

ENHANCED PATROLLER SCHOOL

Explosions! Airplane crashes! Screaming Injured people! Along with great training, good Patroller fellowship, camping, and great food! If that sounds like a good time to you, you should be attending the Enhanced Patrollers Schools that are conducted every year by our friends at the Genesee Valley Region. This year's Enhanced Patroller School was held at Hunt Hollow Ski Area from Friday, August 25th to Sunday, August 27th. Jeff Baker and Tom Wallin have been organizing these training events since 2011. Jim Nickerson and Joe Menichino have been right there planning and working since the beginning as well. From year to year they bring in additional patrollers from around the Division to help act as guides and gurus because they have the expertise in the different modules they are planning for the given year. These typically include Low Angle Rescue, Chair Evacuation, Outdoor Emergency Care, Risk Management, and more.

This 3-day event typically starts on Friday with many folks registering and setting up their campsite in the early afternoon. Around 3:00 there is a safety briefing along with introductions. The Friday afternoon activities include gear checks, knot tying, dinner and Fire Pit talks well into the evening. Saturday is consumed with practicing various Patroller skills including OEC skills, Chair Evac, and Low Angle Rescue. The weekend culminates on Sunday morning with a huge simulated Mass Casualty Exercise where all the skills that have been practiced on Friday and Saturday are used. This year's simulated MCI was centered around an airplane crashing at a ski resort, clipping the haul cable on the chair lift, and knocking people from the chairlift to the ground.

The crux of the concept of an Enhanced Patroller School is making patrollers of any level better by improving their skills so they ultimately become a more valuable resource and provide value to the areas that they work for. They look at as many areas of patrolling that a patroller can come in contact with and try to provide training and experience in those areas.



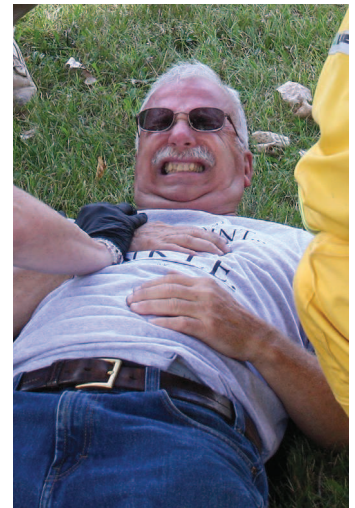
Jeff Baker



Tom Wallin - applying final touches



Joe Menichino



Jim Nickerson - in character as one of the patients

Another concept of the Enhanced Patroller School is that everyone has something to offer. Whether it be patrolling experience, life experience, climbing experience, work experience, skill sets, etc. We can all learn from each other and apply these skills to our jobs as patrollers. That's why there are no instructors at this school. There are station guides or gurus that are there to keep the train moving during the station rotations. Each of the stations that are put out each year have certain "goals" in mind, be that skill based, equipment based, or knowledge based. They have tried with each successive year to build in current topics or hot button issues, most recently unseated passengers. Several years ago it was active shooters. In other years it was incapacitated persons up in a chair among others.

Jeff has also been instrumental in bringing in outside expertise to give their take on things such as their procedures, equipment, and training which may be beneficial to us as patrollers as well as interacting with local EMS agencies and systems. They have had people from Fire Departments, Ambulance Corps, paramedics, paramedic trainers, law enforcement, high angle rope teams, Search

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and Rescue teams and backcountry rescue teams come and help out. Again, they are learning and interacting with these agencies from a cooperative perspective rather than an adversarial position. What can we learn from other people to make us more effective as patrollers? What equipment is out there that will make it easier and safer for our line patrollers to do their jobs?

Jeff started the school on Keuka Lake with some help from Tom and then they have had wonderful support from ski areas such as Blue Mountain, Bristol Mountain, Holiday Valley, and Hunt Hollow allowing them to use their facilities and have access to their lifts for Chair evacuation. The schools have had similar formats over the years though some of the modules do change or rotate from time to time. There is always an OEC module focusing on assessment and the core skills that we use as patrollers. This station works on refining assessment skills by making them faster and more efficient without missing anything. You will also see new equipment that patrollers may not have seen before like a Slishman traction splint, or this year it was a new type of pelvic sling. Low Angle Rope rescue



is a perpetual favorite with this course so it stays in the rotation. Patrollers like tying knots and bringing injured persons up the hill with ropes.

Chair Evac is also one of the perennial modules as it is something that we are tasked with as patrollers. This is the only area of patrolling that, if things go sideways during an evac, there could be life altering consequences. With recent updates in best practices, most recently with unseated passenger rescue procedures being scrutinized by states and insurance companies, bringing updates and information about lift evacuation changes and information like the Aerial Evacuation Resource Guide has been important. They have also had Risk Management modules, now Outdoor Risk Management in past years. This year they added Search and Rescue which is a topic that we as patrollers are tasked with doing but it rarely gets studied in depth.

The whole purpose of the Mass Casualty Incident drill

at the end is to put the skills and techniques that they have worked on over the span of the course into immediate practical use. MCI's are covered in the OEC refresher cycle once every three years, but how many of us could pull one off if it happened at our respective areas? It also gives the patrollers in attendance the opportunity to see interaction with EMS agencies whether that be Fire departments, Ambulance corps, or law enforcement agencies. These are learning opportunities for the patrollers and the goal is



Tom Wallin's moulage from the Active Shooter Training Incident simulation

that they learn something and take something home with them. No MCI drill ever goes perfectly and it usually hits the fan about 5 minutes in. If the patrollers listen to the feedback from the outside agencies that are critiquing the drill, both the things that went well, and more importantly the things that did not go well, then the patrollers have lessons that they can bring back to their patrols and start a discussion with their patrol leaders and their area management.

The most memorable drill for Tom was the one at Blue Mountain where the area specifically asked them to run an
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Another photo of Tom Wallin's moulage. This is an open mid-femur fracture from this year's Mass Casualty Incident Simulation

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active shooter drill. The Pennsylvania State police came in and gave a presentation to the group about what was going to happen during and after an incident. This discussion was eye opening for everyone. When the drill began it was interesting to watch the reactions of the Patrollers. They were chomping at the bit to go out and help people but the scene was not safe and the State Police would not allow anyone out until they gave the all clear. Tom noted that he was really happy how his gun shot moulage came out. If you have attended any of these events, you will know that when it comes to moulage, no one does it better than Tom. He is truly the "Moulage Master". His knack for coming up with real-looking wounds and injuries is amazing. Tom says that as far as moulage goes, he started in Jeff's shadow by helping him and doing some small stuff. It didn't hurt that he had some creative little kids at the time, that were always coming up with some



They want everyone to have fun, learn stuff, and take ideas back to their home patrols. With patrollers coming from all around the Division, as you sit around the fire pit talking at night, you get the interchange of ideas and techniques from many other Patrollers.

Maybe the weekend answers a question that you might have. Maybe it sparks an idea for a procedure that your patrol has been struggling with lately. Maybe you saw some new equipment that you have never seen or used before and it made the difference for you. It is a networking event. They feed everyone that comes to the event and they feed everyone well. They have never wanted food at this event to be the reason they didn't learn anything or had a bad time. They have always said that if you go home hungry at the end of the weekend, it's your own fault.

Jeff Baker patrols at Bristol Mountain, Tom Wallin and Joe Menichino patrol at Swain Resort and Jim Nickerson patrols at Hunt Hollow Resort.



really interesting Halloween costume ideas and he would think "How am I supposed to do that?" YouTube has been a big help as far as ideas, techniques, and material ideas from the many FX channels that he follows.

When it comes to attendance at these events, they had around 25-30 attendees in the beginning and it has been up close to around 70. As far as overall total number of patrollers at this course they are not sure of the total number. At this year's event they had 51 attendees from 9 different Regions, 8 different states, and 20 different patrols. The actual planning of these events starts during the ski season when they start making inquiries about potential ski areas that are willing to host the event. The programming planning of the event usually starts in earnest in April.

This school has always been a low pressure, hands on, try stuff, get your hands dirty (or bloody), ask questions type of event. They have always wanted it accessible to patrollers of any level, including Candidates, Basic Patrollers, Senior Candidates, Senior Patrollers, and Certified.

