

March 15, 2005 - NSP Forum Posting/General Discussion:

## **Name Dropped From Back Cross**

Fellow patrollers:

As the person who started this discussion on the NSP Forum, I have sat back and read with anticipation every night as many patrollers from across the country have offered their opinions on the back cross issue. Some think it's the end of the world, others that it is no big deal--but all have been able to express themselves via this forum. And the passion has been wonderful, for it is this same passion that makes us stay up late as a candidate practicing tying knots, and motivates us later to become an OEC instructor or toboggan trainer or get up at dawn on Saturday morning and go ski in freezing rain. It's passion and pride that both hold this organization together and move it forward.

I knew that the back cross would be a rallying cry for many patrollers, including myself, who were increasingly uncomfortable with where the organization was headed, but couldn't really spur themselves to cry "STOP." Well that time has come.

I have sat back somewhat for the last few weeks, because as a line officer (Eastern Michigan Region Director) I felt that I had a duty not to press my own agenda, but to understand the concerns of my patrollers and get a mandate for my actions. I now have that mandate. The real issue here is not rusty parkas, or embroidery on a cross, or gold and silver pins--the issue is that the board of directors is making decisions many in the membership are uncomfortable with AND THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT. The patrollers in my region are upset, I have relayed that to our Division Director, he has relayed that to Bill Sachs and if the board chooses to ignore us what can we do?

Vote them out?

I doubt if you voted them in (unless you count your non-vote as a positive vote, a tactic which even the old Soviet Union didn't try in their own sham elections) Our current process for elections is morally corrupt and undeserving of an American icon institution such as ours. And at the last two board meetings, the process has gotten even WORSE. Please read the Annual meeting notes from last year, at that meeting the board approved that the national chairman alone chooses the nominating committee, which chooses the slate of candidates, which gets elected if you don't vote. And the check and balance on the process which allowed for a petition (write -in) candidate was removed.

It gets worse. At the mid-winter meeting, the rules were changed again to allow the board to go from a maximum of two 3-year terms to three 3-year terms. And the board chairman who in the past could only serve on the board a total of six years, (including his/her time as a board member) can now serve for three 2-year terms as chair IN ADDITION to a maximum three 3-year terms on the board. This means that someone who you didn't really elect through a democratic vote in the first place could serve on the board for FIFTEEN YEARS!!!!

I have not up to this point and will not make any accusations as to the character or the motives of the individuals on the board who have made these decisions. I give them the benefit of the doubt that somehow they feel they are justified and "know what's best for us." But absolute power corrupts absolutely and a benevolent dictatorship is still not a democracy.

So, job one is to stay focused on a solution to the liability issues that started this ruckus (and some great solutions have been offered on this forum.) For real leadership demands solving the root problem, not hiding behind obscured patches on a jacket.

But the end goal must be a board of directors which is democratically chosen by the people and accountable to the will of the dues paying membership -- and if we stop short of that then we need to accept whatever decisions are made, or leave the organization. And the patrollers in Eastern Michigan

have made it clear to me that they're not going anywhere. They want their ski patrol back and they won't stop till they succeed.

Talk to the patrollers on your duty shift, your PD, your Section Chief, your Region Director -- spread the word, and get others involved.

**JOIN THE RUST REVOLUTION!**

Ty Damon  
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Member since 1980