



# SnowLine

The Official Newsletter of the

**TAHOE NORDIC SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC.**  
Lake Tahoe • Truckee • Donner Summit

**T**ahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team's final meeting of the season is Monday, May 2, at 6:00 PM. We'll rendezvous at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut, of course, which reminds me... Please take the time to offer your sincere thanks to all the personnel at Granlibakken.

Since time immortal (or at least the last 25 years), Granlibakken has offered the Nordic Team not only meeting space, but a kind of second home from which we have comfortably choreographed our monthly high jinks. Can you imagine the monthly Team meetings without the Ski Hut? Thank you, Granlibakken!

Dinner will be served to you on May 2—maybe even outside (if it ever stops snowing)—so show up hungry or show up famished, but do show up! On the meeting agenda: Team searches, Team trainings, Team elections, Team Member of the Year!

## Searches

Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team was dispatched the night of March 20 to search for a missing hiker reported overdue from an outing in the Snow Mountain Wilderness, a wilderness that spans Lake and Colusa Counties. March 20 and 21 saw heavy precipitation across much of California.

Five Nordic Team searchers responded, arriving at the trailhead late the morning of March 21. The Team searchers were quite the sensation starting up the trail, at 3300 feet elevation, with skis on their packs. A foot of new, wet snow had fallen at the 5200 foot level. Casey Prince, the missing guy, was located by one of the local rescue groups at 2:30 that afternoon in good condition. He had spent the previous stormy night in an old cabin.

The Team was next called at 1:15 AM on April 9 by Nevada County. 14 skiers and snowshoers had been heading for Donner

Summit's Grubb Hut, and there was strong evidence to suggest they never reached the cabin. Two feet of new snow had already fallen and it was snowing still.

Team skiers and the Team snowcat broke trail over Castle Pass and into Round Valley, arriving at the hut by about 5:00 AM. There, they found the missing party tucked in and fast asleep. The group, all part of a bachelor party, had missed the hut on their way in,

working at Sugar Bowl—oops!) at the Onion Creek bridge. All were transported out.

These were the Team's eighth, ninth, and tenth responses this season.

## Truck Search

Scoop Remenih, Ray O'Brien et al have done a fantastic job building the Team snowcat into one of the most functional search tools around. The crux of employing

the Team cat into a search and rescue is getting the darn thing to the trailhead. The cat weighs in at about 6000 pounds (not counting the trailer)—that's a formidable load to be pulling up and down the Sierra during a blizzard at full gun. When you're driving on icy roads pulling a load that weighs more than the pulling vehicle—well, you do the physics. The Team is in a preliminary search phase for a flatbed truck that can carry the snowcat. Scoop and Ray would be interested in hearing about any leads you might have on a service truck that would be

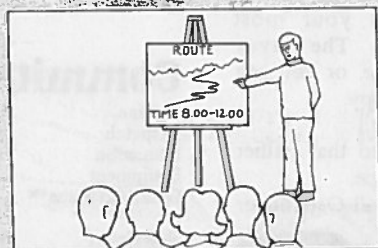
a capable and practical mothership for the Team snowcat. Please contact Scoop (583-1684) with any ideas.

## From The Mail Bag

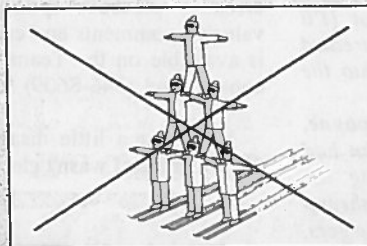
This correspondence from the leader of the Team's dispatch committee, Jackie Thomas...

*It was the first day in a week without clouds, snow or rain. It was a night with a complete full moon. And it was a party many of us will never forget.*

*On March 25th, John Pang coordinated a snow cat ride up to Mt. Watson for all the behind the search and rescue scenes people. Thanks to John, Ray O'Brien and Scoop Remenih, a group of people which included TNSAR dispatch, truck team, Sheriff's office personnel and Great Ski Race workers took off from the TNSAR garage for an 'E' ride trip to Mt. Watson.*



1. Always tell others where you are going and when you are coming back. If you do not know the resort, hire a professional guide to find the best spots. Never go alone.



6. When skiing in a group, ski down one by one, not together.

Tips number 1 and 6 on how to prepare for an off-piste ski run from the Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook by Joshua Piven and David Borgenicht.

dropping by mistake into the Lower Castle Creek drainage. They spent some extra hours that night correcting their error, but ultimately reached their destination.

At 5:00 PM that afternoon, the Nordic Team was called on another search, this time for a missing skier from Sugar Bowl.

Just as the Team was responding, patrollers from Sugar Bowl made contact with the lost guy. They asked that Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team standby just in case they needed transport from the Onion Creek drainage back up to Ice Lakes Lodge.

In short order they did indeed request transport. Scoop headed down in the Team snowcat; three Team snowmobilers also started descending into the drainage.

At 7:00 PM, Scoop found the two Sugar Bowl patrollers and the search subject (word has it that he was a National ski patroller

**Next General Meeting is Monday, May 2, 2005, 6:00 pm at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut**

For many of the people who attended, it was the first time in a snow cat. We were all laughing and getting to know the people we work with at 2 AM on many mornings, and then the snow cat left the driveway. All of a sudden, the laughing turned into shocked, scared giggles. What did we get ourselves into? The trip was going very well for the first two or three minutes when all of a sudden a tree branch hits one of the windows on Scoop's older snow cat. Diane Reinstra and I didn't think too much of it until Lisa Swartz pointed out the broken window right behind our heads! Well, we're off to a good start!

The snow was a pure, sparkling, white after the recent storms. We were given the guided tour on our trip up to Mt. Watson. We were able to see the sun set on our way up the mountain and the moon rise just as we arrived right on the peak of Mt. Watson. We all jumped out (well, we carefully lumbered out, still worried about falling off the mountain) grabbed our cameras and took as many pictures as we could while it was still light enough.

After the photo op, we went to the bonfire/dining area. The boys had built a bonfire earlier that day, in preparation for the grand lighting ceremony. Holly Beattie had the honor of shooting a flare into the fire temple. She hit it with the first shot (I'll never cross Holly again!) and we were treated to a huge column of fire shooting up into the sky.

Now it was time to open the champagne, beer and wine, cook a great dinner John had prepared for us and work on keeping the bonfire burning. We were treated to shrimp hors d'oeuvres, Teriyaki chicken, burgers, potato salad, garlic bread and cookies for dessert. It was quite a feast! We spent the evening around the fire getting to know each other and enjoying our dinner when a dog and a skier appeared out of nowhere. Doug Read and Rode crashed the party! Considering they skied (and ran) up the entire mountain, we

were more than happy to let the party crashers in.

Much too soon, it was time to head back down the mountain. The snow cats decided they needed to race down and maybe try a few new trails. Well, when we ended up in someone's backyard, dropped down to the neighborhood street and ended up at Tahoe Lake Elementary school, the race took on a whole new element. Which snow cat can get through the streets of Tahoe City first! The snow cats met in a tie at the TNSAR garage in much the same manner they had left the garage. The cats were full of people laughing and talking about the wonderful adventure we had just shared.

Thanks John, Ray and Scoop!

## Survey Says!

At last month's Nordic Team meeting, Paul Honeywell and Bernie Mellor handed out a questionnaire to Team members seeking everyone's input on the strong and weak points of the Team's trainings. Last word from Paul was that just three people had responded to the survey. Those two guys have done an outstanding job keeping the training calendar filled with a diverse set of exercises, so, it's time to do them a favor. If you haven't already, please respond with your most valuable comments and criticism. The survey is available on the Team website, or you can contact Paul (546-8609) for a copy.

More than a little disappointed that Father Guido Sarducci wasn't elected pope,  
—Randall Osterhuber



"There are people in this world who are rocks. They are never, in my experience, like stage heros; they are neryv and highly strung. They do their best and seem to fail. And then comes some great emergency; and quite quietly they accept what the good God has sent them, and take a wieght which would crush hundreds of thousands of their fellow men."

—Apsley Cherry-Garrard

## Team Officers

President	Russ Viehmann	525-6978
Vice President	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Treasurer	Scott Schroefer	546-2809
Secretary	Suc Duerksen	412-3836
Board Members	Mark Johnson	583-1308
	Sarah Lagano	775-745-7037
	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
	Dirk Schoonmaker	583-2929
Directors-at-large	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Joe Pace	583-1806
	Doug Read	583-6381
	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
	Steve Twomey	525-7280

## Committee Chairs

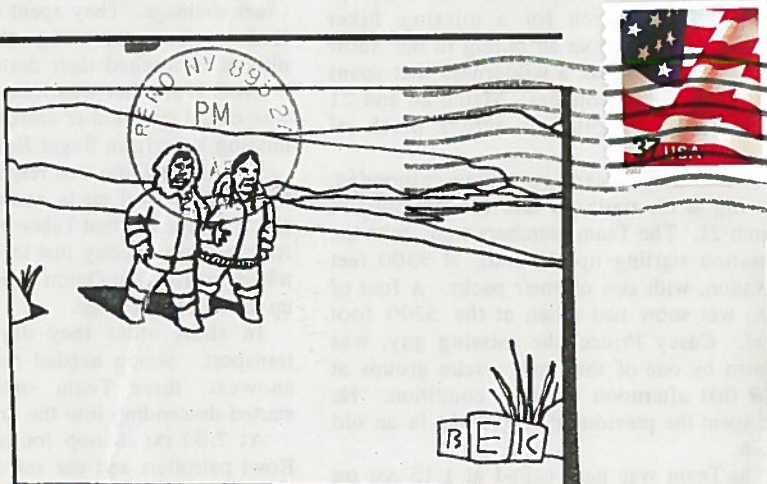
Cuisine	Debra Schroefer	546-2809
Dispatch	Jackie Thomas	587-2687
Education	Jim Coffey	583-1276
Equipment	Brian York	583-0465
Great Ski Race™	Doug Read	583-6381
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
Newsletter	Scoop Remenih	583-1684
Snowcats	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Snowmobiles	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
Technology	Paul Honeywell	546-8609
Training	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
Truck	Peter York	583-0465
Website	Mark Johnson	583-1308

All phone numbers area code (530) unless otherwise noted.

## Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team, Inc.

Post Office Box 7703  
Tahoe City, California 96145  
(530) 581-4038  
[www.tahoenordicsar.com](http://www.tahoenordicsar.com)  
[www.thegreatskirace.com](http://www.thegreatskirace.com)

MARK JOHNSON  
PO BOX 8258  
TAHOE CITY CA 96145



"When we first started seeing each other, we would always use the same word for snow."

**please** keep us informed of your correct address!