

# SPOKANE NORDIC NEWS

January, 2014

## On the Eve of Something Good

by John McCarthy

I was skiing up at Mt. Spokane over the New Year's Holiday and wanted to share some reflections. New Year's Eve was truly wonderful in some ways that don't get shown on the gala TV shows. There was no abundance of alcohol, nor fancy expensive lights, nor even a single shot of New York Times Square and a descending ball. But there was an abundance of camaraderie with happy kids, adults and families.

A few of us decided to head out to Nova Hut around 8 p.m. and as we hit the Selkirk parking lot, we saw about thirty cars—highly unusual for night skiing! We skied out toward Nova Hut, some of us with lights, some without, stopping at Junction 2 to marvel at the stars, the quiet, and the serenity. As we headed further and Nova Hut came into view, we were accosted with “glow lights,” a compelling sense of energy, and a bevy of kids pulling on Jud Ford's arm searching for recognition and affirmation. Fortunately we were able to wiggle past these young revelers and into the building, where a rush of warm air greeted us along with at least thirty adult skiers with food and drink.

It was genuine fun, camaraderie, and celebration. No airs, no unrealistic expectations—just healthy people doing healthy things, in touch with the mountain, the stars, and the night. It was a genuine way to bring in the New Year. And this was only the 8 p.m. version.

Later that night, my sons and friends headed out to ski in the New Year. (They always go without lights, which I think is crazy.) They returned New Year's morning with tales of star-gazing, dancing, discovery of snow-covered “glow lights” by the Nova Hut, and the same spirit of camaraderie, fun, and celebration experienced by many others on the mountain that night and the following day.

On New Year's day, wanting to get an early start and thinking most folk would be sleeping in, we arrived back at the parking lot to see ten cars already there. *Idaho plates this early in the morning?*

I thought. Fit-looking skiers were locking into skis, gliding off into the mist as the sunbeams were finding their way through the trees. Another beautiful morning, with wonderfully groomed trails, marred only by the fresh moose tracks meandering down the middle of Quartz.

Mt. Spokane Ranger Steve Christensen, this year's Gary Silver Award recipient, was finishing

his ski and going home to watch football after checking on a snowshoeing event. Scott Allen, Ski Team graduate, was out with his folks regretting his lack of winter exercise, but enjoying the snow.

No one I saw was obviously nursing a hangover, and all were smiling. “Happy New Year” was the greeting *du jour* as I glided into the New Year.

I returned to the parking lot and it was full!

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An impromptu gathering showed the spirit that makes Nordic skiing special.

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About 30 adults plus kids brought in the new year in at the Nova Hut.

*Amazing, I thought. This snow park plays an incredibly important role in the health of this community.*

It is with optimism that I look at the ski park in 2014. We have a lot to look forward to and it looks like there are a lot of folks, both young and old, looking to enjoy one of our community's greatest assets.

*- John is President of the Spokane Nordic board*

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# Sign Up to Sprint or Sip Soup and Cider

Join in a celebration of skiing, snow and community at Spokane Nordic WinterFest on Sunday, January 19th—a day of fun events for all ages and ski abilities. Pick your favorite event, or take in the whole day.

SIGN UP TODAY for the the Donut Dash 2-person relay sprint race, with options for lighthearted or competitive teams (mixes of ages and genders will add to the fun!), and either the Cider Trail group ski or the guided Back-Cider expedition to the Nova Hut for soup and cider. As of day of printing, there is still room in the back-country skiing clinic, but the Skijoring clinic is full.

A key feature of the day is free 45-minute lessons for beginner and intermediate skiers. REI will offer discounted



ski rentals for the day, from their shop on Monroe Street in Spokane. This is an easy, low-cost way to try cross-country skiing for the first time, so invite that friend who's always wanted to give it a shot.

There will also be a demonstration by the Ski Patrol, and the grooming machine will be on display.

WinterFest is free, but please register TODAY! Donations will benefit Spokane Nordic Ski Association.

A Sno-Park Pass is required for each vehicle. Annual and 1-day passes are available at REI, Mountain Gear and Fitness Fanatics in Spokane, and 1-day passes are available outside the Selkirk Lodge at a credit-card kiosk.

Learn more and register at [spokanenordic.org/winterfest](http://spokanenordic.org/winterfest).



Photo: Brad Thiessen

Art Bookstrom will lead the Cider Trail, a guided back-country trek to Nova Hut for soup and cider.

## Caught in the Act > members share their skiing lives

### Jamie Redman

#### >First Nordic Experience:

“When I was really little, my parents would leave a little trail of Jelly Beans in the tracks for me to pick up. And whenever I got tired or cold or grumpy, they would tow me back in a sled.”

#### >Gear:

“When I was twelve, my favorite Nordic Kids teacher gave us some wise words: “It doesn’t matter how fast your gear is, as long as it looks good!” So as long as I have a colorful jacket and a flashy hat and fast-looking boots, I’m feeling pretty stellar!”



#### >Favorite Trail:

“Quartz Mountain on a perfect Blue-Extra day ... bliss.”

#### >Most Memorable Nordic Moment:

“Teaching my USA Rowing teammates how to skate ski during a cross-training trip to Lake Placid. It was an absolute blast to share Nordic skiing with them. Besides, it was pretty funny to see all these Olympic champions and world record holders face-plant around the learning area! (Rowers = adorably uncoordinated.)”

#### >Little Known Fact:

“Let’s see... I love to do the New York Times crossword, I play piano, and I have a not-so-secret crush on Matt Damon.”

# Langlauf

10km Classic Race  
February 9

The 36th annual Langlauf 10km ski race will be held February 9 at the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. Organizers emphasize that this is an event for all skill and fitness levels and all ages. Get there early and you can have the wax pros from Fitness Fanatics apply the wax of the day to your skis for free. Compete for the Woolies and Woodies prize for dressing in traditional Nordic garb and skiing on wood skis.

The event features over \$6,000 in donated prizes. Racers also get free lunch, including hot soup from Europa, Great Harvest rolls, and cookies; plus morning treats from Rocket Bakery, hot apple cider from Walters Fruit Ranch, and fresh coffee from Roast House Coffee.

Proceeds benefit Spokane Nordic Youth Ski Team scholarships, as well as ski trail maintenance and development.

Learn more and register at [spokanelanglauf.org](http://spokanelanglauf.org).



Photo: Rich Landers

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## “SOUPER” BOWL X-Country Ski & Snowshoe Sunday



Women, mark your calendar for Sunday, February 2 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., and register for the 9th annual Souper Bowl Cross-Country and Snowshoe event at Mt. Spokane. It's open to women of all skill levels, and will feature a Poker Ski for classic and skate skiers, games for skiers and snowshoers, a lunch of homemade soup, bread and cookies, and prize drawings. Free snowshoe rentals will be available at the Selkirk Lodge.

In addition, an event bus will be available from Spokane, at a cost of \$5; thank-you to REI for sponsoring the bus.

A minimum \$30 donation is suggested. As always, the event benefits the Women's and Children's Free Restaurant.

Learn more and register at [souperbowlspokane.org](http://souperbowlspokane.org).



Photo: Teresa Gort

# Loppet: a <sup>long</sup> recreational or competitive race

Pick your distance ♦ Aim for a personal best, or just enjoy the day

## Spokane Nordic Challenge

The Spokane Nordic Challenge is a loppet with options for 20, 30 or 50 kilometer distances. “Loppet” is the traditional term for a long-distance cross country ski event that can be either recreational or competitive. Or as one writer put it’s, “a Scandinavian word that, loosely translated, means ‘I wish I had a snowmobile.’”

The Spokane Nordic Challenge is the legacy of John Hatcher. For ten years, John held an event that went under various names, including the Hatcher Challenge and Selkirk Challenge. The original idea was to ski every trail in the Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park. Last year’s event had 35 and 50 km options.

John handed the reigns over to Spokane Nordic this year. The 20km option was added to make it a more accessible option for people looking to stretch their distance and enjoy a great day out on the trails.

The Spokane Nordic Challenge is an ideal end-of-year training goal. Pick a distance that seems right for you, then aim for speed or set a relaxed pace with friends.

The 30km course includes stunning views from the



entire perimeter of the Ski Park. The 50 km course is a combination of the 20 km and 30 km loops.

Proceeds benefit Spokane Nordic Ski Association. Learn more at [spokanenordic.org/challenge](http://spokanenordic.org/challenge).



Photo: Lisa Sunderman



Photo: Jamie Redman

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

# Lesson Programs Start Strong

- by Lisa Sunderman and Brad Thiessen

You were in good company if you sought a few tips to improve your early season skiing. Eight Spokane Nordic instructors, certified by the Professional Ski Instructors of America, were busy every December weekend giving 87 lessons to 45 people in 23 group sessions.

We skied in extreme cold squeaky snow; in the sun even though we should have been Christmas shopping; and on the last weekend of 2013, enjoyed clear skies and new snow.

Participants worked on the fundamentals of body position, movement, timing, and power while enjoying our excellent trails and making new friends. Instructors gave both classic and skate lessons to skiers ranging from never-skied through strong intermediate. Many thanks to those who brought their smiles, and we hope to see you on the trails!

Our teachers improved their skills in December too. To ensure our members get quality lessons, 22 instructors for Nordic Kids and Adult Lessons received either Level I PSIA Certification or continuing education by taking one of three all-day clinics. We're looking forward to sharing our old and new knowledge and skills.

Dates have now been set for February adult single sessions and the Gals Get Going program. Go to [spokanenordic.org/adult\\_lessons](http://spokanenordic.org/adult_lessons) to sign up. Spokane Nordic Ski School will also give free 45-minute skate and classic lessons during WinterFest. All lessons are available in skate or class, beginner or intermediate.

coaches and volunteers helping out on the snow and in the lodge! The program will run every Saturday until the Nordic Kids Olympics on February 22.

## Youth Rangers

The new Youth Rangers program is off to a great start, with the inaugural group full at ten kids. Their first week, they helped put up new Trailhead sign and began putting up new directional and caution signs on the trails. Thanks to Chris Oxford for dreaming up the

program and pulling it off!

Slated sessions include:

- > Skate skiing lesson
- > Backcountry ski lesson
- > Ski Patrol rescue demonstration
- > Orienteering
- > Survival/Mountaineering introduction
- > State Parks Overview with Mt. Spokane Rangers
- > History and Operations of Spokane Nordic Ski Park
- > Forestry/Backcountry Skiing



Photos: Lisa Sunderman



Photo: Chris Oxford



Youth Rangers and their leaders worked with Tim Ray to put up the new trailhead sign, which was provided and paid for by Spokane Nordic.

Photo: Brad Thiessen



Lizzy and Lauren from the Owls felt good as they neared the end of their first lesson.

## Nordic Kids

Over 140 kids are stretching their ski legs this year, with more beginners in the 8+ age group than in recent years. Finding coaches for all those kids was a challenge, but organizer Alison Liaboe pulled it off. Thanks to all the



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## 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 Ski Association 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)



# EVENTS

- Jan 19 Spokane Nordic WinterFest ski festival  
Feb 2 Souperbowl  
Feb 9 Langlauf 10 km Race  
March 2 Selkirk Challenge Loppet 20/35/50 km ski tour

## Area Races

- Feb 1 Chewelah Peak Challenge, 49 Degrees North

## Nordic Kids Lessons: Main Program

Saturdays Jan 4-Feb 15, NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

## Nordic Kids Lessons: Sunday Program

Sundays Jan 5 - Feb 16, NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

*\*enrollment is limited*

## Youth Rangers Program

Saturdays Jan 4-Feb 15, 9:00 am - noon;

assist with NK Olympics Feb 22, 1:00-3:00 pm

*\*enrollment is limited*

## Adult Single-Day Lessons

*For men and women, beginner or intermediate, skate or classic style*

*\*Can be taken as a progressive lesson program*

Saturdays Feb 1-22, 9:30-11:30 am

## Gals Get Going Program

*Beginner or Intermediate, skate or classic style*

Saturdays Feb 1,8,22 and March 1, 9:30-11:30 am

## Spokane Parks and Rec. 1-day Beginner Adult Lessons

*\*all lessons 10:00-2:00. More info at [spokaneparks.org](http://spokaneparks.org)*

Jan 19 and 23

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

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

## Grooming and Trails Committee: Working for You

The Spokane Nordic Grooming and Trails Committee works year-round to keep the trails fantastic. In summer, committee members organize trail maintenance projects.

In winter, their role is to receive and collate input from the public, then pass it on to Park Manager Steve Christensen.

To give comments to the grooming committee, please email to [grooming@spokanenordic.org](mailto:grooming@spokanenordic.org).

Committee members are Nathan Caproni, Tom Frost, Brian Hawkins, Chris Oxford, George Momany, Tim Ray and Sam Schleider.



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

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**SPOKANE NORDIC WINTERFEST 20 X 14**

Sunday Jan. 19, 2014, 9:00 - 4:00  
Mt. Spokane Cross-Country Ski Park

**LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT [SPOKANENORDIC.ORG/WINTERFEST](http://SPOKANENORDIC.ORG/WINTERFEST)**

- Donut Dash relay race
- Cider Trail to lunch and cider
- Free 45-minute ski lessons
- Back-country ski clinic
- Back-Cider trail trek
- ... and more!

**SPOKANE NORDIC SKI ASSOCIATION**