. Skiers are divided into age-ability groups. Each level group has its own curriculum that includes warm-up exercises, skill goals, drills and games for each day. Each lesson builds on the previous one, but coaches are encouraged to customize according to conditions and opportunities that might present themselves. The day usually ends with a healthy snack to refuel the active skiers.

Anne Rykken’s early vision has paid out with huge dividends. MYSL is responsible in no small degree for the growth of the sport. As a byproduct of its emphasis on fostering life-long outdoor activity, the league has become a dependable pipeline for technically skilled young athletes in high school teams, and at the Junior National and International Race levels. Its most visible world class athlete is United States Ski Team Member Jessie Diggins who won a silver medal at the World Championships at Falun, Sweden, last winter.

Under the leadership of current executive director and PSIA member Amy Cichanowski, and an active board of directors, the organization has grown to over 2,000 youth members in 25 clubs, making it the largest cross country membership organization in the country. The organization provides coaching resources, insurance, branded swag, rental equipment, bibs, and also maintains a website. Each new member receives a MYSL branded fleece hat, and each skier, and coach wears a bib on meeting days that belongs to the local club.

Amy Cichanowski designed unique bibs that are adjustable for the extra layers younger children wear, are color-coded by ability level, and have a clear card pocket for the skier’s name and emergency information.

MYSL also provides an annual on-snow training clinic for coaches that focuses on basic teaching skills, youth cognitive and physical development, use of the curriculum, and ski games and personal skiing skills. Traveling clinics are available for clubs at their venue during the season.

In the spirit of encouraging skiing as a family activity, some clubs offer adult lessons during the weekly club meetings. Each year, between Christmas and New Years, a kid’s day camp is offered in the Twin Cities to give young skiers a chance to hone their skills in an intense environment over the course of several days. One pressing request from some parents has been to offer a similar opportunity for parents who are on the verge of being dropped by their youngsters on family outings. This led to the development of the ‘Keep Up With Your Kids Camp.’ The clinic is offered on the same days as the kid’s version, but only for half a day at a time. The executive director and a PSIA-C Cross-Country Ed. Staff member work with small groups on personal classic and skate technique, waxing tips, and a synopsis of competitive opportunities in the area.

One of the foundational goals of MYSL is to encourage family skiing during the week between club meetings. Every season, skiers can choose to participate in the ‘K Counter’. Participants log the distance that they ski each day and post their progress on the MYSL website. Clubs set their own standards for gold, silver and bronze award pins. Typically, a participant has to ski 100 km to earn a gold pin. That’s a lot of skiing during our brief winter! In 2015, the top SkiSparks skier logged 476.84 km, while the top Skiwerx skier made 433.5 km.

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The foundational program, SkiSparks, is delivered by almost 300 volunteer parent coaches using the unique curriculum. Several years ago, Amy Cichanowski discovered that the best way to establish new clubs was to provide
equipment for rent to members. This policy encouraged clubs to be formed in areas where there was not a tradition of family cross country skiing. Today, MYSL is the largest buyer of youth cross-country equipment in the United States. While skiers begin on waxless skis, Amy feels strongly that even young skiers need waxable classic skis in order to improve. New initiatives focus on educating kids and parents about the performance value of waxing and how easy it really is for kids to maintain their own skis. The league also hosts an enormous annual equipment sale in November, where skiers of all ages can acquire top-notch gear at rock-bottom prices. The proceeds of the sale help fund MYSL’s growth and enable the addition of new programs.

Skiwerx is professionally coached year-round [programming approved] for active kids age 9-15 who want to learn a variety of training skills (including speed, strength, endurance & flexibility), to help them become successful and healthy endurance athletes in the future. Of course, in winter the club meetings feature a lot of skiing. Warm weather season meetings include roller-skiing, pole bounding, running and strength and agility exercises. All Skiwerx members must own or rent skate and waxable classic skis.

SkiCraft is a new MYSL Club Program for young adults (post-high school or college) who have a cross-country skiing background and want to stay connected to the ski community and to each other. These young adult athletes volunteer with MYSL clubs, passing on the passion, knowledge and skills which they have gained over the years. They proudly wear the same racing uniforms as the Skiwerx kids.

The MYSL Trailer contains 70 pairs of skis, poles and boots, primarily intended for use by children in grades one through six. It is available for loan to any non-profit organization to provide free skiing opportunities for kids. The Trailer was purchased with a grant from the North Star Ski Touring Club, and the custom interior designed and built as an Eagle Scout project. The purchase of the equipment, which was updated in 2014, was supported by a Hennepin County Youth Sport Grant.

In the last four years, MYSL has organized a Wednesday evening race series at Wirth Park in Minneapolis. The unique format pairs adults and children in relay sprints that increase in distance and duration over the winter. While all the participants are inspired by the competition and the desire to test their training progress, the real motivation seems to be the pie that is taken home by the fastest team each night!

In keeping with MYSL’s commitment to community partnerships, it co-sponsors the Skiwerx Race Series with Fast Wax and partners with the Loppet Foundation to produce the Midwest Junior Championships and Festival. This is a year-end event that features a variety of ski activities, as well as numerous races for boys and girls in the U8-U16 categories.

Several MYSL coaches, in addition to Amy Cichanowski, are PSIA certified. The PSIA-AASI Central Division Cross Country Education Staff have facilitated the league’s annual coach’s clinic for the past three years. As further proof of the league’s commitment to excellence in athlete development, the executive director and a number of professional and volunteer coaches hold USSA Level 100 certification.

Thomas Shaw is PSIA Cross Country Level III, Alpine Level II and Telemark Level I certified. He has a Children’s Specialist I credential. He is a Cross Country Examiner. He is the Chair of the Central Division Nordic Education/Certification Committee. He is a USSA Cross Country Level 100. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Minnesota Youth Ski League.

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2015 Professional Development Series

A PDS event will be coming to a location near you this October. Details are still being finalized, but there will be even more PDS venues this year, and the events will be held during the first three weekends of October. So, hold those dates on your calendar, and look for specific locations, dates and content to be announced by September 1st.
Nordic Administrator’s Introduction

Dear Members:

As of June, 2015, I replaced Mr. Rob Arend as your Nordic Administrator. On behalf of all of those that had the privilege to work with Rob, I wish to express my gratitude for his tireless efforts. Over the last three years, Rob and Education Staff member Mr. John Fay have been instrumental in navigating me through the Telemark certification process and onto the Tele Ed staff. This process took place during a big change at the National level where Tele and Cross Country diverged in demo teams, and separate Technical Manuals were created. A huge component that Rob brought to the Tele ‘table’ was the educational component-teaching and knowledge, as required by National Standards. New this fall, you will be able to review the Exam outlines for all levels, on the Central Division website. There will be more new material, including event schedule changes.

Nordic passion

My three year exam process also included a level 2 XC exam in Traverse City, last year. The event was led by Ed Staff member, and former world master’s competitor, Ms. Amy Powell, with help from Ed Staff member and Coach Eric Davidson. Not only did I come away 5 pounds lighter, I learned a great deal about class handling for XC.

Generally, I spend approximately 90 percent of my free ski and multi-discipline training time skate skiing on the North American VASA trail. Traverse City is a Nordic ‘Mecca’ in the mitten state. The prior Parks and Recreation Director for Traverse City was a former Yugoslavian XC member who, along with his brothers, decided to take their training route over the border to freedom. I do know that his energy and passion rubbed off on Traverse City native Mr. Thomas Shaw, our new Chair of the Nordic Education/Certification Committee. Mr. Shaw will be taking charge of the XC side of Nordic.

I’m excited to begin working on behalf of the Central Division membership and look forward to the future of PSIA Nordic. I would enjoy hearing from you and would love to get your feedback concerning the past and the future of our great Sport.

Sincerely,

Brad Miller

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Nordic Update

There are some big changes afoot this year in the Nordic sector of the Central Division. These changes are partly in response to circumstances and are partly strategic decisions meant to strengthen the discipline for future growth.

The first big change is that the past Nordic representative, Minnesotan Thomas Shaw, decided not to run for re-election. Bob Zwald ran unopposed for a two-year term for the sole Nordic seat on the board and was installed at the May 2015 board meeting. Mr. Zwald is a Telemark Level 1 and Alpine Level 3 instructor from Brighton, Michigan. He is also an avid Cross Country skier, and hopes to achieve his Cross Country certification this year.

The second major change is that long-time Nordic Administrator and Examiner Rob Arend decided to retire this spring. Under his tireless leadership:

A. Several new members were added to the Cross Country Education Staff;
B. The number of new Telemark and Cross Country members was increased;
C. Cross Country benefited from a marked increase in members taking Level 1 examinations;
D. New examination materials were developed;
E. The two Nordic disciplines showed a consistent profit; and
F. Education Staff training in advance of new technical manuals took on a renewed emphasis.

At the end of this tenure, Rob left the discipline poised for dynamic growth in membership and member services.

While Rob’s shoes will prove difficult to fill, veteran examiner and multi-discipline specialist, Brad Miller of Traverse City, Michigan volunteered to step in as Nordic Administrator. Brad brings his expertise as an Alpine and Telemark examiner and expert Children’s Specialist resource (as well as ace resident cartoonist) to the job, and will be handling all education and certification event
organizational tasks as well as supervision of the Telemark education staff.

Another big change is due in part to the recent decision by PSIA-AASI National to separate the Nordic Discipline into two distinct subsets: Cross Country and Telemark. This separation was inspired by practical considerations rather than a change in affinity. While both disciplines share the love of the “free heel,” Telemark instruction has a strong connection to Alpine in terms of lift-served access and teaching progressions, while Cross Country is a “self-propelled” sport, with its own strong identity and unique needs.

In 2014, PSIA-AASI released the first-ever Nordic technical manual which focused on the Telemark discipline. Cross Country members can look forward to a new technical manual this autumn. This manual is a uniquely collaborative effort in which Central Division has been heavily involved and which was strongly influenced by current USSA instruction concepts. PSIA chose this route partly in an effort to increase our relevancy in the fast-growing sport of Cross Country and to increase our degree of cooperation with USSA. USSA is primarily concerned with athletic development, while PSIA is directed to teaching the skills of skiing. Both organizations are becoming more disposed to recognize our complimentary roles in advancing the sport both recreationally and competitively.

Former Nordic Representative, Thomas Shaw, has been appointed the Chair of the Nordic Education/Certification Committee. Working closely with Nordic Administrator Brad Miller, Mr. Shaw will be responsible for the Cross Country education staff and events, as well as the coordination of all Nordic education staff training.

Because Telemark is a gravity-driven discipline, the Telemark education staff will be taking more training in conjunction with the Alpine Education Staff. The mechanics of events and exams, as well as the teaching progressions in the discipline, have much in common with Alpine. The opportunity to leverage this expertise will improve the Telemark educational and examination events for all members.

Several new initiatives are being offered that the board hopes will attract new Cross Country members and add value for present members. The first is work focusing on the development of a Cross Country-specific Children’s Specialist I certification workbook and examination. Since many present and potential member ski schools are youth-centered clubs, the focus on teaching young skiers the technical skills should well serve this growing segment. Volunteer coaches are enthusiastic about becoming better equipped to meet the unique demands involved in guiding aspiring athletes, and PSIA can help improve the level of technical instruction among all Cross Country skiers.

The second initiative is intensive training for the Cross Country Education Staff to ensure complete and accurate implementation of the new Cross Country standards. Third, there is a strong exploration of the development of Adaptive standards for Cross Country. Finally, several division volunteers are actively pursuing cooperative relationships with other regional organizations and manufacturers to add value for members and increase the opportunities for collaboration that can have a positive influence on the growth of Nordic involvement at all levels of the sport.

While the ability of the Nordic education staff to deliver numerous events in the division is hampered by their small numbers, Central Division members can still expect to see some new events this year. Under consideration are “Learn To Telemark,” and “Learn To Cross Country” events that focus on members learning the skills necessary to maximize fun and participation. These events will be of particular interest to members who require education credits, and want to try something completely different, but who have no intention to teach in this discipline.

While change in an organization as large and varied as our Central Division may seem daunting, the super-charged division volunteers and staff are excited about the abundant opportunities available within the organization and invite any and all members who share their passion to become involved.
Pre-school oriented ski class:
The Hot Cocoa Club

By Robyn Cook, a.k.a. “Rope-Tow Robyn”

**Picture this:**
- A 3 year-old skier making parallel turns on her own
- A young child having a full-blown kicking and screaming tantrum while skiing
- Parents skiing close behind their tethered children who are exploring their balance and edging skills
- Little ones and their parents skiing with balloons attached to their helmets or hats — it’s a party!
- A preschooler curled up in a “nest” of large stuffed bears listening to an instructor read a story

**Welcome to Hot Cocoa Club**, a pre-school oriented ski class for children and their parents, located at the Hyland Snow Sports Academy. Think of it as an Early Childhood Family Education Class on skis. The focus is on introducing skiing to young children while coaching their parents to effectively help in the learning process. During this time, playtime and real life lessons are incorporated into the learning experience.

The Hot Cocoa Club started about 20 years ago, when Pam Farmer, also known as “Pizza Pam,” approached Glen Peterson, ski school director of Hyland Snow Sports Academy in Bloomington, with an idea for a new type of class. Pam, a pre-school teacher and ski instructor had developed an ankle tether system called “Snap-Two”, after observing that children who skied with upper body harnesses tended to lean backwards. She sought to develop a class for pre-school aged children and their parents, incorporating her new type of tethers. Robyn Cook, a.k.a. “Rope Tow Robyn,” was invited to help develop the program.

At that time, our Hot Cocoa Club was off and running! We began with a two hour weekly class, consisting of one session. The class was so popular through pre-school word of mouth that the program kept expanding. Currently, we have three sessions of six classes per week, as well as an advanced class.

**The class setting**

Hot Cocoa Club classes aren’t run like other ski lessons. There is an indoor space which is geared for 3 - 5 year olds. The area contains teddy bears, ski-themed story books and coloring sheets, and a snow-filled tub with play-mobile skiers, plastic snow animals, and trucks. This is often the children’s favorite part of Hot Cocoa Club!

We always start and end the class inside. We begin with “circle time,” singing our “name song” and introducing the goals for the day. We conclude with snacks and a story and, of course, hot cocoa and mini marshmallows! The beauty of having a designated indoor space, is that it is a comfortable and safe venue which enables families to move at their own pace. Also, there isn’t any pressure to be outside at a certain time.

Once outside, we encourage parents to proceed at the child’s own speed. Some kids can easily ski for an hour or so, while others can only manage to take one run. The teaching/learning plan can also vary from week to week. If families need to go inside early, they are free to do so.

**Week one**

During the first week, the beginner group has an indoors class. We have found that it is much easier to teach the basics without having the kids deal with snow, weather, bulky clothing and unfamiliar equipment. To begin with, we explain foot positions, little toe/big toe, and the parts of the skis. We do it playfully, and use humorous allusions. To this day, however, we have not been able to convince the kids that the ski is actually a giant cell phone, or a toothbrush!

After that, we introduce the obstacle course. It contains numerous props which are used to reinforce footwork, stance, balance, tipping and general skiing movements. We have floor cloths with taped foot positions and movements
sidestep, turning, wagon wheels). We have a balance beam, bosu ball, and other balance toys on which the children can play. We have wooden twist circles, and most importantly, small and large tip/slant boards. These are so effective in developing the sensation of edging/angulating, that we often have to ask the kids to decrease the amount of their edging/angulation once they are on the hill.

After we’ve described the obstacle course, we have kids go around it twice in their boots, then while wearing one ski, and next with both skis. By this time, they are usually worn out. Then, it’s playtime, which includes the use of snow toys, coloring books, and having fun by decorating squirrel skis and getting Hot Cocoa pass pictures. This is followed by snack and story time. This fun session includes our most recent story book: “Squirrels on skis”. I guess our squirrels aren’t the only ones who ski.

**Week two**

During week two, we perform a brief review of the obstacle course. We introduce the tether system and head out to the Bunny hill. Initially, parents walk slowly behind their child, so that both become familiar with the tethers. Next, they try using the tethers while wearing skis. We stress going slow enough so that the kids have time to feel what they are doing and develop proper stance and balancing skills. Going fast certainly is fun, but when you are in survival mode, good skills are slow to develop.

The rest of the session is focused on mileage, skill development, a good stance and safety. Because we have the luxury of using the tethers, we encourage the children to ski parallel, with a focus on tipping the skis and making a proper rounded turn shape. We have found that the tether system really “jump-starts” the skiing progress for the children!!

We typically have sixteen children and parents, with four to five teachers. We act as coaches, trying to give parents an idea of what to work on, and taking at least one run with each family during class. We use toys and creative imagery for skill development, distraction and incentive. A bottle of bubbles, toy stuffed animals, steering wheels, and sometimes snacks can be found in our pockets. Stuff animals are great tools. They can help to improve stance, and quiet the upper body. The toys often improve a child’s ability to make turns. Attached to either skis or mittens, they can get a child to follow you, or even stop tears. We have become adept at utilizing our creativity and resources in order to adapt to our young student’s needs.

**Conclusion:** Hot Cocoa Club is a highly successful program which has been demonstrably effective in introducing young children to the joy of skiing. It has helped them develop solid skills at a rapid pace, and has become a strong feeder program for our older children lesson groups.

For questions about our program, feel free to contact Robyn Cook at hotcocoaclub@gmail.com.

Robyn Cook is an Alpine Level 2 certified instructor with a CS 1 accreditation.
The Times They are a Changin’

By Doug Carter, Central Division Representative
PSIA-AASI National Board of Directors

When our organization was two years old, singer-songwriter Bob Dylan first recorded “The Times They Are a Changin.” A few days later, President Kennedy was assassinated. Dylan opened a concert the next night with his new song. He later told his biographer: “I thought, ‘Wow, how can I open with that song. I’ll get rocks thrown at me.’”

No rocks were thrown. The Times They Are a Changin became a popular anthem, still heard today in a new millennium.

The message of the seven instructors who founded our organization 54 years ago also still resonates. It too is a message embracing change.

Before our organization was formed a variety of regional associations used conflicting standards, largely based on European skiing techniques, to certify instructors. PSIA was created to reconcile this patchwork. A platform was launched to support a truly American style of skiing and teaching, with common certification standards being developed and advanced under a shared professional banner.

The founders’ vision evolved to encompass the American Teaching System and to embrace increasingly modern equipment. The vision expanded to include adaptive and snowboard.

The vision was enlarged yet again on May 26, 2015 when the ninth and final Division of PSIA-AASI (Eastern) signed a revised “Affiliation Agreement” with the national association.

In essence, May 26 marks the historic date on which all nine Divisions of PSIA-AASI and the national association again renewed vows to work together toward our common goals. The accord builds upon recent internal governance reform at the national level, in particular bylaw amendments adopted last year as recommended by the 2013 Governance Task Force.

The May 26 accord arrives in the wake of another record membership year, both nationally and as a Division. We enjoy 32,243 members nationwide, almost 500 over last year’s record high of 31,748 (not bad with west coast weather), with 3,461 hailing from Central. Nationwide membership in 1991, to provide additional contrast, was 19,775.

But alas, as Dylan urged:

Don’t stand in the doorway
Don’t block up the hall
For he who gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled...

Additional significant changes at our doorstep include:

1. National Leadership

After 26 years of service to our organization, our national Executive Director, Mark Dorsey, has accepted other employment. Two new directors, Joel Munn (Rocky Mountain) and Steve Kling (Eastern), have also joined the national board.

2. Dues Adjustments

Using the consumer price index as a method to adjust national dues was proposed at the national board meeting on May 31, 2015 in Golden, Colorado. To date, no action has been taken. (Note: Under the revised Affiliation Agreement, an increase in national dues requires formal notice to the Divisions with 180 days provided for comment prior to the increase becoming effective. The May 31 proposal did not ripen into the required notice. No national dues increase is therefore currently approved.)

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Living the Dream!

By Craig Johnson
Level 3 Alpine Certified, PSIA-AASI C

What is your dream in life?

For Central Division Ski Instructor, Mike Moen, much of his dream was to SKI!

We lost Mike unexpectedly in May of this year. He was Level 3 Alpine Certified and was nearing 40 years with our division. During his career, Mike instructed and coached skiers, racers, instructors, and ski patrol. As a successful sales executive, his expertise and outgoing personality inspired many people to be lifelong skiers.

Mike’s home area was the Wild Mountain Ski and Snowboard Area, an hour’s drive north of the Twin Cities in Minnesota. Amy Frischmon, an owner of Wild Mountain, stated, “Mike’s smile and quest for fun and adventure will be missed at our area. He was a big presence for many years and he left us much too soon! Mike’s zest for life and love of skiing should inspire all of us to get out on the hills as much as possible each season.”

In addition to his activities at Wild Mountain, Mike’s passion was to teach in the mountains. He became a member of the adult ski school teaching staff at the Beaver Creek Ski School – completing his fourth year this past season. In addition to teaching, he attended many clinics taught by top skiers, including members of the National Alpine Team. He would share these experiences back home in clinics and workshops.

An example of these experiences was his participation in the highly regarded Friday Video Masters (FVM) training program for instructors. The FVM program works with experienced instructors over a six week period to improve teaching and skiing skills – with extensive use of video and still images. Dave Cook, the leader of the program, and Emeritus Member of the Education Staff, commented, “Mike was a student of skiing. He loved to learn and share with others so that they could better enjoy our sport. Mike was always smiling, even when working hard on something unfamiliar. The love of skiing ‘oozed’ from him. As much as the skiing itself, he enjoyed the freedom of doing and moving.”

Part of Mike’s dream was to go helicopter skiing in British Columbia. About 18 months ago, he realized this goal through a charter operation in the Caribou mountain range. You should have seen the smile on his face as he carved turns through the powder. The guide staff was surprised at how well this man from the “flatlands” could ski!

Mike was a friend and role model – he will be missed. His charisma and dedication to excellence were contagious. He has left his ski tracks on the hearts of those whose lives he touched.

3. Cross Country Certification

New cross country certification standards were approved at the May 31 national board meeting. A PDF file containing the revised standards may be downloaded at www.thesnowpros.org.

4. Continuing Governance Reform

The final report of the 2013 Governance Task Force, endorsed by all nine Divisions, emphasized: “Significant additional governance issues [beyond last year’s bylaw changes] remain for meriting careful attention by this year’s national board.

Stay tuned as these and other developments continue to unfold. Contact your representatives on the divisional and national boards to share ideas and perspectives.

But cast no stone at Dylan or any other troubadour who sings of the change. Throw snowballs!
“If they had PSIA underwear, you would wear them.”

That’s what a fellow skier said to Paul Ellis, also known as “PSIA man” at Timber Ridge Ski Resort, in Gobles, Michigan.

Paul hated skiing when his parents made him start the sport as a way to keep him off the streets of Detroit during the winter. But, by the time he started college at Western Michigan University, he had caught the bug – so much so that his father would remind him that he wasn’t going to college to be a ski instructor. Unfortunately, Paul caught another bug while an undergraduate, a virus that resulted in kidney failure and years of dialysis treatments. In 1986, he received a kidney transplant. In 2000, the kidney failed.

Paul’s enthusiasm for teaching skiing did not. Between lessons, he fit in his daily dialysis treatments. The search for a new kidney began. It ended, amazingly, in 2003, with fellow Timber Ridge ski instructor Jeff Schippers, who had volunteered to be tested, and turned out to be a perfect match.

Then, Paul’s life took another turn. At the same time Jeff Schippers got the green light to donate his kidney, Paul was diagnosed with kidney cancer. The earliest the transplant could take place was 2005. In 2005, Paul was diagnosed with colon cancer, and the transplant was moved to 2010. Paul continued to ski and teach while hooked up to a portable chemotherapy pump, even when it took two people to get him in his ski boots due to the severe pain in his feet that he suffered from peripheral neuropathy.

During that five year wait, Paul had surgery that required a blood transfusion. Because of the transfusion, he was no longer a match with Jeff.

In 2012, unable to continue skiing due to the pain of the neuropathy, Paul hooked up with the Cannonsburg Challenged Ski Association and started learning to mono-ski. Nothing stopped his determination to stay on the snow – not even a face forward spill off the ski lift.

On June 9th of this year, Paul finally got a new kidney. Now he needs our help to ease the financial burdens of the long recovery ahead. Please donate whatever you can, and follow his road to recovery, at http://de.gofund.me/y9qnvs, or use the smart tag above.

Certification Update
Instructor Tony Herman was inadvertently omitted from the list of newly certified members in our last issue. Tony received his Alpine Level 2 certification this past season at Marquette Mountain. Congratulations, Tony!

Share your passion and enthusiasm, while enjoying the Greatest Snow on Earth!
Solitude Mountain Resort in Utah is hiring Ski and Snowboard Instructors for the 2015 – 2016 winter season.

• Seeking staff who can commit to working weekends and holidays
• Apprentice instructors needed, will train
• PSIA/AASI certified instructors needed who can demonstrate and teach contemporary ski/ride methods on all terrain, in all conditions to both children and adults

We Offer:
• Competitive wage and benefit package
• Training to enhance your skills and credentials
• Free UTA Bus Pass
• Great teaching terrain and an average of 500 annual inches of snowfall!

Join our dedicated, fun loving team at Solitude Mountain Resort.
Please apply online at skisolitude.com/employment or contact Tim Wolfgram at 801-536-5731, t.wolfgram@skisolitude.com or 12000 Big Cottonwood Canyon, Solitude, Utah 84121.
I’m Learning to Fly

By Brad Miller

Many years ago, I attended a PSIA event in which the late skiing icon Stu Campbell was taking part. I followed Stu on a moderate run when, for no apparent reason, he hit the deck. Stu must have read my mind. Getting up, he brushed off the snow, gave a wink, and said “See, it happens to everyone.” He went on to conduct a very effective clinic. Almost three decades later, that moment came back to me in a flash as I picked myself off the ground in front of the perennial state powerhouse, Traverse City High School XC ski team. Turning around to face downhill, I had a momentary lapse, thinking I had on my Alpine ski gear, and Boom!

No one laughed louder than me. Working with XC skiers, specifically good ones is like learning to fly when you come from the Alpine and Telemark worlds. In this specific case, and later that week with the VASA ski club, I was asked to help with downhill technique and tactics for XC skiers. World Masters XC competitor Milan Biac has often told me his initial Alpine upbringing on the slopes of Hickory Hills helped him with the downhill selections of many races. While some athletes worked as hard going down the steep hills as up, Milan was able to use these sections for rest. Many athletes come to the XC world with little to no downhill experience.

“But I ain’t got wings.”

The “wing” which all sports revolve around is an athletic stance. In the biped Snowsports world, that stance needs to be perpendicular with the slope when traveling downhill. Ankles, knees, hips and spine play huge roles in creating a solid base of support. If you were looking at an athlete from the side (Sagittal plane for you techies), knees over your toes, and your spine angle matches your shin angle.

With limited time on a moderately flat slope, a set of pole jumpers were set approximately 8-9 meters apart, creating a curved turn shape that led to a left hand turn that went back up the hill. (Note: Instead of poles we used brushes to prevent base damage and/or possible injury). Before we started, we worked on a functional stance that would allow us to jump left-to-right and fore-to-aft. Athletes were allowed to jump over the brushes as their abilities allowed. The only specification was that they made a soft landing, a.k.a. no beaver tailing, and hands and elbows forward. For those that were more advanced, this was done on one ski.

Another important wing in the downhill sections of XC tracks is the abilities to turn and/or slow down and stop. Although the wedge turn, parallel turn and Telemark turn are very important components in XC descending, our task was to create more efficient step turns in an effort to maintain speed. The left hand turn at the bottom of our pole jumper course was set in brushes that have a tactical line. In this case, the tactical line was outside-to-inside. Although pressed for time, we talked about inertia via the ball on the end of a string. We used quicker and smaller steps, while at the same time keeping the inside hip slightly higher. A visual cue that helped was “inside hand forward and at shoulder height.” Although pressed for time, the majority of the athletes became far more comfortable on their skis.

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In Memoriam

Colton James King, 1993-2015

Surrounded by his loving family, Colton died on March 23rd, after a tragic bicycle accident in Wisconsin.

Although only age 22, Colton had achieved his Alpine Level I certification, his Snowboard Level I Certification, and his Children’s Specialist I certificate. He was a member of Central Division and taught at Big Sky, Montana.

In addition to snowsports, Colton was an avid water skier, bike rider and rock climber. He was also passionately involved in ‘Engineers without Borders.’

He will be sorely missed by the members of the Central Division and Northern Rocky Mountain Division.

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Tribute Giving

ASEA - Central Education Foundation (also referred to as the PSIA-AASI Central Education Foundation) is establishing a way for members and friends who would like to contribute to the ASEA-CEF 501(c) (3) non-profit charitable foundation in honor of or in memory of the recipient(s) or event(s) of your choice. PSIA-AASI Central holds tremendous meaning for many, and we want to provide a way to recognize both the donors and those to whom they are paying tribute.

Frequently asked questions

What is a tribute gift, and what is the difference between an honor gift and a memorial gift?

A tribute gift is a gift made in recognition of a person or an event. At ASEA-CEF we use the term tribute gift to refer to both honor and memorial gifts. Memorial gifts are made in remembrance of someone who has passed away. All other types of tribute gifts, such as gifts made in celebration of special events or as expressions of gratitude for PSIA/AASI-C members or beneficiaries, are referred to as honor gifts.

In the Central Line magazine, Tributes will be listed “in honor of” or “in memory of”, the person or event, and the name of the donor. Anonymous donors shall be so noted.

To whom should checks be made payable?

Checks may be made payable to “ASEA-CEF” and sent to ASEA-CEF, PO Box 456, Highland, MI 48357. Be sure to submit a completed tribute-giving form along with your check.

Can I collect gifts from others and then send one large gift to ASEA-CEF? (NOT RECOMMENDED)

If you send one combined gift, ASEA-CEF will legally be able to provide only one tax receipt to just one legal donor. By giving directly to ASEA-CEF, we will provide all donors with charitable giving receipts for their tax purposes. We will notify you when gifts are made.

What information will notification letters provide?

Families of those memorialized or honored will receive the top portion of the Tribute Giving form which will provide the names and addresses of individuals who made tribute gifts. To protect the privacy of our donors, we do not provide individual gift amounts on the Tribute Giving form.

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I’m Learning to Fly

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“And coming down, is the hardest thing.”

Falling in front of my group proved that Stu Campbell was right when he said “See, it happens to everyone.” However, like Stu, it was what followed that counted. Learning a couple basic things and practicing specific drills led to a more efficient descent for the athletics and the instructor.

These tactics also allowed me to share things learned from Alpine and Tele that are common to XC at the beginning through advanced levels, in essence learning to fly as a XC instructor.

Let the Sun singe your wings.

Brad Miller, Level 3 Alpine (Alpine Education Staff), Level 3 Telly (Nordic Education Staff), Children’s Specialist 2. PSIA Level 2 Nordic Track. Instructor and Coach since 1979. Always an adventurer.

Why should I make a tribute gift or ask others to support ASEA-CEF?

Philanthropic gifts support ASEA-CEF’s research, education, scholarship, and community program efforts. When you give, you are helping to develop innovative programs and deliver high-quality instruction to instructors in the PSIA-AASI Central Division and across the Midwest. You are also contributing to making instruction affordable and available to all members and program participants.

I want others to make tribute gifts to ASEA-CEF. What information should I provide to the Office at ASEA-CEF?

To ensure that gifts are processed quickly and allocated appropriately and that timely gift receipts, acknowledgments and notifications can be sent, you should provide the following basic information to the PSIA-AASI Central Division/ASEA-CEF Office:

• Notification Recipient — Who should be notified when gifts are made?
• Tribute Name — In whose honor or memory are gifts being made?
• Gift Allocation — All gifts are to the General Fund or specify.

You can also request printed donation forms for easy giving.

Can I specify where my donation is going to?

By default, all Tributes go to the ASEA-CEF General Fund unless otherwise specified.

In Memoriam
With sincere condolences, please know that a tribute contribution has been made to the American Snowsports Education Association - Central Education Foundation in loving memory of:

Name of individual

Donor name and address

Please complete the top section which will be sent to the individual’s family. We ask that you also fill out the bottom of the form and mail it, along with your memorial contribution to, ASEA-CEF, P.O. Box 456, Highland, MI 48357.

In Honor of
This tribute contribution, made to the American Snowsports Education Association - Central Education Foundation is in recognition and celebration of the following living individual or special event:

Name of individual

Donor name and address

Please complete the top section which will be sent to the individual’s family. We ask that you also fill out the bottom of the form and mail it, along with your memorial contribution to, ASEA-CEF, P.O. Box 456, Highland, MI 48357.
The Central Line
Interview with former education staff member Tom Gallagher

1. Please identify your teaching discipline and your home teaching area.

I am a Ski Instructor and a past Alpine Examiner. I have been skiing since 1969. I currently coach the middle school ski team in Harbor Springs, MI.

Our training takes place at Nub’s Nob. I have been involved with coaching in the Harbor Springs School System for over 30 years.

2. Where else have you taught as a snowsports instructor during your career?

I began my teaching career at Mt. Zion for Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, while studying ski area management. I taught for a season at Boyne Highlands Resort (1976-77). From there, I moved across the valley to teach at Nub’s Nob. I ran the Nub’s Nob Ski School from 1982 to 1984. At that time, I purchased my current business, Harbor Springs Excavating, and had to give up full time ski instruction. I continued to coach with the high school through 1994, until my son was two years of age. I rejoined the middle school coaching staff once my son was old enough to accompany me on the slopes.
3. Please state the number of years in which you have been an Education Staff Member.

I became a member of the Education Staff in the early 1980’s and was only able to keep up that commitment through the purchase of my own business in the mid-1980’s.

4. What are your favorite memories concerning the PSIA-AASI Central Division?

My favorite memories include the sharing of ideas and information from my first exam through my years on the education staff, and continuing now with time spent attending clinics. I also enjoy the sharing of ideas and knowledge with both the presenters and the attendees.

5. Do you teach adults, teens, and/or children?

Middle school age children, and adult friends and acquaintances.

6. What is your example of a “fun,” or “meaningful” lesson?

One where the students or athletes quickly grasp the concept being taught and are able to implement it, then can show and feel the difference.

7. Describe the most interesting student you have ever taught in a class.

My most interesting students have been young children as they tend to get the most enjoyment from my ski lessons and coaching.

8. What was your most memorable event while skiing, snowboarding or teaching?

Coaching my 6th seed (final) skier at the State Meet to successfully navigate a slalom course which was destroying skier after skier. She succeeded and the team won the State Meet that year!

9. Where is your favorite location in which to ski or snowboard?

My favorite lift-served-area is Solitude, Utah. I have also managed to hook myself on heli-skiing, but it is expensive.

10. How has teaching skiing or snowboarding changed over the last ten years?

For me, it has not changed in presentation, but rather in the equipment that allows more athletes to perform the tasks required to reach a higher level of skiing.

11. What advice can you render to instructors planning to take certification events?

It is important that you understand what you have read in the manuals, not simply be able to repeat what you have viewed. Of equal importance is the ability to take the technical knowledge you have gained from the manuals and translate it to a simple language that a student will be able to understand.

12. What are your thoughts about teaching children how to ski?

Response: I have always taught children as part of my teaching and coaching background, and have found that they are quite often the most satisfying group with which to work.
It is with great pleasure that I was elected to lead the Central Education Foundation (CEF) for the 2015-16 season. I look forward to serving and have high hopes to bring focus and vision to the CEF. Before I became a member of the board, I didn’t even realize that there were two organizations that I would be serving – I knew I was a member of the PSIA-AASI Central Division (and of the PSIA-AASI National organization), but I did not know I was also automatically a member of the CEF.

The Central Division and the Central Education Foundation are separate corporations and, while both have tax-exempt status with the IRS, they belong in two different tax-exempt categories. The Central Division is a 501(c)(6) membership organization, and this is the membership that elected me as a board member. As a 501(c)(6), the Central Division’s focus is on its members. It can provide certification and continuing education, it can lobby, and it can provide a wide range of benefits to its members. As a 501(c)(3), the CEF is a charitable nonprofit that can raise funds through grants and donations which are tax-deductible to the giver. The money can help support the work of the Central Division while also serving in other ways to benefit the public. While this may sound like boring details, it’s very important and impacts what the organizations can do and how they are run.

When you hear or see a reference to the PSIA-AASI CEF or the ASEA-CEF, that’s the organization that I am leading this year. It’s been around since 1983, but I am excited to help create clearer direction and management for the future. Currently, we are focused on defining our mission, which will help us determine our activities and clarify the guidelines under which we need to abide.

You have many opportunities to support the CEF. When you renew your membership online or register for an event, you have the opportunity to donate. You can donate via the Central Division website at any time. In addition, we have tribute cards (available in this issue and will be available at all events) that can be used to donate in memory of a friend or loved one who has passed away, or in honor of an event or individual who has impacted your life. Donations and tributes are tax-deductible and will be listed in the Central Line unless you request anonymity.

Change doesn’t happen overnight. The activities of the Central Education Foundation may largely be behind the scenes in the coming months. But we are working to make funds available for the advancement of the love of snowsports.

Elaine Koyama  
Hyland SnowSports Academy, Snowboard Instructor & Supervisor  
PSIA/AASI-C Director, PSIA/AASI-C Education Foundation President  
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612-940-5002

Thank you to these generous donors to ASEA Central Education Foundation!

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PUBLICATION CALENDAR
ISSUE | ARTICLE & AD SUBMISSION DEADLINE
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2015 Issue 4 | October 5, 2015
2016 Issue 1 | January 5, 2016
2016 Issue 2 | May 5, 2016
2016 Issue 3 | July 10, 2016

GENERAL INFORMATION
To ensure the most effective representation, PSIA-AASI Central Division members should contact their Section Representative to share concerns or opinions on the policies, procedures or content of The Central Line. Materials that have been provided by persons not writing as PSIA-AASI Central officials are the responsibility of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by PSIA-AASI Central Division.

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All articles and photographs intended for publication in The Central Line should be submitted to the Editor.

COVER PHOTO
Cover photograph: PSIA Nordic Team member Megan Spurkland enjoys wind in her hair during a fast V2A workout. Photo courtesy PSIA-AASI. Photo by Kevin Cass.
Save the Date!

Boyne Highlands, MI
December 5-6, 2015

A great event for the entire family.

Watch the Central Division website and your email for details of this event, include sessions to be offered, lodging discounts, and much more.