

National Life Member: Bill Esdale – 1999 – LM42

Kawartha Zone Life Member – 1992 – #5

Bill joined the Canadian Ski Patrol System in 1976 at the late age of 34 as a member of the Dagmar Ski Resort in Kawartha Zone. In 1979, he became the Patrol Leader of Dagmar; a position he held for five years. The same year, he took on the position of Vice-President of Finance for Kawartha Zone and served in both these positions for the next five years and Zone Operations until 1984.

In 1982, Bill received National Appreciation Award Number 596.

That same year, he was one of the co-founders of the Ski Swap for Kawartha Zone, an activity that turned the zone into one of the more financially stable zones in the country; he continues to be the Manager of this event today.

Under his tutelage and guidance, this Swap has become the second largest in Ontario and the third largest in Canada. Bill developed a computer program to run the Ski swap, and this program has now been shared with most of the zones in Ontario and many throughout Canada.

Also, in 1984, Bill became President of Kawartha Zone and held this position for four years. Under his leadership, he developed a fledgling zone into one of the strongest zones in the country. What was a diversified and geographically distant zone was unified into a single and strong entity?

In 1986, Bill received the Canadian Ski Patroller Award Number 512 and in 1987 he was rewarded by receiving the Ontario Division President's Award for the most outstanding Zone in Ontario. Unprecedented, he was presented with this Award again in 1988.

Also, in 1988, for the first time in its history, Kawartha Zone was recognized and received the Dr. Douglas Firth Trophy for the Most Outstanding Zone in Canada. In the words of the presenter at the time "this is no small feat considering it is one of the smaller zones in the country located under the shadow of the largest zone in the country." In 1988, Bill also participated as a member of the CSPS at the Olympics in Calgary following two years of training in that venue.

In 1988, Bill retired as President of Kawartha Zone and accepted the position of Vice-President of Finance at Ontario Division. During this time, he developed a computer program for tracking finances, a program that has now been adapted by most zones in Ontario and several in other parts of the country. Around about this time, he perceived that there were administrative shortcomings associated with the annual election at the National level and to this end he developed a program for use by National for this purpose at the Annual Conference.

In 1989, because of a downsizing of the executive of Ontario Division due to financial constraints, Bill assumed the dual roles of Treasurer of Ontario Division and Vice-President of Operations for Ontario Division. He continued in this dual role for three years. During this period, through his leadership in fiscal responsibility, the Division turned its fortunes around and got into a fiscally sound and prosperous position.

He also further developed the computer financial program to ease all tracking of expenditures and receipts. In 1992, Bill gave up the position of Treasurer and continued as Vice-President of Operations. In 1992, Bill received the highest operational recognition possible in Kawartha Zone, the Zone Life Member Award. This is rarely bestowed; in fact, Bill is only the fifth patroller in the history of the zone to receive it. In 1993, Bill was an integral and major part of Ontario Division when the Division was recognized and awarded the Most Outstanding Division in Canada.

In 1993, Bill became President of Ontario Division. He immediately set out to encourage the participation of all zone presidents, training officers, and division executive in developing the role and responsibilities of the Division through the Disney methodology and setting this to a living document. His driving force and leadership led to the creation of a Zone President's Manual, a prototype for such manuals now being developed in other Divisions, Zones and Patrols throughout the country. His vision has also resulted in a Workplace and Discrimination Policy in Ontario Division.

Finally, through his guidance and leadership, Ontario Division has been a pioneer in developing training standards to enhance our training program. He has almost single-handedly produced the first Annual Division Newsletter in twenty years. During this period, he personally fostered a strong relationship between the Canadian Ski Patrol and the Ontario Ski Resorts Association. Under his guidance, Ontario Division of the Canadian Ski Patrol has now received accreditation with the Worker's Compensation Board for Ontario.

At the Annual Conference in Montreal in 1995, Bill became aware of the financial picture at the National level with respect to expenditures over receipts. When an increase in membership fees to overcome a deficit or to work with a deficit became a possibility, Bill not only expressed concern but followed up his concern with positive action. He quickly sought the approval of his executive and zone presidents in Ontario and on behalf of Ontario Division made a donation to the National System to avoid this situation.

All the initiatives that are taking place within Ontario Division are being watched with interest by the rest of the System and there is no doubt that each and every one of them is in line with the goals and objectives of the System. The most amazing thing of it all is that he continues to drive and be the rest of the System and there is no doubt that each and every one of them is in line with the goals and objectives of the System.

The most amazing thing of it all is that he continues to drive and be driven at a time when his personal health is of some concern to his close colleagues and friends. However, his initiative and enthusiasm never seem to wane and one never knows what new idea he is going to come up with next but there is no doubt that he will see it through to fruition.

In 1996 at the Annual Conference, Bill's efforts were recognized when he was awarded the National Outstanding Division Award. Bill retired as Division President and ran for election to the National Board of Directors and was successful. What is interesting about this and little realized is that Bill is the first member of the Board from Ontario who is not from Central Zone. This is an example of how Bill has molded the Division into one of cohesiveness amongst the zones.

I would respectfully submit that the foregoing chronology outlines how Bill has been a positive leader in the System for over ten years, in fact in nineteen of his twenty-one years, who, in every function in which he has served, has been a progressive builder in both leadership and significant contributions that have aided the growth of the System and has had a major positive impact.

In his position as Division President, he constantly consults and works with other Division Presidents and this has helped in making this body a stronger arm of the System in cohesion and unification. To those that do not know Bill intimately, one might be inclined to have doubts about his methods. He asks the right questions when they should be asked and in his own way seeks a sensible solution. His character is one of no fanfare and no grandstanding. He avoids major conflict and works with people in a quiet, unassuming manner. He is a natural leader.

As a footnote, if I may be presumptuous, I would like to request that should the Awards Committee deem that Bill is worthy of this most prestigious award, that he not be notified of such, but rather that the writer be informed in confidence. (June 5th 1992)

Dear Stu:

This is probably the hardest letter that I have ever attempted to write. I have given up counting the number of abortive attempts I have made over the last month. I am just not sure how to go about thanking you and your executive for the presentation of the Life Membership Award you so earnestly made to me at the Kawartha zone banquet in April.

Knowing the other four individuals that have received this award in the past and the contribution they have made to Kawartha Zone and the System as a whole, makes me feel that my small contribution pales in comparison.

As you well know Stu, my life is interwoven around the Patrol and Kawartha Zone. My best friends are all within the Patrol and mostly within Kawartha Zone. It is probably that fact that makes helping out in any way I can, not a task, but just plain fun and enjoyment.

I have had many great moments over the last 15 years in the Patrol. I have fond memories of being a Patrol Leader and winning the best Patrol award, receiving the Outstanding Zone award in Quebec City on behalf of Kawartha Zone and my memories of the '88 Olympics. None of these memories give me the emotional feeling that I get now when I think back about that award presentation you made to me in Haliburton. I just wish I was capable of tell you and all the Patrollers that where in Haliburton that night just exactly how I felt about receiving the Life Membership award. The words just would not come out.

I must still be having the same problem as all I can still say to you Stu, and your Executive is "Thank you very much, you will never know who much it is appreciated." Regards, Bill