

For immediate release.



Great Falls, Montana November 1, 2022: The National Ski Patrol awards The Great Falls Ski Patrol with the 2022 Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol in North America award - the highest honor awarded by the National Ski Patrol.

The National Ski Patrol is made up of over 600 patrol units and over 32,000 patrollers worldwide. The Great Falls Ski Patrol with 49 members just barely meets the 40 members criteria to be a Large Alpine Patrol. Although they are right at the bottom of the threshold for the Large Alpine Patrol category, this doesn't stop the GFSP from being awarded the top in the industry for 2022; they call themselves "a small large alpine patrol".

Founded in 1938, the Great Falls Ski Patrol is one of the oldest volunteer patrols in the country. Volunteer Ski Patroller, Allan Rabbit, who first joined the patrol in 1979, attributes the success of the GFSP to the community of dedicated volunteers. The GFSP is composed of 49 members, many of whom have been on the patrol for 30+ years, a few in the 40+ year club, one 50 yearer, and the legendary Stan King who celebrated his 60th year on the Great Falls Ski Patrol in 2021.

Showdown is incredibly proud of and grateful for, our GFSP and all they do for our mountain. While Showdown has professional patrollers on the weekdays, most of the people you see in the red coats on the weekends are volunteers. Not only do they volunteer their time during the season as patrollers on the mountain, but they also spend numerous weekends in the off-season going through training. While we hope we never need the assistance of patrol, we rest easy knowing that our patrollers are the most professional, prepared, and trustworthy group of people.

Along with their dedication and outstanding work, they also create a fun and educational environment for our guests. Their annual "Patrollerpalooza" event invites skiers of all ages to visit stations around the mountain and have the opportunity to learn about mountain safety and

what it takes to be a Patroller; from tobogganing, to mountaineering, to avalanche safety, and knot tying. And in a historically male-dominated industry, their annual GFSP Women's Patrol Fest invites women patrollers from other ski areas in the division to Showdown for a weekend of clinics, skill building, and networking.

While we talk a lot about the patrollers themselves, the GFSP is made up of so much more than that. It's the spouses, parents & family members who also sacrifice their winter weekends. It's their children who learn to ski here and inevitably join the patrol or the Showdown staff themselves. The GFSP is made up of generations of patrollers & families, and we watching that continue for the next 84 years.

At the end of a busy weekend, you can often find a large table of patrollers and their families unwinding in the lodge. There is no better feeling than having their laughter and camaraderie fill the room. They're the friendly familiar faces you see every weekend that help make our mountain feel like a second home for so many of our guests.

They're our family, our dear friends, and our heroes in red jackets.

Thank you and congratulations to the Great Falls Ski Patrol on this incredible achievement.

For more information on the Great Falls Ski Patrol visit <https://gfskipatrol.org>