



Sierra Regional Ski For Light NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019.

Volume 15, Issue 1

WHO WE ARE

by

Editor Betsy Rowell

Sierra Regional Ski For Light (SRSFL) is an all-volunteer, non-profit cross-country ski program for blind and visually impaired children and adults. Donations are tax-exempt under section (501)(c)(3) of the IRS code.

The program is a way for blind and visually impaired individuals to promote good health by being involved in a winter cross-country ski program and a summer program, including hiking and water activities. This newsletter is published annually to provide information about the people and activities of SRSFL.

The magic of SRSFL is in all the individual stories and experiences, so please enjoy them.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by

Betsy Rowell

Sacramento, CA

Last year we had a near record snow fall. This made for a super ski season for SRSFL skiers from ages 6 to 80.

Now, we welcome spring and summer. I am enjoying my newly landscaped yard and counting the days to when I can spend time in the pool. I am also looking forward to the SRSFL hiking weekend in late summer at Lake Tahoe.



Betsy Rowell, President

I want to thank all of you for choosing me as your President. I have BIG shoes to fill. Thanks to Vicki Post for all her hard work over the past 4 years, keeping SRSFL together. Thanks to Cindy Quintana for keeping the SRSFL books in order. Tom Gorin, thank you for accepting another 2 year term as Member at Large, and for working with the caterer throughout the March 3-day event. Welcome, newly elected Jean Snuggs as SRSFL treasurer. I look forward to working with Vice President Edie Lott and Member at Large II Shawna Ramsey.

In 1992 my husband Monte and I, along with Pat and Bob Slauson, attended the 1992 Ski For Light International week in Granby Colorado. We returned home with the idea of starting a Ski For Light Regional cross-country ski program in California. In 1996 Sierra Regional Ski For Light was established as a non-profit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code.

In 1993 I was elected as the first President of SRSFL. We started with just one 3-day event. Since then we have added day trips, a program to include children and a hiking weekend in late summer. I have seen a lot of changes in the past 27 years. I hope SRSFL will continue to improve as it evolves.

As President, I will focus on getting more involvement from all participants: skiers, guides and volunteers. I would like to encourage more publicity to reach out to skiers of all ages. Fundraising is a big part of SRSFL and I want to encourage everyone to participate in this task.

As most of you may know, I am a firm believer in the SRSFL program. I want to see blind and visually impaired participants enjoy a day on the snow or a hike in the mountains.

Have a fun summer. I look forward to working with all of you. Remember, this is your program!

EAGER TO GET BACK ON THE SLOPE

**by
Kevin Andrews
Santa Cruz, CA**

As someone who grew up in Michigan, my childhood was surrounded by snow, and all of the winter activities one would associate with snow, so I was incredibly eager to get back on the slopes! I hadn't downhill skied in eight years, and had never done cross-country. It was great to get back out there and really move. Skiing is a fantastic form of



Skier Kevin and Guide Riley

movement, purposeful and skillful. And it was only a few hours from where I live on the coast! My guide, Riley Hacker, has cross-country ski raced for years and that translated into some fantastic instruction. He could tell I really wanted to learn and improve my skiing over the weekend, and with his dexterity on the snow, even with some tricky terrain and steep hills, he was able to expertly maneuver that in order to provide some really solid instruction. I also can't forget the great food and all of the logistics that went into this three-day weekend, and was able to have some really cool conversations, connect and build camaraderie with others.

RILEY HACKER IS ONE AMAZING GUIDE

by
Edie Lott
Truckee, CA

Sierra Regional Ski for Light has been extremely fortunate to have Riley as a guide the past four years. Riley started guiding as a freshman in high school and faithfully guided at almost every event we held, both skiing and hiking, throughout his high school years. It is rare to come across a student of his age with such maturity and good judgment. Even though he comes quite a distance to guide, he is always on time and ready to begin guiding. Riley shows concern and empathy for those he is guiding and a deep understanding of the importance of his job he is doing. Riley's lack of self-centeredness and dedication to do an



Edie Lott, Guide Coordinator, Web Master

excellent job really stands out. He has shared with me the enjoyment he found in guiding which is tedious, attention demanding work. As SRSFL Guide Coordinator, I'm really going to miss Riley, as he heads for college. Thank you Riley for a job well done!

A FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE

by
Miles Lima
Manteca, CA

Once again it was a fantastic experience. I have been participating in Ski for Light for approximately 5 years and I always have fun!!! The guides are very helpful and patient. I have learned a lot of new skiing techniques while there. The guides are awesome and the ski area is very large. The ski runs have big hills and small hills for all ages. There are lots of people to talk to and trails to follow. Also, you can bring siblings along for which I was happy that my sister got a chance to cross country ski. I am looking forward to coming back next year.



10 year old Miles and Guide Riley



9 year old Berkeley makes a snow angel

I'M BACK ON SKIS
by
Margie Donovan
Folsom, CA

Greetings SRSFL Family,
My name is Margie Donovan and I have been skiing with SRSFL for about 18 years. I have not skied for the past three or so years as I needed to get both knees replaced. This year was my first back and it was a great year to be back on skis and snow shoes.

Prior to my knee replacements I was an excellent skier. I noticed this year that my confidence has dropped. I know getting out



Margie and Guide Kathy

there on the snow more frequently will build up my confidence. I tell you about this because one can't build up their confidence if they do not stay on skis. Always remember, falling is a part of skiing. It is important to learn how to fall so you do not hurt yourself. I am an expert at this. Smile.

SRSFL has built my confidence in the past and I am sure it will again with its wonderful guides. What occurs to me is how wonderful and flexible our guides and volunteers are. Thanks to all of them for their gift of serving SRSFL! I especially noticed this year at the three day event the guides helping in many ways including in the kitchen, to ensure we got our dinners on time.

I look forward to seeing many of you next ski season. While you are waiting, I am out in the snow with RC working on my confidence.

I WAS INSPIRED
by
Arlene Jamar
Rocklin, CA

I anticipated an interesting experience with my first opportunity to participate as a volunteer with the Sacramento Area's Ski for Light Organization. I wasn't disappointed and in fact, was inspired by the strong trust visually impaired skiers shared with their guide-partner. The amount of training and support by other volunteers is quite remarkable in the activities of the Ski For Light organization.

I first heard about the Sacramento area's Ski for Light group from friends in my downhill ski club. This season was my first opportunity to become a volunteer with the group.

I'm an experienced skier and know well the skill and confidence required to get down a mountain on skis. On this day and without hesitation, skiers paired up with a guide and

confidently explored the trails of the Tahoe Donner Cross Country ski area. I donned a bib, joined a group and followed along as an observer. The SFL Organization provides training for the guides and other volunteers take care of the many details basic for these fun activities that happen during the season. The planning includes drivers that will transport the skiers for the day.

It was a fun day and also rewarding to be a part of this group that provides a fun and confidence building activity for adventure-seeking, sight-challenged skiers .

WHO ARE THE ORANGE VESTED FOLKS?

by

**Gale Rankin
San Mateo, CA**

Who are those orange-vested folks skiing around all over Tahoe Donner? Are they adventurous or just plain crazy? After years of seeing Ski For Light out on the cross country trails, I was finally able to join in the fun as a volunteer and guide-in-training and find out for myself. The seemingly never-ending snow of 2019 paused, the clouds parted and the sun came out just in time for the wonderful 3-day event and end of season one day ski trip.

Three different guide/skier pairs took me under their wings to show me the ropes. All were extremely



Gale Rankin, Guide

generous, patient, and skillful. I found that SFL is even more than I expected. Not only is it a great group of volunteers and VIPs that love the outdoors, but it is very organized and well run. I could not be more impressed. Thanks to everyone for an amazing first season.

ON SKIS AGAIN

by

**Robert Glass
San Bruno, CA**

As the snow was starting to melt in the mountains this spring, I found myself sliding down a hill at frightening speed on a snowboard. I had never been on a snowboard before, and before this winter I hadn't been skiing for over twenty years. And since I went blind. I never thought I would have the nerve for anything like this.

But that all changed last winter. I tried cross-country skiing for the first time at the Ski For Light International week in January.



Robert Glass, Skier

By the end of the week I knew I was hooked, and I wanted more. Would I have to wait a full year for another chance to go skiing? Fortunately, during the week I met Jean Snuggs, and she told me about Sierra Regional Ski For Light and the upcoming three-day ski weekend. So a few weeks later I found myself again on skinny skis, this time on the wonderfully deep snow of the Sierra Nevada.

By the end of the International Week I was just starting to get the hang of the diagonal stride, and I was hoping to work on my kick-and-glide technique. But the mountains had other plans for me. Tahoe Donner has more up-and-down terrain than Snow Mountain Ranch, and I wound up working on my uphill and downhill technique more than I had expected. By the second day I was skiing intermediate trails, though I was falling a lot in the attempt. On the third day my guide and I climbed up Sundance, herringbone all the way, in order to ski down Tumbleweed. And as the time for leaving approached, I managed to get down Chickadee without falling, something I hadn't been able to do the day before.

Thanks to the terrific SRSFL guides, my self-confidence received a tremendous boost over those three days. I would not have had the courage to try snowboarding without that experience. And while, after trying it, I decided that snowboarding wasn't for me, I can hardly wait for next winter and the chance to go cross-country skiing again. There are trails with names like White Lightning and Mine Shaft I'm longing to try.

MEMORIES OF A WEEKEND WITH SRSFL

by
Betsey Done
Shelton, CT



Betsy and Guide Estelle

know how much I like pizza! I got to visit with friends Friday night who lived locally. And I got to meet so many of you too. The conversation was terrific.

I sure had a wonderful time at the Sierra Regional Ski For Light weekend this past March.

The flight from CT was super. I was met by Marley and Mel from the Sacramento Valley Sertoma Club. We had a very nice drive to Rancho Cordova with great descriptions of the area along the way. We visited a while when waiting for the room to be ready.

I had spoken to Betsy Rowell on the phone so the two of us were especially excited to meet each other.

Pizza was great; I'm Italian so you

After the long bus ride Saturday, I met my amazing guide Estelle. Wow, we had so much fun; I learned a lot and actually got through a hurdle. I finally felt the glide one feels when skiing. I was thrilled! I told my family all about it. Yes, I had really moved forward in my skiing skill.

The evenings were fun with a delightful layout of appetizers by such wonderful SRSFL volunteers. And of course, our dinners were delicious. Thank you all.

One of the staff at the lodge remembered me from last year when I was at the national so it was exciting to see her again and share a few memories.

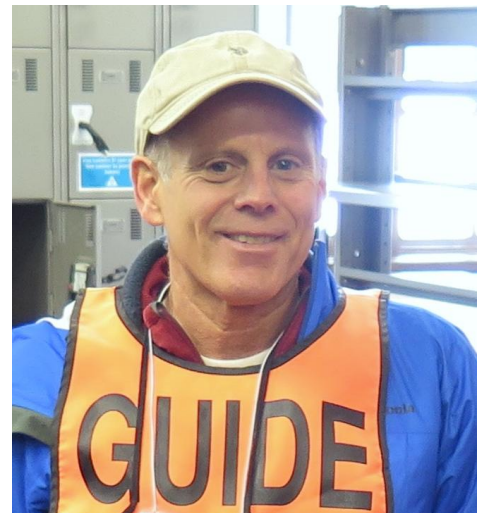
I had a terrific time; thanks for letting me come. A huge thank you to all of the SRSFL volunteers who worked very hard for an event that means so much to all of us. Hope to see all of you next year.

IN MEMORIAM: MAT STEIN GUIDE EXTRAORDINAIRE

by
Vicki Post

We were stunned and saddened to learn of the sudden unexpected death of our beloved long-time guide, Mat Stein. Mat left us on December 19, 2018, and his passing left a very large hole in the heart of SRSFL. In his honor, we are dedicating this weekend to Mat and to his memory; may his spirit guide and grace us all, whether we knew him or not.

Those of you who knew Mat, who skied with him, who were guided by him, know what a huge loss this is for SRSFL. He was a caring, exquisite soul, a brilliant engineer, a free spirit with a wonderful bit of rebel in him. He brought so much to



Mat Stein, Guide

our program and to this world. He had a way of instilling confidence in people he was guiding. He was always available to discuss hiking trails and more; heck, he even gave Margie the shirt off his back one day.

Mat was bold right up to the end, leaving us as suddenly as he would take off down a hill or get a new idea for a book or run up to someone for a hug or whisk Monte up the stairs of the Lakeview Lodge.

Thank you, Mat, for all you brought to all whose lives you touched; we will miss you terribly. Rest in peace.

THE SRSFL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

By
Betsy Rowell

SRSFL is governed and managed by a Board of Directors, elected by all SRSFL members. Every two years, half of the Board comes up for re-election. As of last May, we

have a newly-constituted Board of Directors who will guide and maintain SRSFL for the next two years.

PRESIDENT: Betsy Rowell
betsy.rowell2@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT: Edie Lott
E-mail: thelots@gmail.com

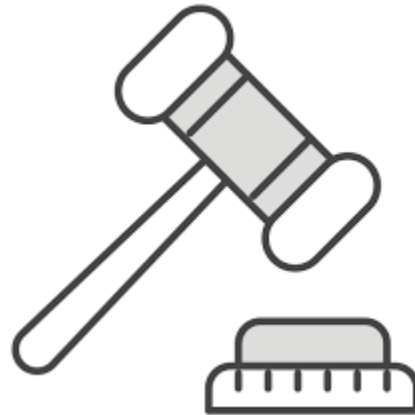
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E-mail: susanmangis@comcast.net

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snuggsj@gmail.com

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: Tom Gorin
E-mail: tdssg@gmail.com

MEMBER-AT-LARGE : Shawna Ramsey
E-mail: shawna2020@sbcglobal.net

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: Vickie Post
E-mail: VickiPost@earthlink.net



FUNDRAISING

Fundraising goes on year round. Fundraising may seem like a bit of a mystery to many of us, but it is one of the most vital elements to ensure SRSFL's bright future. Now that summer activities have been added to the program, extra funds are more critical than ever! So, anything you can do to help will be greatly appreciated. We are seeking supporters, donors, grants and cash. All money raised goes directly into the program for transportation, scholarships and other expenses, and to keep the cost down for all. Signing up for Amazon Smile is another way for SRSFL to raise money. Go to Amazon and choose SRSFL as your charity.



If you have questions, ideas and/or suggestions please contact Betsy Rowell, chair of the fund-raising committee. Phone: (916) 362-5557, Email: betsy.rowell2@gmail.com
SRSFL would like to take this opportunity to thank the many organizations and businesses for their support of our cross-country ski program and summer outings. Please let them know how much you appreciate their support by patronizing their business and supporting their other activities.

Active 20/30 Club No. 1 of Sacramento
Auburn Host Lions Club, Auburn, CA
Commerce Printing, Sacramento, CA
Embarcadero Lions, Sacramento, CA
Folsom Lake Lions, Folsom, CA
Grant from the Peninsula Endowment (one time grant)

49er Ski Club, Sacramento, CA
Kiwanis Club of Citrus Heights, CA
Kiwanis Club of Folsom, CA
Lions Education Foundation
North Tahoe Catering, Truckee, CA
Sacramento Turn Verein Actives
Sacramento Valley Sertoma Club
Tahoe Donner X/C, Truckee, CA
The Treat Box Bakery, Truckee, CA

MANY THANKS also to the individual donors who have supported SRSFL throughout the years and the past year.

2019 - 2020 SRSFL CALENDAR

SUMMER HIKING WEEKEND

Aug. 23 - 26, 2019

We will spend 3 nights at beautiful Lake Tahoe

For more details contact:

Vicki Post

Home: 415 928-2711

E-mail: VickiPost@earthlink.net



SKI GUIDE TRAINING

Dates and time not yet scheduled. For guide training information contact:

Edie Lott

Home: 530 582-5362

E-mail: thelotts@gmail.com

or

Vicki Post

Home: 415 928-2711

E-mail: VickiPost@earthlink.net

SINGLE DAY SKI TRIPS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS AND THE 28TH 3-DAY EVENT

Dates are not scheduled at this time. Check your e-mail and the SRSFL web site for ski schedule. For ski information contact:

Betsy Rowell

Home: 916 362-5557

betsy.rowell2@gmail.com

KEEP IN TOUCH

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We are on the web:
www.srsfl.org



6 year old Emma learns to ski with Guide Claudia



SRSFL 2019 3 day event volunteers



2019 SRSFL March 3 - day event