

NORTHFIELD MOUNTAIN NORDIC SKI PATROL



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WHAT IS A WEMT – REVEALED!

by Jonathan Shefftz

Over the first two weekends in December I attended a wilderness EMT course. Overall, this was a very intensive and highly valuable training experience.

The focus of Wilderness EMT training compared to NSP OEC is somewhat akin to that of OEC compared to urban EMT. Or in other words, OEC is in-between the respective settings for urban EMT and Wilderness EMT. That is, we ski patrollers operate in a non-urban outdoor environment. But our fellow patrollers, additional equipment, the patrol room, and a waiting ambulance are not very far or long in coming. By contrast, in a true wilderness setting, all of those elements may be missing, and hospital care might be many hours, days, or even weeks away.

Therefore, our WEMT training focused on improvising with whatever materials we might have with us (e.g., avalanche probe for splinting, water bottles in lieu of collar) as well as what we might find nearby (e.g., sticks and branches for constructing a litter). Environmental concerns were very important, especially since a patient sitting on the ground - even in the summer - might become cold very quickly, and infections can become life-threatening in an extended-care situation in the wilderness.

We also reviewed specialized techniques not commonly used in prehospital care, much of which stemmed from transport and CSM issues. To this economist, that reflected a risk-reward/cost-benefit consideration. In other words, in an urban EMT setting, or even at a ski area, the patient can be readily backboarded and transported. Similarly, CSM concerns would not merit attempting to reduce a dislocation. By contrast, in some backcountry settings, transport will be exceedingly long and difficult if the patient is not allowed to walk under his/her own power. And if prehospital care will not be reached for days, then CSM concerns may merit procedures that would not otherwise be performed outside of an emergency room.

The course also stressed injuries that are more likely to occur in the wilderness than in an urban setting or even at a ski area. Fortunately our instructor, in addition to being an urban paramedic, was a mountain guide, so he focused on cold and snowy mountainous settings rather than icky creep-crawly jungle stuff! He was also an (*continued on page two*)

PATROL AWARDS BANQUET

Saturday, May 5th

Countryside Living Restaurant
Cocktails 6pm – Dinner 7pm

Our season got off to a late start, after many patrollers had just about given up. Celebrate the fact that we actually got snow and come to our annual awards banquet. Patrollers, candidates, friends, family and significant others are all invited. We'll be gathering in the banquet room at the Countryside Living restaurant, just down from Northfield Mountain on Route 2 in Erving (next to the bowling alley.) The patrol has reduced the cost of the banquet to \$10/meal for both patrollers and guests. *Patrollers and candidates will be refunded the cost of their own meals at the banquet.*

The program after the dinner will include awards, door prizes, and perhaps a surprise or two. Many patrollers have been active in spite of the lack of earlier snow. Nominations for the Bill Hawley Outstanding Patroller of the Year award should be emailed to Tom Deam: tdream@verizon.net. Unfortunate nominations for the Flaming Flounder Award should be sent to wrong-way Bill Gabriel: wgabriel@firstlightpower.com.

Our banquet menu includes the following:

Hot hors d'oeuvres
Fresh fruit with sorbet or sherbet
Fresh garden salad with chef's house dressing
Choice of entrée:
Prime Rib au jus
Grilled lemon herb chicken
Grilled tuna with herb butter

Entrées include bacon, cheddar, scallion twice-baked potatoes, a mixed vegetable sauté, choice of beverage and dessert – Keli's ice cream cake creation.

All checks and reservations should be mailed to Bob Perry by Friday, April 27th. If you have questions, or would like to make arrangements for a vegetarian meal, call Bob at 413-863-2658 (home) or 413-659-4468 (work), or email: bperry@firstlightpower.com.

BANQUET RESERVATIONS

Name	# Guests
Number/Selection	Cost
Prime Rib	at \$10/meal=
Chicken	at \$10/meal=
Tuna	at \$10/meal=

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:

Make checks payable to: Northfield Mountain Nordic Ski Patrol
Mail to: Bob Perry, 42 West Gill Road, Gill, MA 01376

CHOCOLATE POT CHAT

by Tom Deam

We left and it snowed! I hope to hear all about the abbreviated season from you. I'm writing this in 70-degree, humid conditions. It's a working visit to the Panhandle of Florida.

We are helping care for our youngest, 15-month-old, grandchild while his mother is deployed for 90 days. Our son needed extra pairs of hands, feet, and eyes to help care for him. Yes, her deployment timing was good!

Through observation, I've had to relearn diaper changing and general toddler care. Ear plugs were brought and are in use. It was brutally brought to my mind the energy needed to watch, feed, and keep happy a young one. There is no place to hide, meals are in shifts, and sleep through the night is only dreamed of. I'd rather be skiing!

Enough about this. Hopefully, all is going well now that the trails are open, and will stay open for the rest of the season. A good training schedule was made for the meetings and I do wish we could be there to keep our skills up.

Time to go, as Nate needs his diaper changed, so someone has to be found to do it.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

2007 – 2008 Season

Patrol Representative – Tom Deam

Assistant Patrol Rep – Bob Duris

Patrol Secretary – Bill Schweikert

Patrol Treasurer – Sue Menick

Assistant Treasurer – Jonathan Shefftz

Past Patrol Rep – Bill Osborn

Patrol Liaison – Bill Gabriel

FIRST ANNUAL PATROL MINI GOLF TOURNAMENT

by Joannie Duris

A lack of snow prior to our February meeting made it difficult to plan out a Winter Carnival, and warmer weather made me think of golf. Seven patrollers helped transform the visitor's center into a 9-hole course for our tournament. Each hole had to incorporate something from the patrol room or the ski shop. Creativity ruled!

From tunnel splints and manikin obstacles, to detours around coat racks and bouncing down stairs or over wavy carpets, we had more than enough challenges to give even Tiger Woods pause. We even had a hole with water (barrel) hazards. And if we hadn't had a maximum of 6 shots/hole, I'd still be trying to get out of those snowshoe sand traps.

Congratulations to Bob Duris for his 1st place finish of 34. Kristin Peterson and Bill Gabriel were close behind with 36 and 38. But Sue Menick gets the loudest applause for her trick shot: a shortcut *under* the manikin's neck and into the hole! I can't wait to see what next year's course looks like.

WWW.NMNSP.ORG

Don't forget to check our website for the latest patrol news and dates of upcoming courses and events.

If you don't remember the user name and password for entering the 'patrol room', contact Bill Schweikert at: webmaster@nmnsp.org

WHAT IS A WEMT – REVEALED! (*continued from page one*) outstanding moulage artist, so during our training we really did look like we had been attacked by bears, caught by avalanches, tripped up by roots, and collided into by trees while backcountry skiing. (You can tell I'm trying to place the blame on the trees for that last scenario!)

Furthermore, the course was a reassuring affirmation of the NSP OEC level of training but also a reminder of the importance of regular practice and review. That is, all the information that we were already expected to know I either indeed knew . . . or at least remembered learning at some point . . . or remembered having been supposed to learn, yet . . . okay, I better not recriminate myself any more here! But seriously, of my five fellow students, one was an EMT-I with lots of experience, so he stood out among us. The other four were all EMT-B, and their level of training was clearly the same as mine, BUT the two EMT-B participants who had more experience clearly had more refined skills. (So, umm, when's it going to snow so that we can get some practice?)

If you're interested in learning more: Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities, or "SOLO" (www.soloschools), teaches most of the courses in the northeast, sometimes at SOLO's own facility in Conway NH and sometimes at other host sites. Most WEMT courses are taught for five days straight, but I took an option that entailed two long weekends, starting at 5:00 or 6:00 each Friday evening, then going until around the same time on Sunday evening, with just enough time off to eat and sleep. Four of us stayed in the bunk rooms on site, which further enhanced the training via additional discussion among us. If five days is too much of a commitment, SOLO also offers two-day Wilderness First Aid classes, but unfortunately these courses essentially start from scratch and hence spend considerable time reviewing very basic concepts instead of wilderness-specific issues.

SAVE THESE DATES:

OCTOBER 20-21, 2007: FALL REFRESHER

OEC Saturday; CPR & HILL Sunday

SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2008: PATROL COMPETITION

Will be a user-friendly course. They'd love to see a telemark team from Northfield. Details in upcoming issues.

The next issue of the Rattlebone will be published in June. Please get all articles, information, dates, etc. to Joannie Duris by June 15th.

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