

# **Eastern Pennsylvania Region Meeting Minutes April 13, 2025**



## **Call To Order**

**Region Director** Kurt Adam called to order the regular meeting of the National Ski Patrol Eastern Pennsylvania Region at 9:18AM on April 13, 2025 at Spring Mountain.

Kurt thanked Brent Watts and Spring Mountain for hosting the meeting and discussed plans to continue rotating the meeting location.

## **Moment Of Silence**

Kurt Adam called for a motion of silence in memory of the following patrollers:

- Joe Joyce (Camelback, Blue, Big Boulder)
- Hubert Seeman (Doe)
- Ed Rodrigo (Spring, Bear Creek)
- Ron Dallago (Blue, Camelback, Spring)

## **Reading of Minutes**

**Motion** made by Sharon Friedel, seconded Brent Watts to waive the reading of the minutes from the November 2024 meeting and approve as presented; motion carried.

## **Introductions/Staff Changes**

Kurt Adam introduced the following new faces to the meeting:

- Mark Kearns - Southwest Section Chief

## **Donations**

Kurt Adam announced the following donations to the Region:

- Eastern Pennsylvania Ski Council: \$756

## **Section Chief Reports**

### Southwest - Mark Kearns

- Roundtop's staff is currently 60% paid. This past season there were 6 new patrollers. Overall, the Patrol provided some 90,000 hours of labor to the Mountain during the season that lasted 27 days longer than the previous season.
- Whitetail is now 80% paid Patrol staff with 4 new members the past season. The Mountain's terrain park has been moved to a less steep location that resulted in fewer injuries.
- Liberty's Patrol is 50% paid, with 10 new members last season. Mountain staff personnel changes are anticipated for next season.

### Central - Leigh Linder

- Bear Creek - the season lasted a record breaking 97 days open despite water shortages, and was a busy season. 7 Candidates became full patrollers, including a good number of women. The Patrol is looking to recruit women instructors. 8 Candidates are enrolled in this fall's OEC class. One person passed SOET. The Mountain hosted an UltraTrek walking event with 1,000 participants last weekend. Will be hosting Mountain biking events in June and July.
- Spring - The Mountain was open for 86 days this season. There were 4 SOEC Candidates, 3 of whom passed and 1 SOET Candidate. Mountain Hosts are being used as a feeder program for Patrol. There are 6 OET Candidates for the upcoming season.
- Eagle Rock - The Mountain had some lift issues this past season; the focus was on beginner terrain.
- Valley Forge Nordic - The park had some snow and was able to open several runs this season. There are plans in the works to allow biking on the trails.
- Blue - Last season there were 18 Candidates; 17 of which passed OET. One new Senior OET patroller.

### Pocono - Dina Manoway

- Big Boulder - The Mountain was open for 86 days; it closed on March 15th with all trails open. Two patrollers retired this season, leaving 42 patrollers. There are 3 Senior Candidates, each participated in the Elk event; 1 did avalanche training in Idaho. One patroller is going for Certified. No patroller injuries for the 2nd season in a row. New toboggan huts have been installed in the beginner area. Around the Mountain, there was a joint race team with Jack Frost; an increase to the size of the tubing park, pond skinning returned for a 2nd year with two different ponds with lights; 2 patrollers participated.
- Saw Creek - The Mountain had a good season despite being only open weekends and holidays, all trails remained open until closing day. Half of the snowmakers are also patrollers; snowmaking continued through the first week of February. No Patrol injuries. There are currently 4 patrollers; 3 of which were there every day they were open. Stopped making snow after the first week of February. The Patrol thanked Bear Creek for their collaboration and spoke about the benefits of Patroller Enhancement School. Visiting patrollers are welcome to sign in for a day.
- Jack Frost - The Mountain had a good season, which ran from December 4th through March 24th. Several patrollers got injured this year. This season, the Patrol saw 4 SOET and 4 SOEC passes. The Patrol is losing 2 members but picking up 4 Candidates and 2 transferred, resulting in 74 primary and 5 secondary patrollers.
- Camelback - Snowmaking was a challenge due to staffing and the drought. The patrol got good social media reviews despite overall mixed feedback about the resort. Discussed OneRisk and lift maintenance issues. The Patrol had 5 Candidates, all of whom passed. A Mountain Host program was started this year.
- Shawnee - There are currently 80 patrollers; 10 Candidates, no YAPs, but 8 of the Pro staff are 60 years of age or older. The Patrol thanked the Region for refunding the OEC fee increase and for the format of last year's OEC refreshers. The Mountain was open for 96 days and is still independently owned.
- Ranchlands - No report

### Northern - Jerry Washo

- Upper Delaware - Minimal snow this season, but the trails are doing well.
- Montage - The Mountain had a good season with 101 consecutive days, from December 6th through March 16th with generally good conditions. There is new lift evacuation equipment.
- Montage - The Patrol has one new full Senior; several other patrollers passed SOET or SOEC. The Mountain has new lift evacuation equipment and hosted several area events.
- Hideout - The Mountain plans to have an ESA event and is installing new industry-standard trail signs; There are currently 12 patrollers.
- Elk - A new ownership group coming in. This past season, there were 260 accidents, but no lift evacuations. 5 patrollers passed SOEC, 4 patrollers passed SOET, and 3 are now full Seniors. There is one Candidate this year. The Mountain hosted Patroller School and a West Point cadet day.
- Big Bear - No report

Kurt Adam spoke about his visits to Mountains around the Region this past season, including: Shawnee, Jack Frost, Liberty, Roundtop, Montage, Camelback, and Saw Creek.

**Motion** made by Brent Watts and seconded by Mike Dodge to approve the Section Chief Reports; motion carried.

### **Program/Advisor Updates**

#### Alumni Program - Kurt Adam for Ed Conaway

- Patrols in the Region are encouraged to engage alumni, inviting them to stay involved. Alumni can be used to share information with new patrollers; even after retirement, they're valuable assets to the Region.

#### Awards – David Marks

- Multiple awards to be presented later in the meeting:
  - 4 Purple Merit stars plus 1 in progress
  - 5 Blue Merit stars, plus 2 in progress
  - 2 Yellow Merit stars in progress
  - 1 National Appointment
  - 3 Patroller Crosses
  - Eastern Division Certificate of Recognition - a new award that replaced the critical care award; for individuals who participate in a difficult OEC incident where the patient was not in danger of losing their life
  - 1 Patriot Award
  - 9 Outstanding Awards; 6 of which were sent to the Division level
  - 3 EPA Awards; all to be given out at end of meeting

#### Elections - Kurt Adam for John Levkulic

- Jerry Washo was re-elected as Northern Section Chief
- Mark Kearns was elected as Southwest Section Chief
- The Regional Director position is up for election this upcoming season
- The Pocono and Northern Section Chief positions are up for re-election in 2026

#### Inter-Agency Liason (EMS) – Eric Snyder

- Patroller workshops have been averaging 30-40 patrollers; ConEd credit can be earned. 3 classes are currently in development.
- The current EMT class has 9 participants; it started last Wednesday. Extra help is needed for the class, especially EMTs who want to help run the class, also patients. Working with the state to bring more recognition to Patrol activities.
- The Eastern PA EMS council donated equipment that is available to Patrols in the Region. Continuing to look for additional training equipment that will be available for Patrols.
- Kurt discussed the benefits of the online ConEd training and the overall EMT program

#### Legal - Tim Kelly

- Discussed several Summary judgements cases including one at Shawnee that was decided in the District Court that considered the implications of parents signing a release agreement on behalf of a minor. Another focused on trail conditions and ski racks in the base area and whether the lodge building's fixtures are an inherent risk of skiing.
- Blue had a construction-based case that wasn't related to skiing

#### Medical - Kurt Adam for Adam Ray and Bill Jordan

- Several updates were sent via email to the Region leadership team

#### MIST - Wolfgang Boernert

- The website calendar has updated to be mobile friendly
- OEC schedules for this fall have been posted; registration is not yet live
- All known On The Hill dates have been added to the calendar; if yours is not listed, please reach out as we're looking to make sure these dates don't conflict with OEC refreshers.
- Program advisors are asked to check the About Us page to ensure contact information is current as several emails have been bouncing and the page is used by Candidate prospects who reach out to the Region.
- Patrol Reps are asked to verify the link to their Patrol websites is correct.
- EPA Region's Email List Issue – We use Constant Contact for our email news and updates. Some Patrollers have clicked the "Unsubscribe Button". Once this happens, the patroller no longer receives any news or OEC Refresher Updates from EPA Region. Secondly, the region does not have the ability to re-instate that patroller to the list. Please reach out to your patrollers and advise them they can re-instate themselves by simply going to the calendar web page and clicking the: "[Ski Patrol News Sign-Up](#)" link to be re-added to the distribution list.
- The Last Run section of the website is updated with passed patrollers; if you have additional information about a patroller listed, please send via email

- Kurt discussed how he learns about patrollers passing; a Division rep monitors obituaries and shares with MIST for posting. Patrol Reps are encouraged to reach out directly if a patroller passes.

#### MTR - Lou Marchi

- 15 patrollers participated in this year's event at Roundtop. 3 additional instructors are in training. MTR 2 will be offered in conjunction with one of the NY regions. One event is planned for December, another in February or March. MTR 1 next year will be at Jack Frost; the weekend before thanksgiving.
- The Winter Olympics this upcoming season will have 2 uphill travel races, which may increase interest in the sport. Jack Frost allows uphill travel one hour before open per Vail policy

#### License Plate - David Ehrlich

- Continuing to receive requests; a few at a time. A new plate design is coming; but we haven't yet seen the design or timing (or if we have to take action). Plate orders are being sent upon request as they come in since we don't know when the new design will debut. No word on whether license plates will automatically be updated to the new design.
- Motorcycle plates are pending NSP National's approval.

#### Treasurer - David Ehrlich

- Finances since Fall meeting:
  - Total Income of \$22,722.29
  - Total Expenses of \$16,284.18
  - Net Income was \$6,438.11
  - Operating Account Balance \$6,089.68 (down from \$52,651.57)
  - Money Market Account Balance was \$10,028.31 (up from \$0)
  - Investment Account: \$144,020.06 (up from \$92,408)
- Discussed self-sustaining programs; Women's Program and SOET were in the black; Senior OEC was slightly in the red. Most of the expenses are travel costs such as mileage/hotels
- Regular dues sustain programs like OEC, OET, the line officers meetings; With positive income of approximately \$6,000; there is no immediate need to raise Region dues
- Alumni dues are used to fund the YAP program; it is slightly in the red
- Notable transactions include transferring \$53,000 to the Edward Jones account; \$43,920 of which was from the East Allen Township Volunteer Ambulance Corps donation and \$765 from the Eastern PA Ski Council
- \$850 was spent to reimburse Candidates for the OEC fee increase
- Discussed Edward Jones being managed by an advisor in Arizona; switched to a new money manager in New Jersey that came recommended from Wolfgang
- Reimbursements: Zelle is preferred but can do paper checks. Send to Program Advisor first; then to the Region Director, then to the Treasurer
- Bylaws stipulate that expense reports must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred; as an example, for OEC season where charges are spread out across several months, submit multiple expense reports as you spend the money

**Motion** made by Brent Watts and seconded by Bill Bock to approve the Treasurer's report; motion carried.

#### Outdoor Risk Management - Phil Barker

- Posted a question about how involved Patrols are with Mountain Risk Managers.
- Discussed the importance of thorough investigations on incidents that may land in court. Happy to share best practices on creating incident reports and investigations. Patrollers can become more valuable if they take on more responsibility before incidents (skier safety) and after (investigations)
- Kurt discussed the Eastern Division online ORM program that takes 2-3 hours to complete

#### Safety - Jenn Rinker

- Patroller stress is the primary focus in the Division, Patrols are encouraged to talk with patrollers about it; especially with Candidate classes in the context of MCI training
- Rick is running a backpack awareness campaign; posters about Ski Patrol backpack safety are available
- NSP sent Snow Angel Foundation information; (eg "she was 5 you were going 50"); we're seeing it used in New England; hoping to see it implemented in Pennsylvania.
- The Eastern Division is encouraging each Mountain to host a safety event each season. The Region's safety tent is centrally-located in Leigh Valley and can be used upon request
- Brent talked about Spring safety days in conjunction with ski school; they have been good for recruitment over the past 3 seasons
- The Region's safety tent is also available for warm season events
- Question about access to safety handouts and whether they can be locally sourced; Jenn mentioned buying 3 kits that lasted a long time; National is currently sold out. There is potential to do something at the Region level if enough Patrols are interested.

#### Senior OET – Chrissy Ludka

- Thanked Kurt and Wolfgang and the staff for their help with the program
- Monthly staff Zoom calls continue; there has been good engagement on the calls. Meetings are limited to 40 minutes on the free Zoom plan, so the Region may consider getting a paid account.
- The staff meeting was held at Montage; some changes were needed due to the weather
- This past season, 2 Region-funded PSIA events were held; we are aiming for 4 next season
- SOET exam had 30 Candidates enrolled, but 2 backed out at the last minute. Overall there was an 81% pass rate and a 96% pass rate for toboggan.
- The evaluation format for next season is being reviewed, possible with two smaller tests.
- Dave Olsen is working with Jack Frost management to hold the next staff meeting there. New TE Candidates should be invited to that meeting.

#### YAP – Meghan Eckhart

- The Region event at Blue Mountain event celebrated its 24th year. 28 YAPs attended with 20 adults helping, capacity may need to be limited next year.
- YAP events are open both to patrollers and those considering joining. For this upcoming season, current YAPs will be prioritized. Having enough instructors is the issue and the program will be soliciting instructor assistance early.
- There are currently 24 active YAP members in Region
- Next season's event will be February 21st-22nd at Blue Mountain
- The Eastern Division event was held at Smugglers Notch; 84 YAPs attended, of which 14 were from the Eastern PA Region. EPA YAPs ranked numbers 7, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 22, 26, and 32nd overall. Several YAPs did the enhancement track as well.
- Next season's Eastern Division YAP event will be March 13th-15th at Sugarloaf. Looking to see if we can arrange group transportation.
- Mountains without a YAP program that have prospects are encouraged to send their information to Meghan or direct them to the YAP page on the Region website.

#### Women's Program – Leigh Linder

- Two events were held this past season, one at Elk in January with 24 participants; and another at Blue in February with a smaller group. The focus is on positivity and empowering women. Lots of hands-on toboggan training is provided
- A component of the program is encouraging women to become instructors
- Discussion about how Patrol Reps shouldn't assume that women want to go to a women's program event... allow them to opt in instead of opt out.

#### Instructor Development - Brent Watts for Brian DeFluri

- A new virtual class will begin on May 17th; 8 are currently signed up
- The next class is expected to be in the fall.

#### OEC - Dennis Zercher

- The fall refresher schedule is posted in calendar, with several dates awaiting final confirmation Mountain; hope to have confirmation by May 1st.
- Patroller/instructor signup expected late June or early July; a new signup method is being considered to move registration from National back to the Region. Time zone issues within the NSP system have caused confusion. Patrollers are reminded that all EPA Region events start at 8:00am unless otherwise noted
- For the upcoming season, 1 IT refresher, 3 instructor refreshers, and 9 patroller refreshers are planned.
- EPA refreshers are well attended by visiting patrollers from other regions
- Kurt thanked Dennis and the OEC staff for another successful season

#### Other Programs

- No updates available from the Awards, Certified, Communication, Historical, Nordic, Senior OEC or Professional programs.

**Motion** made by Mike Dodge and seconded by Brent Watts to approve the Program Advisor Reports; motion carried.

#### **National Updates**

- Kurt reported that the Eastern Division has considered the idea of hiring a lobbyist; the initiative has been tabled due to the political climate in Washington.
- National is hiring an avalanche coordinator despite the program being discontinued/outsourced 2 years ago. To be discussed at Eastern Division meeting in Albany.
- Elections: call for candidates is open; nearly 2000 members in the Region (some 30% of patrollers) vote. EPA is the biggest voting block in the Eastern Division and one of the biggest in the country. The Region doesn't always need to support the candidates put forth by the Division.

## **Other Updates**

Kurt Adam provided the following updates:

- EPA website: Kurt encourages Patrol Reps and Program Advisors to share info with Wolfgang for posting
- Discussion of difference between Patrol Director and Patrol Rep as it pertains to elections such as Section Chief. Wolfgang mentioned that the election chairman should be contacting the authorized voter from each Patrol. Discussion about how several years back, Jack Frost had two Patrol Reps; it was cleared by National at the time with the stipulation that only one person could have the formal Patrol Rep title and voting rights. Kurt to raise with John Levkolic upon his return.
- Online Hybrid - Jay talked about the new OEC class hybrid and how all Candidates must go through the course. The National Board recently voted to allow instructors to determine the structure of a class. OEC classes are encouraged to start on July 1st or later so that Candidates don't have to pay it twice. Dina mentioned that you can coordinate with National to waive one of the fees for classes that start before July 1st.
- Discussion about the written final evaluation and whether it needs to be part of the online program - or done in-person on paper... and how to proctor an online test. Jay reported that there's no need to proctor locally; open book is likely permitted. Need guidance from the Division or National.
- Question about the annual billing/membership cycle as it pertains to OEC classes; why does the cycle start in July when most resorts wrap their previous season in April?
- Discussion about the requirements to be a Senior OEC technician and where that requirement originated. Dennis discussed how the expectation is that you can't teach something you haven't experienced yourself. Kurt mentioned it may not be a written rule. Mark L talked about the structure in other regions that have a single IT for the entire program; not different staff between OEC and SOEC and how this may be an EPA policy. Kurt to investigate.
- Stickers from 10th Mountain Division available at sign in table
- Mark L inquired about Senior status and the need to re-certify every 3 years, there is discussion happening at the National board level; potential to be very taxing on the Senior programs. No word yet, but Kurt to inquire.
- Meghan inquired about Region training toboggan locations: they are stationed at Montage, Blue, Elk, and Camelback; there is supposed to be one per Section. Kurt to discuss the best way to coordinate for regional events.

## **Award Presentations**

Purple Merit Star (4 + 1 in progress)

- Rob Shultz (Jack Frost)

- Richard Miller (Camelback)
- Ed Eccker (Camelback)
- Michael Brong (Camelback)
- Robert Arciere (Blue Mountain) *In Progress*

#### Blue Merit Star (5 + 2 in progress)

- Dina Manoway (Camelback)
- William Meeks (Camelback)
- Daniel Kerr (Camelback)
- Richard Fiedler (Camelback)
- John Abatte (Camelback)
- Theodore Catranis (Blue Mountain) *In Progress*
- Joseph Bennet (Blue Mountain) *In Progress*

#### Yellow Merit Star (2 in progress)

- Dennis Zercher (Ski Roundtop) *In progress*
- Suzanne Schiller (Jack Frost) *In progress*

#### National Appointment (1)

- Sidney Hamburger (Camelback)

#### Patrollers Cross (3)

- Jim Paradee (Spring Mountain)
- Suzy Nicol (Ski Liberty)
- Jennifer Rushanan (Ski Liberty)

#### Eastern Division Certificate of Recognition (1)

- Steve Sobolewski (Ski Liberty)

#### EPA Outstanding Awards (9)

- Wolfgang Boernert (Shawnee) – Outstanding Administrative Patroller
- Sidney Hamburger (Camelback) – Outstanding Alpine Patroller
- Thomas Buckwalter\* – Outstanding Alumni
- Ski Liberty\* – Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol
- Lou Marchi\* (Ski Roundtop) – Outstanding Non-OEC Instructor
- Larry Hassman\* (Ski Roundtop) – Outstanding OEC Instructor
- Rebecca Toman\* (Ski Roundtop) – Outstanding Paid Patroller
- Saw Creek\* – Outstanding Small Alpine Patrol
- Charles Wallace\* (Camelback) – Outstanding Paid Patrol Director
- John Levkolic\* (Eagle Rock) – Outstanding Volunteer Patrol Representative

*\* Sent to Division for divisional and national competition*

#### Patriot Star Award (1)

- Richard Fenati (Ski Liberty)

#### Ed Hirschman Award for Service

- Steve Sobolewski (Ski Liberty)

#### Irv Nailor Partners in Industry

- Two Top Mountain Adaptive Sports Foundation

#### Region Director's Award

- Rich Messina (Camelback)

#### **Open Discussion**

1. Discussion of a Certified boot camp event; a patroller school program opening for registration this summer.
2. Discussion about night time lift evacuation training; recommend doing it, even if not with the full patrol.

#### **Adjournment**

**Motion** made by Joe Hall and seconded by Lou Marchi to adjourn the meeting at 11:49am; motion carried.

Minutes Submitted by Mike Woodruff

**Next Meeting:** EPA Fall Officers Meeting, date and location TBD.