

## Here is my gift (Check with your Human Resources about Matching Gifts)

\$1000  \$500  \$250  \$100  Other \_\_\_\_\_

We also accept:  American Express  Visa  Mastercard  Discover  Check or Money order

I would like my gift to go to:  AbilityPLUS general fund OR a specific AbilityPLUS location:

Waterville Valley  Attitash  Mount Snow  Stowe  Bretton Woods  Gunstock  Wachusett  Nashoba Valley

**Please make your gift payable to AbilityPLUS and return this form with your gift. Your gift is tax-deductible. Thanks!**



PO Box 253  
Waterville Valley, NH 03215  
603.236.4758  
www.abilityplus.org

YES – I want to help AbilityPLUS continue providing sports and recreational programs to individuals with disabilities on a year round basis throughout New England.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



P.O. Box 253  
Waterville Valley, NH 03215



# Tracks

The Newsletter of AbilityPLUS Inc.  
A Nonprofit Adaptive Skiing & Recreation Organization

Summer 2006

### STAFF & PROGRAM DIRECTORS:

Katharine R. Chandler  
Executive Director

Gregory T. Cutler  
Development Director

Joan Sweeney  
Administrative Assistant

Silk Fockenbrock  
Waterville Valley

Erik Corbett  
Attitash/Bear Peak

Sue Tatem  
Mount Snow

Cris Criswell  
Bretton Woods

Jane Haressis  
Stowe Resort

Nancy Ripley  
Gunstock

Kevin Shea & Rick Patrick  
Wachusett Mountain

Al Bevington  
Nashoba Valley

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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### AbilityPLUS Inc.

P.O. Box 253  
Waterville Valley, NH 03215  
603-236-4758  
603-236-4250 fax  
www.abilityplus.org

## Volunteers



Here at AbilityPLUS our volunteers are our lifeline – without them we could not do the work that we do. These hundreds of volunteers allow us to offer so many great programs to well over a 1000 disabled clients. Programs like: skiing, snowboarding, water skiing, biking, canoeing, kayaking, tennis, camping and more.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of you – instructors, committee members, Board Members - who have helped AbilityPLUS be the terrific program that it is. We would love to mention you all by name but there simply isn't enough room in this newsletter. We know who you are, our clients know who you are and you know who you are. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the extra special gifts that you give!

AbilityPLUS is more than just its' daily programs. We do community outreach, attend conferences and put on many special events. You are instrumental in these as well. You've shown your willingness to learn and grow by attending conferences; you've become speakers and advocates of AbilityPLUS when we, the staff, were tied up elsewhere and you've assisted us with the huge undertaking of our special events.

### A few of the conferences and extra things you've done for us are:

The Hartford Ski Spectacular  
PSIA Adaptive Certification Exams  
PSIA Adaptive Educational Events  
Abilities Expo in Boston  
Albany Ski Show  
College/University Volunteer Conferences  
Ski Council Shows and Conferences  
Community Outreach Organizations

### Without you, we would not be able to run all of these special events:

The WMUR Winter Rodeo  
Winterfest at Mount Snow  
Waterville Valley Golf Tourney  
Diana Golden Level 1 Races  
Annual 'Party On The Snow' at Gunstock  
NH Special Olympic State Games  
'Fund Dash Dual' at Bretton Woods  
Mass. Special Olympic State games  
"Operation Veterans" at Waterville Valley  
Eastern Regional Level 2 Championship Races  
Waterskiing Weekends  
Adaptive Camping Events  
Gunstock 3rd Annual Benefit Auction  
Wine Tasting and Silent Auction

# THANK YOU!

# Attitash



My first season as the Program Director here at Attitash was ...well....let's just say there were actually a couple of days I was glad the weather was "too rainy/windy/warm/cold" for lessons. It gave me a moment to catch my breath. I started in November and headed right into instructor training, reorganization of the office, reservations and the holidays. Reworking the program from the ground up has been a challenge in many ways - learning the community while trying to recruit new volunteers and clients, spreading the word about

our program and figuring out all the ins and outs of working with ski area management and doing it all during our busiest season.

Even though many days we were stretched pretty thin on instructors - we managed to have some terrific lessons and see some amazing things happen out on the slopes!

Let me tell you Lily's story. Lily is 4 yrs old and in November was diagnosed with Autism. Lily spent a lot of her time in the Attitash Skiing Nursery Program and the instructors there were getting increasingly frustrated and not sure how best to help Lily learn to ski - so they called me. I paired instructor Rich Staples with Lily and a tethering team was made. Rich did all the work initiating turns for Lily and Lily just skied along wherever the "Magic Tethers" took her.

Things were going pretty well when we came to one particularly steep pitch. At the top Lily stopped and Patrick kept going leaving a little too much space between he and Lily. She then pointed her skis and went straight down. She made it to the bot-

tom fine but a power wedge going that fast was too much for her little 4 yr old legs and she landed on her face. I expected the worst when I saw the broken goggles but she was fine once the shock wore off. We brushed her off, turned her around and off she went. By the time we got to the lift she was yelling, "I'm a speed racer".

When Rich came back he noticed Lily was doing more of the turning and that he was doing very little with the tethers. After another weekend or so Rich and Lily were out skiing and ran into her parents and family. Lily had been skiing along just fine so Rich and her parents were ready to take the tethers off. At first Lily didn't want anything to do with it but after a few minutes she agreed. She made a top to bottom run with her family and the instructors just faded into the background. SUCCESS!

**Erik Corbett,**  
Program Director,  
Attitash, NH

For more information about AbilityPLUS, please contact Kathy Chandler at 603-236-4758 or via email at [kcability@comcast.net](mailto:kcability@comcast.net)

## Volunteer Testimonial:



I have been moved to write this little note of appreciation, in case there was any doubt about how much I really loved working in the adaptive program. This year has repeatedly given me ample reason to rejoice in what happens at Waterville. Several examples come to mind for me..... Skiing with Ty, a 6 year old recovering from surgery to remove a brain tumor; Rory - another example of what great things this program can do, not just for the kid but the family. He now skis independently, his father is so proud and his mom is thrilled that she can ski with him. I've also skied with John, a boy challenged with Aspergers. He taught me several things this winter.

Whenever I ski with Brendan, my spirits soar. I could go on and on..... I know you know what this program does for our students but I want to make sure you know what it does for the 'non-students' also. The way this program works, the comradery with all the instructors, the fun we have in the room is all part of what makes this program so great. I want you both to know how much I appreciate the leadership you demonstrate and the environment you create. Thank you, thank you. I'm proud to be part of this great program.

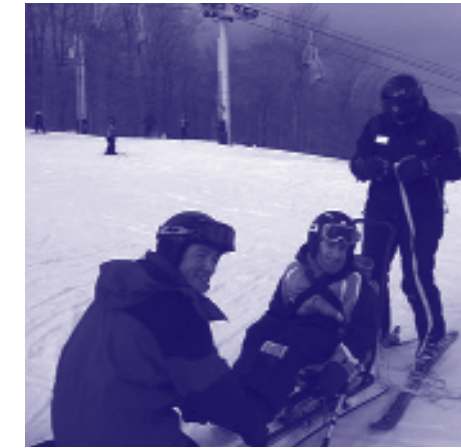
Core Values: Communication • Integrated • Up-to date well maintained adaptive equipment

# Mount Snow

Greetings from Mount Snow Vermont! I still can't believe the winter is already over, I know it was just yesterday I was freaking out about our orientation and getting the training clinics all scheduled. What a fabulous season - in spite of the bizarre weather, there was plenty of good skiing to be had, everyone around here knew it and took advantage of the lack of crowds. When I jumped on board back in November I set 4 specific goals for the program and myself - *I'm thrilled to say that we met each and every one of them.*

### The Goals

- 1 Increase client numbers - we did, by 8%
- 2 Improve the pre-season training - I think we did, we were able to offer more clinics by experienced instructors.
- 3 Start a Junior Volunteer Program - we did - by baby steps. I set the groundwork within the local high schools to reach out to kids next fall. We also had two new kids from the Keene area join us as well as one of the racers from Mount Snow Academy came over and worked on some community service credit with us. \*\* Overall - we had 15 NEW volunteers this year!



- 4 Bring our fundraiser to the next level - there's no question that we reached this goal! Thanks to the hard work of the Winterfest committee, many other volunteers and clients and their families we raised the most ever!

Not only did we reach those goals, there were so many other wonderful things that happened. The program office was totally revamped, painted, carpeted, cleaned up; got new jackets; saw the return of many old clients as well as met many new ones;

laughed and trained in the POURING rain; commiserated and offered words of support when one of our own broke "her wing"; encouraged others on their quest for their adaptive certification; were host to examiners and instructors from adaptive programs from all over the east, tried out new equipment, new ideas and new teaching techniques; saw miracles happen everyday; reconnected with some of "the old crowd"; met some really terrific new clients and their families, laughed A LOT, kept the PITA in line, reconnected with Mount Snow management in a wonderful way, had a fabulous end of the season ski day, après ski party and dinner and so much more!

What's next? Summer programs, more messing with our program space, planning for next winter (it's only 153 days till the fall training schedule is posted!), new programs, outreach, volunteer recruitment, administrative stuff (yuck), a little vacation time, ask you all for more construction help.....and more.....and more.....and more.....

**Sue Tatem,**  
Program Director,  
Mount Snow, VT.

## Waterville Valley, NH

Spring already? They say, "Time flies when you're having fun", and we've sure been having fun here at Waterville Valley! Preseason / early season was busy, busy, busy with instructor training, opening and organizing the office, equipment upkeep, client and volunteer outreach and taking LOTS of reservations. Almost before I could blink the holidays were here and we were crazy wild not only with lessons but getting ready for our giant fundraiser - The 2006 WMUR Winter Rodeo. As always, the Rodeo was a huge success and a fun time for all!

There are a couple of very special miracles I'd like to share with you all. Sarah G. is 12 yrs old, has Cerebral Palsy, some developmental delays and a speech disability. Most times Sarah's mode of transportation is her wheelchair - but she still uses her walker when she can. Skiing with AbilityPLUS has always been a family affair for Sarah, her brother and parents. This year we all decided to give the 'Snow Slider' a try.



After just a few adjustments, Sarah went back out and had a very successful weekend on the slopes. Since then - Sarah skis standing up and everyone is so proud of her huge accomplishment!

In March we hosted our '2nd Annual Operation Veterans' weekend. Twenty-two Soldiers and Marines injured in Iraq and the Global War on Terrorism joined us at Waterville Valley for 3 days of skiing, snowboarding and fun on the slopes!

Instructors from many of our AbilityPLUS locations as well as other adaptive sports programs throughout the northeast were on hand to help out with this incredible event. Not even taking a breath we jumped right into the Eastern Regional Level 2 Championship Races. Fifteen adaptive athletes from around New England gathered to compete in slalom and giant slalom events over 3 days.

Whew! What a way to send off the end of the season! Now we've got a couple of weeks off to regroup and recharge and then we jump right into our summer programs. Check out the middle insert in our newsletter for a tear out schedule of summer events and instructor training dates.

See you in May!

**Silke Fockenbrock,**  
Program Director,  
Waterville Valley, NH

Core Values: Communication • Integrated • Up-to date well maintained adaptive equipment

# AbilityPLUS 2006 Summer Programs

AbilityPLUS Inc.  
P.O. Box 253  
Waterville Valley, NH 03215  
603-236-4758  
603-236-4250 fax  
www.abilityPLUS.org



## Schedule of Weekend Programs

This summer the AbilityPLUS program at Waterville Valley will be running many weekend programs for individuals with disabilities. All disabilities will be welcome and all ability levels. Call the office for more information or to make a reservation; call 603 236 4758.

**Cycling:** On alternate Saturdays July through September we will be cycling. All ages and abilities welcome. We will be doing introductory clinics to try different types of cycling equipment and go on short rides around the Valley. On alternate days we will go on longer rides through the White Mountains. September 9<sup>th</sup> is our annual Bike Classic, a pledged ride to raise funds to build the cycling program.

July 8 – Introductory, short rides

July 22 – Longer Ride TBD

August 5 – Introductory, short rides

August 19 – Longer Ride TBD

September 2 – Introductory, short rides

September 9 – Bike Classic

**Waterskiing:** Together with Northeast Passage AbilityPLUS will run two weekend waterskiing programs. Join us to experience the fun of waterskiing. All ages and abilities welcome.

July 8 – 9 in Wilmington Vermont

August 12 – 13 at Newfound Lake in New Hampshire

**Camping/Hiking Weekend:** New this summer we will be doing some family camping; learn how to set up a camp that works for you, hike through the White Mountains if that suits your fancy, mountain bike or just enjoy the outdoors.

July 8 – 9 at the Waterville Valley Campground

August 12 – 13 at Wellington State Park Campground

**Kayaking:** Join us to learn to kayak with certified kayak instructors or go for a nice trip around the lake. All abilities welcome.

July 15 – Learn to Kayak

July 29 – Kayak trip

August 20 – Learn to Kayak

August 27 – Kayak trip

**Tennis:** Join us for a weekend tennis clinic and round robin in Waterville Valley. All abilities welcome. We will work on stroke development, movement on the court and get into some actual play.

July 29 - 30

**Golf:** We will have equipment and carts available to play golf at the Waterville Valley Golf Course and learn and practice your swing at Sugar Shack Golf Range. On September 16 - 17 we will have our annual Golf Tournament to raise funds for AbilityPLUS at Waterville Valley, so get your team together and join us for a weekend of fun.

July 23 – Learn to Golf

August 26 – Learn to Golf

September 10 – Play a round in Waterville Valley

September 16 - 17 – Annual Golf Tournament at Owls Nest Golf Course



Bringing family and friends together through adaptive summer recreation programs.



## Summer Day Camp

For children

July 5 - August 25

Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 4:00pm

- Ages 6-14
- All disabilities welcome
- Integrated program with the Waterville Valley Recreation Department
- Activities include: active games, arts and crafts, field trips, swimming, cooking and hiking.
- Independent daily living skills required
- By reservation only

## Volunteers needed for all programs.

**Volunteers are our lifeline. They truly are what make our programs a success.**

### Instructor Training Schedule:

Weekend programs:

May 21-22 and June 17 – 18

Waterville Valley Summer Day Camp training  
June 19 – 23

Waterskiing Training  
July 7 and August 11

**Ages 16 and older, no prior training or experience necessary. If you are interested in helping, please call the office 603 236 4758**



**W**atch for the Sept. 15th posting of the fall and early winter pre season training schedule for volunteers and instructors.  
[www.abilityplus.org](http://www.abilityplus.org)

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world” - Mahatma Gandhi

# Bretton Woods

So many exciting things happened this year it's hard to know where to start. During November and December we hosted a full training curriculum for a large number of new volunteers and grew our volunteer base to 60+. Many of our volunteers have been interested in continuing their adaptive education and pursuing their PSIA Adaptive Certification. After offering a "mock" exam a week prior to the Level 1 Adaptive Certification exams, seven of our volunteers went on to take and pass their PSIA Level I Adaptive exams. Congrats to all!

Not only were we kept busy with clients here at Bretton Woods but also two fairly large events - on February 5th we hosted a Diana Golden Level 1 Adaptive Race and later in the season a Veterans Appreciation Clinic sponsored by the Mount Washington Hotel and the Bretton Woods Mountain Resort.

The future looks bright and busy for us as well, we're looking to develop adaptive sports and recreation programs to fit within



the existing and new activities at the Adventure Center here at Bretton Woods and hiring a full-time replacement for me this summer [I want to return to being retired].

Stay tuned to the Bretton Woods website [www.brettonwoods.com](http://www.brettonwoods.com) for details as they become available.

## Have a great summer!

**Cris Criswell,**  
Program Director,  
Bretton Woods Mountain Resort

## NEWS

AbilityPLUS at Mount Snow is proud to announce the creation of the Frank Crowley Scholarship Fund. Frank, retired 10<sup>th</sup> Mtn. Division, joined the Mount Snow crew as a volunteer this year but has been a ski teacher with adaptive programs for many, many years. Franks' passion for skiing and love of children has been shared with many generations of skiers and in his early 80's he continues to help out with our school programs and younger skiers.

Donations for this scholarship fund can be sent to:

**AbilityPLUS** at Mount Snow  
Attn: Sue Tatem,  
Route 100 N,  
West Dover, VT 05356

THANK YOU FRANK!

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

AbilityPLUS has seen a new burst of energy and enthusiasm this year. We have taken on the responsibility of the operation of the programs at Mount Snow in Vermont and Attitash in Mount Washington Valley. Sue Tatem and Erik Corbett as their new directors have done a superb job of bringing in new volunteers, increasing training opportunities for them and building their student base. Bretton Woods has created a solid training plan for their volunteers and a large group of them got their PSIA certification this year. They continue to hold successful

fundraising events, which will help them build the program, and they will soon offer more programs in the summer months. Gunstock is building a solid program with huge support from management. They, along with Bretton Woods, hosted a Diana Golden Race for developing racers; held some successful fundraising events and have many happy volunteers and students. Stowe hosted its second fundraising event to build their adaptive equipment inventory and despite the adverse weather of the winter of 2006, had a successful season. Wachusett held its first fundraising event in order to get more adaptive equipment there. Waterville Valley had a good season and has a full schedule of events for the summer months. It is exciting to see the growth and excitement at these AbilityPLUS program.

*Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm*

*-Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The networking and collaboration of these programs is a role that AbilityPLUS plays. All of these programs are working to provide quality experiences in sports and recreation for people with disabilities and their families and they are doing a good job at it. AbilityPLUS is able to support all of the programs. We are developing the network of directors and volunteers with the same interest in helping this community. We are collaborating with other organizations like Northeast Passage and Disabled Sports USA to bring in more expertise and opportunities. As the parent organization it is wonderful to see the growth and development of the AbilityPLUS programs and watch them help each other in the process.

I am extremely proud of the AbilityPLUS Programs, their directors, volunteers and instructors. They are doing a fabulous job. I invite you to be a part of the AbilityPLUS family; read about our successes, go to the website at [www.abilityplus.org](http://www.abilityplus.org) and join us for a specific program or event. I assure you it will be fun!

Warmly,  
**Katharine R. Chandler,**  
Executive Director

For more information about AbilityPLUS, please contact Kathy Chandler at 603-236-4758 or via email at [kcability@comcast.net](mailto:kcability@comcast.net)

## Mission Statement

To offer increased access to athletic and recreational opportunities for persons with physical and mental disabilities that will create freedom, promote independence, support inclusion and help those individuals and their families discover their full social, mental and athletic potential.