



**DISABLED
SPORTS
EASTERN
SIERRA**

Sierra Snow Notes

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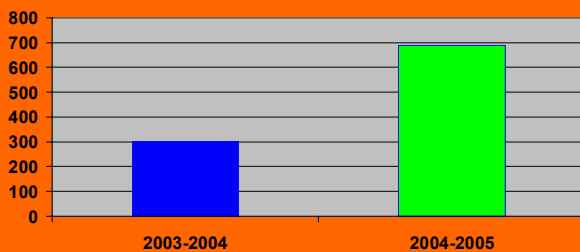
Empowering our students and staff to maximize their abilities!!

THE ENDLESS WINTER

Potential Closing Date July 4th!

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra has more than doubled their number of lessons taught this season, as compared to last season's numbers. At the end of March 2005, DSES has taught 686 lessons, while last season's end-of-March total was 300 lessons. One of the reasons for the 2004/05 season's success is because of the record amounts of snow Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort has received over the last six months. More than 500 inches of snow has dumped on Mammoth since October -- and 6 feet in the last month! Because of this incredible snow base, high demand for lessons and extended ski days, DSES will be taking reservations though April, May, and maybe longer! Call for reservations at (760) 934-0791. **—Jill Butz**

**DISABLED SPORTS EASTERN SIERRA
LESSON COMPARISON
FROM OPENING DAY THROUGH MARCH
2003-2004 & 2004-2005 SEASONS**



ALSO FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE!

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CAMP DEL CORAZON! DSES'S FIRST GROUP LESSON



Camp del Corazon instructors, campers and staff

The weekend of 5-6 March 2005 was an exciting one for Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra – it marked the first group lessons ever for us! Camp del Corazon selected Mammoth Mountain and the DSES program for their 2005 Leadership Weekend.

Camp del Corazon (“heart” in Spanish), like DSES, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. They provide a free summer camp on Catalina Island for children with heart disease, staffed totally by volunteers. Lisa Knight, RN, and Dr. Kevin Shannon started the camp in 1995 to help heal the emotional scars of children who had undergone treatment for heart disease. These kids often feel isolated from the mainstream since they’re

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frequently absent from school and can have severe restrictions on their physical activity. Medications or surgeries can sometimes allow the restrictions on physical activity to be lifted, but the emotional scars and feeling that no one shares or understands what they've gone through, linger.

As Camp del Corazon has grown over the years, Dr. Shannon's goal for the camp has also expanded. In his words, his goal for the group is, "To make this opportunity available to anyone who might benefit from it." "Anyone" includes the doctors, nurses, camp staff, and adults with congenital heart disease who have volunteered, as well as the children who attend the summer camp.

This Leadership Ski Weekend was a fantastic opportunity for the two nonprofits to come together and learn from each other. DSES taught both skiing and snowboarding to the adult volunteers and "campers" from Camp del Corazon. In turn, the Corazon group taught DSES about heart disease and how physical activities such as snow sports can be influenced by it.

Kathy Copeland, Director of DSES, first found out about Camp del Corazon at the recent California Association of Nonprofits conference (Thank you Jack and Abby!), where she met Ronya Waters from Camp del Corazon. Jill Butz worked on making the logistics happen, and it was set!

After a bit of foul weather and a trace of snow on Friday, Saturday turned bright and sunny. Snowstorms weren't even considered as E.L. Smoogen, proudly wearing his "15 feet in 15 days" DSES t-shirt, was told by a student, "I love that shirt – but what does it mean?" Enthusiasm was high as a total of 28 snowboarders and skiers (including 1 bi-skier) hit the Mammoth slopes. This year, 16 counselors-in-training ranging in age from 17 to 22 participated, with the adult volunteer staff rounding out the group. Some last-minute equipment shuffling by the students tilted the scale more toward boarders than skiers, but we were able to adapt to accommodate! Enough DSES volunteers came out to help so that group sizes were kept to around 4 or so students.

Sunday saw the altitude and the previous day's activities taking its toll on the students. However, Camp del Corazon's Saturday apres ski workshop to identify fundraising ideas for next year and to

CORAZON CONTINUES

Corazon Continued

plan the expansion of the ski weekend in 2006 to include the younger heart patients motivated most hardy souls to venture to the slopes once again. Everyone who made some turns on Sunday was glad they had, and all participants, from both Camp del Corazon and DSES, are looking forward to next year's event. *–Alex Fabbro*

DSES brings Gold Medalist to Mammoth



Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra sponsored an all-day mono-ski clinic for its staff on Saturday March 12, 2005. The clinic was conducted by Bill Bowness, a member of Professional Ski Instructor's of America's national Alpine Demo Team. Bill has a spinal cord injury and skis in a mono-ski. He has competed in the Paralympics at Lillehammer, bringing home two gold medals and a silver. Bill is on staff at Tahoe Adaptive Ski School and is also a senior examiner for PSIA-W. Topics covered included information on the latest skiing concepts presented at the Alpine Demo Team training, and mono-ski teaching progressions—for levels from beginner to advanced. DSES staff were thrilled and honored to learn from one of the best mono-skiers and instructors in the country. *-Karen Taketomo "Tako"*

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE WAILERS SKI CLUB FOR DONATING \$4200 TO DSES

Christopher Reeves Foundation Donates \$6000



The staff and Board of DSES are excited to announce that the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation (CRPF) has awarded the DSES program six thousand dollars (\$6,000) for student scholarships and adaptive instructor training. This Quality of Life Grant will help:

- 1) provide scholarships to people with disabilities so everyone can enjoy the therapeutic benefits of winter snowsports regardless of financial status, and
- 2) improve the quality of lessons given through extensive professional training of all staff.

This grant will give a tremendous boost to DSES's efforts to developing life skills by creating opportunities for adaptive sports through student scholarships and instructor training. Students of all economic backgrounds come to the DSES program. Many are unable to afford the full cost of lessons. Although DSES has made every effort to allow all students to be involved in the sports program, this grant from CRPF will assure many more students will be able to participate in the program.

During the first year of operation, five DSES volunteer instructors passed their Adaptive Instructor's Certification with the Professional Ski Instructors of America. Instructor training is a priority in order to offer the highest quality lessons possible. The added training funds from this grant will benefit not only the instructors but more importantly their students.

The CRPF Quality of Life grants program was conceived by Dana Reeve, Chairman of the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation and co-founder of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Resource Center. Dana Reeve started the program with the goal of helping people living with disabilities in the "here and now". Grants are

awarded to programs or projects that improve the well being of people with paralysis, particularly spinal cord injuries. Funding is awarded twice annually in thirteen categories, including: accessibility, advocacy, arts, assistive technology, children, counseling, education, employment, health promotion, independent living, practical services, sports and recreation, and therapeutic riding. Since 1999, CRPF has awarded 734 Quality of Life grants totaling \$6,539,511.

During this grant cycle, the CRPF awarded over \$928,417 in Quality of Life grants to 117 nonprofit organizations nationwide as part of its Quality of Life program. DSES is pleased to be one of those organizations.

The Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation (CRPF) is committed to funding research that develops treatments and cures for paralysis caused by spinal cord injury and other central nervous system disorders. The Foundation also vigorously works to improve the quality of life for people living with disabilities through its grants program, paralysis resource center, and advocacy efforts.

~Robin Conners

Please visit www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org for more information.

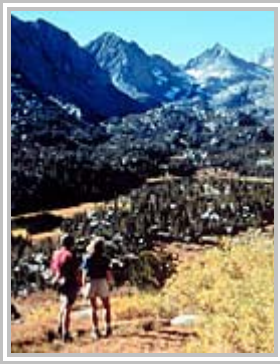
Dublin's Restaurant Sponsors Benefit for DSES.



On January 19th 2005 Dublin's Irish whiskey pub donated 10% of all of their sales to Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra. The benefit was a fun-filled event that included great food, drinks and the camaraderie of the DSES family. The benefit raised \$500 and will lead to other events sponsored by Dublin's for DSES.

If you are a business who would like to host a benefit for DSES please contact (760)934-0791

EXCITING NEWS!
DSES IS EXTENDING SERVICES TO
SUMMER ACTIVITIES



Summer activities could include hiking and fishing

Thanks to all of DSES's volunteers! YOU made this season surpass all expectations. Without you, our success would not be possible. Now for some exciting news! DSES is looking to go year round. Kathy and I will be working this summer to finalize plans for an implementation of a summer program for 2006! We will be starting out with non-motorized activities, such as hiking, fishing, etc. The sky will be the limit with how far we can go and what kind of activities we will be able to offer the disabled community, but we are going to start out slow and small. For anyone who is interested in being a part of the summer program, contact me at the office. We will have a planning committee for this program and would love to have input from the volunteers who will help to make this dream a reality. Cheers to you and thanks for making this year as wonderful as it was.

-Dave Owings "DAVO"



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DSES is always accepting applications for volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering as an instructor or office assistant to DSES contact "Davo" by calling (760) 934-0791

Volunteer Raising Money
One Mile at a Time



Volunteer Jennifer Langlo will compete in 2005 Big Sur Marathon to raise money for DSES

Volunteer Jennifer Langlo will compete in this year's Big Sur Marathon on April 24. The course spans a distance of 26.2 miles. Jennifer is planning on raising money for DSES by accepting donations in any dollar amount for each mile she runs. Jennifer hopes to raise at least \$3000 dollars from her run for DSES. Each donor will be given a tax deductible receipt for their contribution.

The course is a point to point race. It is considered one of the toughest marathons in California. The course features rolling hills along coastal highways and is the largest rural marathon in the world, winding through redwoods, paralleling ranches, and offering stunning views of the Pacific Ocean.

Donations can be made to Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra at PO Box 7275, Mammoth Lakes Ca, 93546.



Patti Rea and Alma Toledo posing for a snapshot at The Magic Carpet

An Inspiring Letter from a Volunteer!



Sally describes volunteer E.L. Smoogen as a Hero!

The Lesson with William,

Last week I volunteered at the Disabled Sports Center. The experience was so rewarding, I want to share it. I'm a new volunteer and worked with an experienced instructor, E.L. Smoogen. We were told our "client" was a ten-year old with autism and down's syndrome. I'm a retired teacher, but for the most part they were mainstream students, so I didn't know what to expect. Little did I realize this student would be full of questions, be very aware of his own abilities and verbally indicate no signs of being in a special education curriculum. He literally never stopped talking. William got more out of the morning ski lesson than any child I have ever seen. One reason was his immediate hero worship of E.L. Oh he liked me too but I could tell E.L. was his ski mentor. The high school races were within view of our lesson, and he asked many questions about that. How old are they? How long have they been skiing? Maybe I could ski like that someday.

This was William's second lesson at DSES, so he announced he would not be going on the Discovery Chair because he wasn't good enough. Then he changed his mind and said "Well, I guess so." So with both instructors, up he went, viewing high school races along the way. We could tell William was slowly warming up to the idea of skiing down the easy run. E.L. proposed the game of

ski-basketball, with William wearing a leash. We begun our descent on the Discovery Chair. William could concentrate on following E.L. and I was the "sweep." William was talking all the way down. Yes, he would consider going up the lift again. And again William set the pace. After a short break, he informed us he would not be going on the lift again. He had changed his mind.

After a short pause, he changed his mind; he was up for it after all. (his hero was going up the lift, so was he.) Then came his moment, his epiphany of great enthusiasm, "I love to ski." After a few more lifts, a few more games of basketball and pizza, we were running out of time. One more lift and the lesson would be over. Would he need the leash this last time, asked the hero? No, William shouted. I'll do it on my own.

That is just what he did. Skiing by himself put him just a little closer to making the far off dream of skiing in the high school championships. With William, I don't doubt he will someday do just that.

~**Sally Gessford.**

Every Penny Counts

As a volunteer for DSES for the past year I have learned the inner workings of this program. How lessons are run, how students learn and most importantly how this program finds ways to fund itself. I have witnessed first hand the generosity of individuals and organizations.

Numerous organizations have donated to DSES through long and detailed grant processes. These grants lead to thousands of wonderful dollars for the program.

I am writing this short statement to express thanks to those individuals who fund this program out of their own checkbook. School teachers, construction workers, doctors donate anywhere from twenty five dollars to thousands of dollars. All these donations make a difference. DSES thanks you for every penny because even the smallest of donations help the biggest of hearts.

~**Mario Arce**



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A Word from the Director, Kathy

The huge success of our second season is due to two groups of *fabulous* people....the volunteers and the donors! In this issue we focus on the donors. I want to emphasize that without the generosity of all our donors – we would not exist. From the nickels and dimes dropped in to the change jars around town to the Educational Foundation of America's \$16,000 grant and Air Tahiti Nui's vacation to Tahiti – and everything in between....it all adds up to success. Success for us means not turning anyone away because they can't afford it. We don't want money to be the deciding factor of skiing or not skiing. To all our contributors...thank you for your support and please continue with your generosity!!! And to all you future donors....maybe NOW is the time??!! Love to you all ~ Kathy

