

# Summit Newsletter

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Tuesday Issue, March 27, 2012

## Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Mountain

Hitting the slopes for the first time today? Thinking, "what the hell am I doing?" You're not the first to think that. Hundreds of Veterans before you have thought the exact same, only to come back year after year to conquer the very same mountain that they feared before.

So what can you expect? Well, expect 200 world class certified ski instructors who are ready and more than willing to provide you the experience of a lifetime, a run down the mountain that's catered for you, a run that will have you begging for more.

You're saying to yourself, "yeah but there's no snow, how much fun could it possibly be." According to Navy Veteran David Pelkey who hit the mountain yesterday morning you can expect a great time. "I was a little frustrated at first looking at the snow, thinking the worst, but as soon as I started down the hill it all disappeared. I had a blast," he said. Then David shared some words of wisdom for all you first timers "Just relax and let the instructors do all the work. Do that and it will always turn out well."

So the question is, how do the instructors know what runs are best for you? Wayne Grapes, the Clinics 'On Mountain Coordinator,' who (will tell you proudly he has attended all 26 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinics) explained that every instructor has to attend a hill orientation when they arrive. At the orientation each run is gone through in detail, all the things an instructor needs to know in order to make your experience one you will never forget. "We have two goals on the mountain: one, be safe and two, have the time of your life," said Wayne.

How can I have the time of my life if all I can think about is my first face plant and the pain that will follow? Wayne says it best, "You're going to fall, it happens to everyone, even the best skiers laid in the snow. Embrace it, get back up and accept the challenge." Many old time Veterans of the Clinic will tell you, if you haven't left some blood on the mountain then you haven't given it your all.

So what's it going to be? I'll tell you, take that first step, dig down deep, and give it everything you got. In the words of Senior Drill Instructor Dan from the Marine Reunion party last night, 'Get Some!'

## Perspectives on Sports Therapy:

My Journey to the Mountain: By Kevin Beus, Navy Veteran and first-time National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic participant

"I have been a cross country skier for most of my life, but after I lost my eye sight two years ago I just didn't think I could do it anymore. The VA told me I couldn't do anything for a year after my stroke.

During that time, I gained 40 pounds, lost my muscle tone and I just wasn't active at all. Then the low vision clinic sent me to see a recreation therapist. I started riding the bus three hours one way to go cross country skiing once a week. My first time back on skis, I was really scared because I didn't have trust in anyone. I've always been on my own, but to be able to ski blind I had to put my faith in other people. That is definitely something that's different for me. Instead of giving up, I thought to myself, I might as well do the best I can because if I fall I'm just going to hurt for a while and that doesn't matter...I'm already hurt. I've been cross country skiing with recreation therapy for two years and I'm going to participate in the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic for the first time. I have become pretty independent on the skis, I only need verbal cues once in a while. Now I'm not afraid to try anything. Working with recreation therapists has inspired me to get involved with rock climbing, golfing, horseback riding and even jogging. Becoming active again has built my confidence so that I can still do stuff even though I'm going blind.

Two years ago, I didn't think I could do anything ever again. I thought I was going to be stuck in my house all the time, but the truth is I still can get out and participate in life. I'm looking forward to the Winter Sports Clinic this year because it's something I know I can do, and being around other people and getting out of the house is all the motivation I need."

## Helping Veterans Achieve Their Goals: By Emily Potter, Recreation Therapist

“Kevin Beus was referred to Recreation Therapy by the low vision clinic at the VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City. He would be the first to admit that he was pretty negative when he came to see us. It was as if his life was over. He was petrified of going skiing, but he went. Sure, he fell a few times, but he got back up and kept going. It was on one of those trips that he had a huge epiphany – it was like he realized that his life wasn’t over and he could do anything he set his mind on.

He started skiing every week and challenged himself to do more. I think he built a trust foundation and this year he just exploded and started doing all sorts of activities – golf, rock climbing, skiing – and he actually just competed in the dance competition of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and won first place in his division. It’s been really delightful to watch him through this journey. He sets a goal each week. And his goals are focused on what he can do, not what he can’t.

I’ve watched him change physically – he’s lost weight, regained muscle tone, cut back on his smoking. And I’ve seen other changes as well, like improvements in his confidence, social interaction and even his speech. Kevin has made an investment in his health and we are so proud of him.”

## Departing Early?

If you are a Winter Sports Clinic participant and you are leaving prior to Saturday please follow these instructions. Write down your name, contact phone number and flight time. Please bring that information to the Host room. The transportation coordinator will contact you with details regarding your trip to the airport.

Thank you.

## CEU Class Suggestions

Do you have a great topic for a CEU session at Winter Sports Clinic? Are you interested in doing a CEU presentation at the next WSC Clinic? We are looking for educational topics that would benefit both recreational therapists and the Veterans they work with. Proposed CEU sessions are submitted to the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) so that we can offer CEU credit for interested attendees. Please send proposed sessions with a title and short description along with your contact information to: Jill Cordova at [jcordova@coloradomesa.edu](mailto:jcordova@coloradomesa.edu). by November 1st, 2012.

## Educational Workshops

Throughout the week, several workshops will be offered to help participants and clinicians cope with the challenges Veterans with disabilities experience in everyday life. Classes include a number of different topics, from how to continue leading active and healthy lives to self-defense for everyone. Participants are encouraged to attend one, or all of these insightful workshops, which have been created with your needs in mind.

TUESDAY March 27, 2012

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| 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. | “Tai Chi Four More”<br>Aspenwood Meeting Room, Fall Lane<br>Presented by Duane Crider, Ph.D. and William Klinger, Ph.D.  |
| 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. | “Mission: Possible...My Health Choices”<br>Aspenwood Meeting Room, Fall Lane<br>Presented by Lynn Novorska, RD, LDN; Sophia Hurley, MSPT, Sue Diamond, RN, MSN |

## Are You On Twitter?

Each day, we'll ask a question about the clinic using hash tag #NDVWSC.

Follow @VAADAPTIVESPORT and join the conversation!

## Question Of The Day: What was your first downhill lesson like?

Denise McAlpin, Miami, FL Army

"The sense of freedom coming down the mountain so fast is what sticks out. It was exhilarating."

Biff Fry, Beaver Creek, OH Air Force

"It was a blast all the way through, my turns were smooth and my instructors kept me out of the trees."

Eli Cantarero, Stowe, OH Army

"It is hard to put it into words, but I am thinking great, awesome and amazing."

Barbara Newstrom, Chillicothe, OH Army

"I was part of Team Blond with my instructors and you know girls just want to have fun, it was fantastic."

Alan Burger, Kansas City, KS Navy

"It was very liberating, feel like I have done this before, but it was my first time. I am hooked."

## Traumatic Brain Injury

The Traumatic Brain Injury Peer Support Group is an informal session for Veterans who have suffered a brain injury--family members are also encouraged to attend. The group will be moderated by Cheryl Lynch, the mother of a brain injury survivor Chris Lynch. Cheryl is also the founder of American Veterans with Brain Injuries (AVBI.org).

When a person suffers a brain injury the experience can be very isolating, not just for the individual who suffers the injury but for the family members as well. Through this group, attendees have a chance to learn from each other, gain strength and a new perspective, overcome feelings of isolation, and connect with others who truly understand life after a brain injury.

This peer support session has been held at the Winter Sports Clinic for the past six years. Each year the number of participants and has grown dramatically and has included a diverse group of Veterans sharing their stories. These peer to peer connections are invaluable. This group allows attendees to gain new friendships that will last long after the Winter Sports clinic is over.

The 2012 TBI Peer Support Group will be held in the Max Park Room at the Wildwood Lodge, Tuesday evening, from 6 to 8 p.m.

## Prosthetic Daily

Dear PDP -

I heard that the VA buys guide dogs and service dogs for Veterans who need help getting around. Is that true? How do I sign up to get my new puppy? I always feel better with a dog around.

Signed, Dog-Lovin' Vet

Dear DLV -

Well, that's not quite true. The VA does not actually BUY the dog for a Veteran but rather refers the Veteran to an accredited guide or service dog organization. There is a highly organized process determine the best combination of dog with Veteran and to provide extensive training for both. If there's a match, the organization donates the dog to the Veteran and the VA can provide support for the dog like some veterinary care and hardware like a leash. If you're interested, the best place to start is with your clinician back at your VA facility; they can do the preliminary evaluation and point you in the right direction.

## Schedule for Tuesday, March 27

6:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.	Host Room: Conference Center
6:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m.	Breakfast: Conference Center Ballroom
8:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.	Snowmobiling: T Lazy 7 Ranch (Loads @ 7:00 a.m. & 9:15 a.m.)
8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.	Skiing Downhill: Bear Bottom, Head Wall, Lodge Pole
9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.	Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing, Biathlon Introduction (Top of the Village) (Lunch Elks BBQ at TOV) (Loads @ 8:20 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.)
9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	Kayaking: Pool, Wildwood Lodge Sled Hockey: Lewis Ice Arena, Aspen (Loads @ 7:45 a.m.)
9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.	Glenwood Springs Trip, Lunch at Elks Lodge, Hot Springs (Loads @ 9:30 a.m.)
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	Scuba Diving: Pool, Silver Tree Hotel Rock-Climbing: Conference Center Circle
10:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.	Aspen Trip, Lunch at Elks Lodge, Aspen Mountain Gondola Ride (Loads @ 10:00 a.m.)
11:15 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch: Conference Center Ballroom
11:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.	Shooting Sports/Archery: Basalt Trap Club (Loads @ 10:00 a.m.)
12:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.	Skiing Downhill: Baby Ruth, Showcase, Fast Draw
1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.	Rock-Climbing: Conference Center Circle
1:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.	Curling: Aspen Ice Rink (Loads @ 12:45 p.m.)
2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.	Scuba Diving: Pool, Silver Tree Hotel Kayaking: Pool, Wildwood Lodge
4:15 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	Ski Instructor Meeting: Eldorado Room, Silver Tree Hotel
4:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m.	Dinner: Conference Center Ballroom
4:45 p.m.	Team Leader Meeting: Stone Bridge Inn Council Room
5:00 p.m.	Coaches Meeting: Max Park Room Wildwood Hotel
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.	TBI Peer Support Group Meeting: Max Park Room
6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.	CEU Educational Workshop: “Tai Chi Four More” Aspenwood Meeting Room, Fall Lane Presented by, Duane Crider, Ph.D. and William Klinger, Ph.D.
7:30 p.m.–9:00 p.m.	CEU Educational Workshop: “Mission: Possible...My Health Choices” Aspenwood Meeting Room, Fall Lane Presented by, Lynn Novorska, RD, LDN; Sophia Hurley, MSPT, Sue Diamond, RN, MSN
8:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m.	Instructor Appreciation Party: Conference Center Ballroom Trez Equis/ZZ Top Cover Band

## Odds and Ends

### MASSAGE

Complimentary massages are available by scheduling an appointment. Massage is located in the Elbert room in the Silvertree Hotel. Please call (970) 300-8135 for an appointment. Massages are available beginning today from 1 – 4:00 p.m. and 6 – 9 p.m. until all slots are full.

### WHEELCHAIR AND PROSTHETICS REPAIR

Located at the Host Room in the Conference Center.

Hours are: 6:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

11 a.m.–1 p.m.

4 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

In between these hours this person (Don) can be reached at 970-430-9417. Please do not call after 6 p.m. unless it is an emergency. If you need to contact Prosthetics Repair 970-300-8133

## **MEDICAL ROOM**

### **For emergencies dial 911**

Medical room phone: (970) 923-8330

### **Location**

The medical room is located in the Bedford A conference room, one level below the mall, across the street from the Mountain Chalet Hotel. Stairway access from the mall is next to Christy Sports. Wheelchair access is by elevator at the far end of the mall above the bus terminal.

### **Transport**

Van transport is available from the Silvertree Hotel to the medical room. Find the medical van in the front of the hotel or call the medical room to arrange transportation.

### **After Hours**

Call the medical room for recorded instructions on how to contact the “on call” medical provider. successful, call the hotel operator.



## TRANSPORTATION

Event	Load
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Snowmobiling

First Trip	7:00 a.m.
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Second Trip	9:00 a.m.
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Please make sure to load at the correct time for your assigned trip.

Sled Hockey	7:45 a.m.
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Cross Country Skiing

First Trip	8:20 a.m.
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Second Trip	1:00 p.m.
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Buses will run up and down the mountain throughout the day. The 1 p.m. bus will also pick up any participants from the first trip who wish to return to the Conference Center. All remaining participants will be picked up at 3 p.m.

Hot Springs	9:30 a.m.
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Shooting Sports	10:00 a.m.
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Aspen Gondola	10:00 a.m.
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Curling	12:45 p.m.
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