

NSP 2020 Board election candidate application

Email the completed form to elections@nspserve.org before 4:00 p.m. MDT on June 1, 2020.

Personal information

Name John M Kane, III
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Work phone N/A
Home phone N/A
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Best phone/time _____

Please indicate which of the above pieces of personal information you approve making available to the NSP membership if you are selected as a nominee

LinkedIn (optional) N/A
NSP 6-digit ID 131927
Member of NSP for how many years 40
Primary patrol Sunday River (E326), Newry, Maine
Division Eastern
Credentials (e.g. senior, certified, Nordic Master) Certified Alpine Patroller
National appointment Number, if applicable 7131
Leadership Commendation Number, if applicable N/A
Number of years previous Board service, if applicable N/A

Please respond to each of the following questions concisely but completely.

1. Describe your NSP Background: List the leadership positions you have held in your Patrol, Section, Region, Division and National.

National

- National Division Director Board – 2016 - Present
 - Standing Committee – Planning Committee – 2016 - Present
 - Business Process Committee Chair – 2019 – Present
 - Interest Group Subcommittee – 2019 - Present
 - Board Restructuring Committee – 2017 - 2018
 - Knowledge Management Structure – 2016 - 2018
 - PRO – Outstanding Award – 2018
 - Search Committee – Young Adult Program Advisor - 2018
 - Hall of Fame Committee Chair – 2016 – 2017
 - Patrol Officers Bulletin (POB) Committee Chair – 2017 – 2018
 - Marketing Committee – 2016 – 2018
 - Election Committee – 2017

Division (Eastern)

- Eastern Division Director – 2016 – 2020
 - Certified Steering Committee – 2018 - Present
 - Assistant Division Director – 2008 – 2012 & 2014
 - Long Range Planning Committee – 2012 – Present
 - OET Eastern Division Staff Member – 1989 – Present
 - OET Eastern Division Steering Committee Member – 1990 - 2003
 - Eastern Division PRO / GEO Committee Chair – 2014 – 2016
 - Eastern Division TrailSweep Committee Chair – 2008 – 2014
 - Special Task Assignment (COC) assigned by DD – 2008 – 2009
 - Eastern Division Certified Boot Camp Training – 2005 – Present
 - Eastern Division Patroller School Creator / Host (Sunday River) – 1988 - 2018
 - Certified OET Chair – 2005 – 2010
 - Transportation Committee Chair, National Meeting, BOMA “50th Anniversary” - 1988

Region (Maine)

- Region Director – 2008 – 2014
 - Central Section Chief – 2014 – 2016
 - Southern Section Chief – 2000 - 2008
 - Certified Region Advisor – 2003 – 2016 & 2019 to Present
 - OET Advisor 2000 - 2008
 - Policies / Procedures / Governance – Rewrite 2007 (Used Present Day)

Region (EMARI)

- Region Director – 1988 – 1992
 - Southern Section Chief – 1987 – 1988

Patrol

- Patrol Director, Prospect Hill, Waltham, MA – 1986 – 1988
 - Blue Hills Treasurer – 1999 - 2002
 - Blue Hills Hill Chief (Friday Night) – 1982 – 1987
 - Blue Hills YAP Advisor – 1981 – 1984
 - Blue Hill OET Training Supervisor – 1985 - 1995

2. List your NSP Educational program participation and certification (OEC, OET, MTR, Avalanche, Instructor Development, Nordic/Backcountry).

Instructor Trainer Certification:

- OEC Instructor Trainer – 2000 – 2016
- OET Instructor Trainer – 1984 – Present

Instructor

- OET Instructor – 1983 - Present
- OEC Instructor – 1985 – Present
- OET, OEC, MTR, LAR, Lift Evac – Instructor – Certified Program

3. Have you served as a board member in any organization? If so, please list the organization, years of service and board leadership positions held, if any.

As a part time real estate developer, I have collaborated on writing up governance by-laws for the associations that I belonged to.

- I serve on the board for the Cape Monday Cove Road Association (CMCRA) chairing the By-Laws committee.
- I served as President for the Harrison Four Seasons Association H4SA from 2002 through 2012 where we accumulated property as appropriate for the members, developed local and municipal relationships to serve the interest of the membership and determine dues to support these initiatives annually.
- I served on the board of a privately owned transportation company as a contributing member. Responsible for providing expert views to support the organizations future success. Company was later acquired.

4. In your professional, personal and community life outside of NSP, describe your leadership and other relevant experience and how it might benefit the NSP?

While working as the Vice President / General Manager for Fine Arts Enterprises (FAE), a company tasked with handling high valued objects and antiquities, I recognized the need to protect the valuable pieces of art we were moving and built a business within the business integrating a “State of the Art” crating business with marginal transportation infrastructure. Museums had to source individual services on their own, using other transport service providers who weren’t protecting art to museum standards during transport; and the wait times to outsource the service were disconnected at best. This inefficiency led to damaged items and delays in shipping. By combining my knowledge of the transportation process with understanding the needs of securement and packaging of irreplaceable items allowed us to control the entire process from point A to B while ensuring the safe arrival of the artwork on schedule.

Recognizing similar inefficiencies in the progression of patroller access to programs throughout the Maine Region I provided a platform for a similar plan to connect NSP programs at the patrol level. My goal was to provide training to patrollers in the region, so they didn’t have to travel outside their region or beyond their home area. This was the basis for my successful bid for becoming the Maine Region Director. Immediately, we reviewed current processes throughout Region and determined that we had to rebuild the entire system. This started with Bylaw rewrite, realignment of the leadership structure, and developing the leaders that would provide immediate infusion of enthusiastic and capable support for delivering core NSP programs. This would be the foundation for a long-lasting growth plan region-wide that would support the development of Instructors in all core programs including recruitment, up-to-date training and a succession plan. Working with dedicated leadership of the Eastern Division helped me to integrate best practices with proven systems that could help the Maine Region grow in concert with other Regions. Twelve years later, I am proud to say that these systems are still in use today.

Taking this experience to serve the Eastern Division as the Division Director gave me chance to further provide the groundwork of our collective regional programs to the Division and National stage. In this position, I had the opportunity to share and work with other Division Directors to employ best practices (as appropriate) that benefited all patrollers across this great NSP organization. Translating this experience for members of the NSP will be a blending of my professional experience in business development, logistics planning, financial planning and customer care balanced with my demonstrated leadership for over 35 years in the NSP. I believe that this accumulated acumen in both my professional and volunteer career will positively serve the interests of them NSP membership.

5. As you review the List of Needs, which one(s) interest you most and why?

Leadership

I have always looked at myself as a facilitator, matching the best personnel this organization has to offer with programs our members would benefit the most. Whether at the Local, Region, Division or National level we need to recognize talent, those individuals who inspire others and are committed to see things through. I have always been a “lead by example” leader, where I would never ask someone to do something I wouldn’t do first, or have done in the past. We need to celebrate inspirational leaders at NSP and let others aspire and learn how to be like them. Inspiration leaders are often pushing the edge to garner interest of those in progressing in one program or the other. Keeping it FUN and interesting is what peaks curiosity and drives participation at all levels.

Experience with successes and failures in the development of ideas and programs provides the groundwork for mentoring those desiring to take part in a greater purpose that fulfills an operational need. One thing to recognize is that our organization is membership driven. This is specifically outlined in our National Policies and Procedures and By-Laws for how leadership serves at the direction of its members. I hold true to these values and support the interest of our membership. It is for us to integrate those desires for change with careful guidance between membership and the National office that provides for a healthy future of our organization.

Strategic Thinker

With my business background I had to be thinking about the “industry”, my competitors and how we would define ourselves from the competition. In our case (the NSP) we have very little competition if any. Our competition can be defined by relevance. We can easily fall into complacency due to this fact. However, we as an organization need to challenge each other and our programs to ensure that we are offering education material that is in concert with the changing times. Additionally, we have to constantly review our guiding documents to ensure that we are prepared for today’s events, but to leave them open enough to work with a changing industry. COVID-19 has already impacted on how we are doing business day-to-day. I am proud of the way Regions, Divisions and National have found ways to stay in meaningful contact and exploring the value of remote communication to keep the business of the NSP moving in a forward direction. We will need to explore more ways to connect and engage with our customers (the resorts) with these limits of social distancing that are upon us. When someone said we need to “think outside the box”, I am sure this is not what they had in mind for us. However, it is here, we need to adapt, stay relevant and to be in a position of the preferred resource in the eyes of our customers. Overall, I see the board operating with a view for the future of the NSP and not in day-to-day operations. I believe by having this view we can be a more effective board team not worrying about program delivery. This is for the office and the Divisions to focus on.

Communication – Question #5 (continued)

Communication is the key to successful any organization. Providing conduits of clear understanding for program delivery and timely information is a key fundamental of the business process that connects strategic initiatives with operational guidelines and support at every level of our organization.

I have a wide range of experience engaging our patrollers and customers on many media platform or in person. I have chaired many committees at all levels of the NSP and have presented them in a prepared and clear way to foster the necessary discussion to move forward in a productive way.

I enjoy being that conduit of information. Communication is also best left unsaid. Listening, (really listening) to our members and customers allows us to gather the critical meaning that is intended but not often conveyed. It is up to us (the Board) to discern the intensions and passions of the messages being sent up the line so that we can apply them to current work in progress or other applications.

Therefore, we need to understand the needs of our intended audience, so we are clearly speaking to their needs and not what we think they need. Communication can be the best or worst tool one can use. Communication is a serious responsibility. I am always thinking about the consequences of what I say before I communicated it out to the public.

Education

Education is the fundamental building blocks for our membership. It sets the stage from one's introduction to the NSP for their successful development with skills offered by our organization. The OEC program is our flagship education program. OEC is the reason why the majority of ski resorts and other outdoor sports industries choose the NSP as their premier education resource provider. There is a tremendous amount of time, in house expertise and other proprietary resources that we use to develop this body of work. If we are to remain as the premier outdoor resource for emergency care, we need to protect this program "in house" for the foreseeable future.

Other programs may work in concert with our industry partners like PSIA (OET); NSAA (ORM and Lift Evac); AIARE (Avalanche) are to name a few to ensure we have the best information for our membership. Our organization needs to stay involved with these organizations so that we are offering the latest and best information available.

I have personally delivered many OET programs for higher skill development at large ski resorts for the benefit of the smaller elevation resorts for several regions that lasted 30 years. It has since been absorbed (or acquired) into our Patroller Schools. Another program that I co-developed was the Certified Boot Camp that happens in the summer months at HurriKane Cove in Maine. Sometimes having great programs (OET, OEC, LAR, MTR, AVA) are not enough to keep the members interested. Sometimes you have to change up the venue, or the setting or other ways to connect the interest of our patrollers to want to come and take part of something great.

Education (continued – question #5)

We need to constantly gauge our audience for how to connect with them. We know the NSP has great programs to offer. Sometimes we have to employ different applications of the same information to create interest. This happens in many different ways throughout our organization. As an example, “Nutz & Bolts” is a program that the Pacific Northwest Division offers with a variety of enhancement seminars that attracts patrollers from all over the country to ski with and learn from one another. It’s programs like these that drive patrollers to want to be part of something different. It also supports the camaraderie that we all appreciate.

6. The four standing committees are Education, Governance, Finance, and Planning. What knowledge, skills, and abilities would you bring to one or more of these committees?

Planning

I have been involved with the Planning Committee since 2016 when I came in as a Division Director. My business acumen for strategic and long-range planning has proven to be a good fit for this group. In 2018 I was assigned to chair the Business Process Committee where we completed Phase One. A dedicated group of geographically diverse members from across eight Divisions worked for over six months to streamline processes which provided forward thinking ideas that I presented at the January 2020 meeting. I have been asked to stay on to see Phase Two through. This committee used to be in a dark corner. No longer is this the case. This committee is populated with some of the most dedicated and talented people in this organization from the members and the national office. We are leading the charge with strict adherence to our 2030 strategic plan. We perform SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) analysis for the organization annually. We have revived the patroller survey which gives us clear understanding for what is on our patroller’s mind. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Chris Pringle who will come off the board at the close of 2020. He has been a great mentor for driving successful results for the Planning Committee. I am hoping to be successful in my bid for NBOD so that I can continue his good work and contribute to the awesome task ahead to 2030.

Governance

Having been involved on previous boards, I have completely written Bylaws from scratch and been involved with Bylaw committees where we had to work together to come up with guiding language that would be applicable for that time and members involved. There were many times where there were conflicts and hard lined thinking among members. I have been able to mitigate conflict by way of thoughtful and respectful dialogue reaching consensus in all cases. I have learned that a successful approach or method for one resolution doesn’t always work in all cases. Each subject matter brought forward requires you to draw on previous experiences to define workable solutions. I believe that having the understanding and respect of the people around you produces positive outcomes.

7. Fundraising is critical to the sustainability of any non-profit, including the NSP. What expertise would you bring to the Board with regard to improving our non-dues revenue?

With the exception of our local church and activities club in my local area, I can honestly say that I do not have National experience to offer. However, this is an area I can learn more about and contribute as needed to support this great organization.

8. Please describe one or two experiences in which you demonstrated your commitment to and support of the strategic mission of the NSP.

1) Worked with the Planning Committee to develop the 3 pillars we are following to support the Strategic Plan for 2030

2) Committee Chair of the Business Process Group – Phase 1. Completed on time and presented at the January 2020 annual meeting. The body of work is available for anyone's review upon request.

9. The NSP faces many challenges. What do you see as the major challenge(s) facing the organization, and what strategic ideas and solutions would you offer?

Risk awareness, developing a streamlined business process and procedure that will be the groundwork and blueprint for the next IT system and maintaining relevancy on behalf of our resort customers are high priorities.

Risk Awareness

Risk awareness has never been more front-and-center with our customers than it is today. We are now educating more than ever pre-loss discussions with our morning patrol meetings discussing improved trail sign placement, guest interaction, situational awareness, detailed documentation, SAFE skiing / riding as patrollers (personal injury awareness) and much more. Events change from week to week depending on recent situations. More patrollers are being asked to train in Accident Investigation (AI) procedures. Should this become a mainstay in a volunteer's job description? Are they prepared to be deposed if it came to that? How are we, as an organization, going to prepare those looking for these events? ORM (Outdoor Risk Management) has recently been adopted by the National Board for the purpose of educating our patrollers at large. I feel there is a misunderstanding for what is being asked of our leadership in this regard. I can help bring clarity to this discussion and look forward to it.

Risk Awareness (Continued – Question #9)

Adding another dimension of Risk, the COVID-19 Pandemic has brought this country to a standstill. We have a lot to think about right now and over the months ahead. At the moment, our mountain area resorts are closed. Still we have “guests” and dare I say Ski Patrol “off duty” climbing up ski surfaces even though the mountain is closed. The “what if” questions are already flying about.... Do off-duty patrollers help guests who become injured on the slopes? Do signs of No Trespassing clearly placed take the owners off the hook? The same goes for Bikers and Bike Patrollers. We can comply with social distancing only if we have permission to access the property. We are in new waters here and time will tell how far we can go. In the meantime, we need to gather this newfound information from social media, Instagram and other media outlets to responsibly communicate our position to these current events with respect to the owner’s property we capture in our reference. Information and changing conditions may find what you are reading -at this moment- be rendered obsolete. This is how fast we (the NSP) need to react, but also need to plan for changing conditions. If we, as a premier education organization, were to just sit back and “wait it out” we do a disservice to our membership and our customers. We need to stay engaged and be proactive when it comes to planning for all elements of risk.

IT Platform – solutions for next generation software – (Question #9 continued)

I was selected to chair the Business Process Committee which will serve to identify inconsistencies in policies and procedures, determine if leadership roles are still performing as expected, and determine if these roles will be relevant in future. Other nuances have come about in our investigations that will be brought forward for the proposal known as Phase Two. This will determine the software platform for which the NSP will work in the future. We have a talented and knowledgeable team where 8 Divisions are represented in this project. They have already turned in over 160 pages of work product that was presented in time for the National Board meeting this past January 2020. I am proud of the work this group is doing and soon the organization will benefit from their efforts.

As we all know, our members at all levels have had a less than satisfactory experience with our current system. The office has done a remarkable job to enhance processes where we can, prioritize the needs of our members, balanced by program priority and administer funds to make it happen. While we still have to do what is necessary to keep up with demands for change, we cannot continue to invest in a system that will not serve the future needs of our members. The analysis of our current business process system will principally look to satisfy simple patroller level improvements. Simple records must be easily accessible and remain accurate. User entry error needs to be easily identifiable or it will always be blamed on “the system”. If we can have the new IT system demonstrate to the rank patroller that it saves them work with intuitive guidance it will be embraced. We are on a good track now to marry up a software platform that will provide a long-term solution with flexibility to grow with a dynamically changing organization. We completed Phase 1. We will need to further define some of the questions surfaced from the board. We hope to finish this investigation before the Fall of 2020. From there we can move to Phase Two. This is a high priority for the organization.

Relevancy (continued – Question #9)

No time more in our history will the NSP be measured for its relevancy in the ski industry and with outdoor activity sector. Even now we just completed the OEC 6th edition. At no time were we talking Pandemics let alone Covid-19. Our industry will be looking for guidance from education providers. Certainly, we look to follow National CDC guidelines, but we just can't sit on the sidelines waiting for others to take leads around. At least we got a message into the OEC 6th Edition recognizing Covid-19 while in print. However, we need to be vigilant, stay connected with our industry partners to develop guidance and proactively keep our membership and our customers informed.

The NSP is an education organization. Therefore, we must be the leaders in developing systems and process that not only keeps our members SAFE, but to be thinking about future pandemic situations and other situations where the NSP has application and service to offer our customers. I am proud of our organization and our members as they have demonstrably shown its capability to adjust to the needs of our customers, the EMS community and hospital settings. We are rich with individuals with experience and expertise in all facets of what our organization offers. We will need to tap into this resource more than ever to stay current and to be on the front line with information, services and guidance for our community at large. We need to continue to look for ways to develop and test our new candidate members, otherwise, we will stand to lose interest and maybe current membership if we don't plan for the next "what if" scenario. When we are committed to find ways to overcome, the NSP will remain a preferred provider in our industry and beyond. I look forward to looking into areas of opportunity and developing those relationships that keeps the NSP forward thinking and relevant for many years ahead.

10. Summarize why you would be the best candidate for membership on the NSP's Board of Directors.

I would not presume to be the best candidate as there are excellent candidates known and yet to be known that may have credentials greater than I have, or at least have the same intentions to serve the membership as I do. The National Board is acting in sync and getting more things done than in recent history. This is because we have a sincere group of thoughtful and dedicated board members acting on the best interest of our organization. Being the best candidate is an earned trust that is built along the way in one's career in the NSP.

Having started at a small patrol in 1979 with only 500' vertical just on the city's edge of Boston, MA, I learned very early on that to earn respect and the confidence of your fellow patrollers you had to first do your job completely and safely. I have always been grounded to know that my best performance as a line patroller was that we all worked as a team to accomplish a single goal. Once I mastered this understanding and fundamentals for myself, I found that it was easier to understand what drives others to better themselves in any one of the many aspects the NSP has to offer. Understanding that, I could match up any number of our NSP patrol programs with instructors that could bring any patroller along and continue to encourage them to grow within the system so they could teach others along the way. I felt it my responsibility to stay informed and seek further education in what NSP had to offer so I could continue to be a reliable resource for these patrollers and patrollers I would come to know.

Summary (continued – Question #10)

I have taken this recipe along the way serving as a Patrol Director, Section Chief, Region Director (2 Regions: EMARI and Maine), Assistant Division Director and just finishing my second term as the Eastern Division Director. I am an OET (IT) and OEC Instructor for more than 35 years. I attained Senior in the early 80's and then Certified in 2002. These credentials are not just badges of honor. They are a collection of knowledge and experiences to be shared and taught to others. They are a pathway for others to follow and to inspire members to be excited to want to better themselves. It is the basis of recruitment. I have repeatedly demonstrated building teams that create programs that are readily embraced by our membership because I surround myself with the best people I can find and then I listen and keep it FUN. Together we have a recipe that is proven to benefit all involved.

If there are those who are looking for a challenging, purposeful and rewarding experience, I believe it is better to have the experience they desire and will want to aspire to. I am fortunate to be surrounded by the best people found in the NSP that I now call friends and family. This rewarding experience is out there for many people, young adults and adults from all walks of life ready to be involved with the NSP. I believe I have the keys to successful recruiting tools to drive membership so they can be part of this great organization.

I know the value of hard work and the commitment it takes to get things done. I do NOT take lightly for what I am asking of the national membership for their consideration of supporting me to the National Board. I have met a lot of new friends from around this great organization and I value their dedication and contribution. What I will promise is to earn one's trust by listening to our members to determine what is important to them. I will try to balance needs and wants by the membership with what is possible by the office and the organization. Not always do we get what we want, but I know I can be persuasive when it means the members benefit from processes that make sense. Should you put your trust in me, I will be fair, honest and reliable for our members and to this organization.