



***Avalanche Education
Season History
2005-06***

History

The Know Before You Go avalanche awareness program was inspired by a tragic avalanche accident, killing three teenagers in Utah. It's the day after Christmas 2003 and the largest storm to hit Salt Lake City in nearly 30 years has been slamming the state for two days with about 18" of snow falling in the city itself. In the nearby Wasatch Mountains, it's raging. Winds are strong and out of the southwest at speeds of 25-40 mph, gusting to 60 and 70 mph along the exposed ridgelines. Since the 25th, 28" of heavy snow has fallen. The Provo area mountains, 30 miles southeast of Salt Lake, have received 22" of dense, wet snow. By all accounts it's an epic storm and cities along with outlying rural areas are crippled. Throughout northern Utah trees are snapped, power lines down, and roads are barely passable. Most ski resorts struggle to keep their areas open, battling strong winds, blinding snow and occasional power outages.

A small local ski resort near Provo, Utah, is busy with young riders enjoying their Christmas break; however, the resort closes early because so many factors are working against it. As a result, a number of snowboarders and skiers, in separate parties, decide to drive up the road to a popular trailhead for some powder riding. They come to the end of the road, and start ascending a popular hiking trail, Aspen Grove. Arriving at different times, but still within about a half an hour of each other, three groups find the visibility poor and decide to charge up the closest slope, a large north facing avalanche path, Elk Point. The slope rises to an elevation over 10,800' with a base elevation at Aspen Grove of 6700', affording a vertical drop of 4100'. No one is wearing avalanche rescue gear and communication among the groups, in total 14 people, is almost non-existent as they all head up the slope. The group never got to their destination. A series of four large natural avalanches are triggered from above and pandemonium ensues. At the end of the day, three young men were buried and killed, and the last body wasn't recovered until April 8, nearly three months after the slide was triggered. Covered extensively by both local and national news, the event kept avalanche awareness in the spotlight for an unusually long time. The tight knit, family-oriented community is devastated.

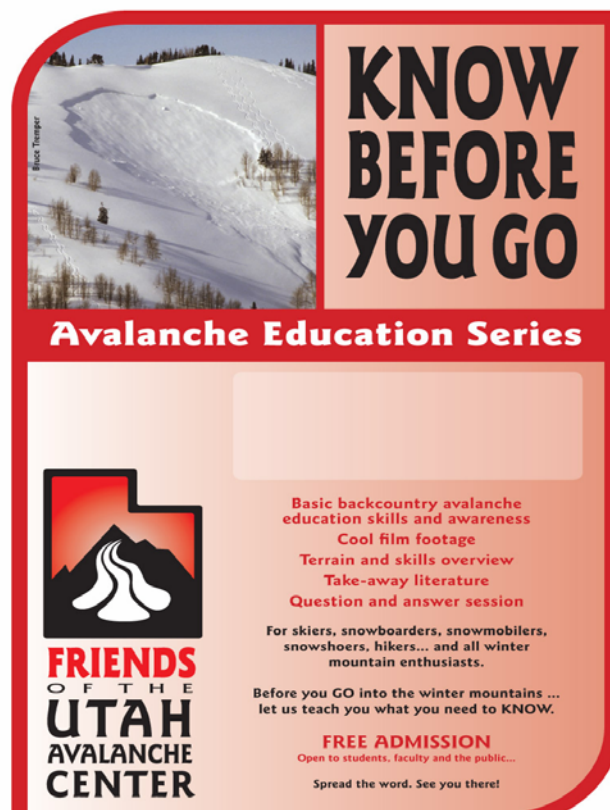
Unfortunately, the story is one we've heard before. While the characters change each time, the theme remains the same and the outcome is devastating for the victim's family and friends alike. The bottom line in so many cases is frustratingly apparent -- technology far outpaces even basic avalanche awareness skills. In addition to high-tech gear, which riders quickly master and then look beyond the ski area boundary for "freshies," today's riders are also inundated with high-octane action sports videos, which can often give an unrealistic impression to the complexity of snow and avalanche safety. Throw in an unstable snowpack, some youth, a dose of testosterone, and mix well with a little lack of situational awareness and you have a potentially lethal combination.

Just two seasons prior to the Aspen grove slide, I investigated a deadly avalanche in upper Big Cottonwood Canyon, approx 18 mi southeast of Salt Lake City. A group of ten young snowboarders, mostly in their mid to late teens triggered a large avalanche, killing two males in the party. Much like the Aspen Grove slide in 2003, other than a few shovels used mainly to build backcountry kickers, no one had avalanche rescue gear or even rudimentary avalanche skills.

The two events convinced me a teen-specific basic avalanche awareness program must be created. I thought if we could get this younger crowd thinking about avalanches, calling the hotline and wearing avalanche safety gear, lives would be saved. In the long run, a generation of riders would be educated on what to do before traveling in the backcountry.

In January 2004, I proposed the idea to Bruce Tremper, the director of the Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center (FSUAC). I expressed the need to develop a program specific to young adults in the state of Utah. This course would be unique, going right to the source—junior highs, high schools, and colleges—preaching the avalanche gospel to the masses. The program would be a massive undertaking, because as with most federal agencies the FSUAC gets by on minimal funding and personnel.

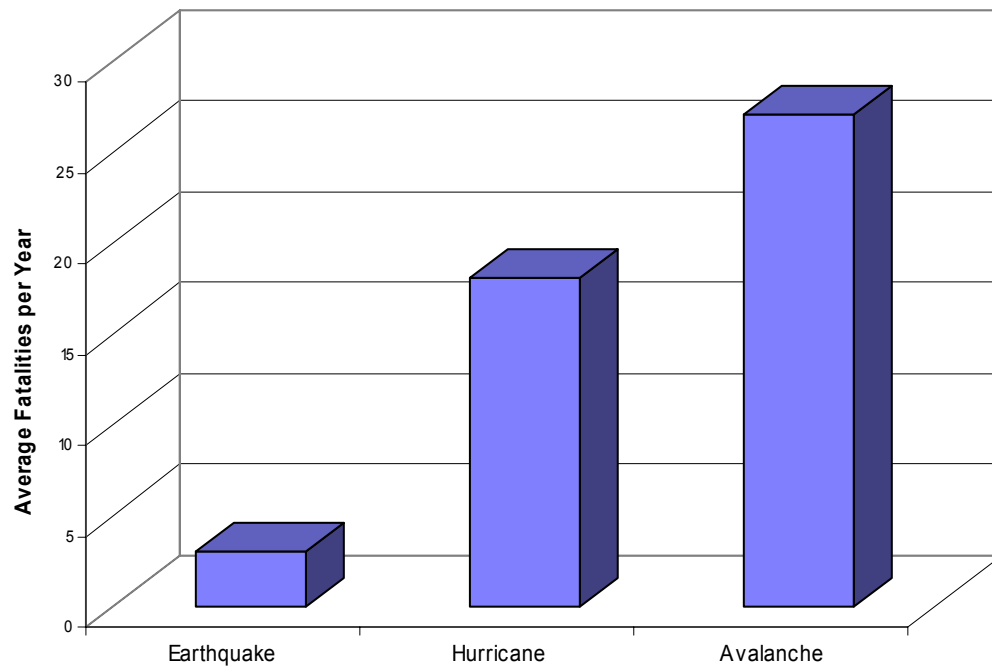
Bruce and I worked on a business plan and decided early on, the program would last for about an hour. To keep teens' attention it needed to be fast paced and energetic. The presentation would be given in three parts. An avalanche professional would go to a school assembly and start with a 15-minute, narrated video that would show avalanches, people triggering avalanches, and the destructive power of avalanches. Next, they would tell a dynamic story about a close call they had and what they have learned over the years. The presenter would follow this up with a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation about avalanche basics. A question and answer session would wrap up the assembly. We wanted to create a successful program, administered by the Friends of the FSUAC, a nonprofit 501c3 organization, which could be shared with all snow professionals and regional avalanche centers across the United States.



The poster is titled "Avalanche Education Series" and features a photograph of a snowy mountain slope with a person visible in the distance. The main headline reads "KNOW BEFORE YOU GO". Below the headline, the text lists the following activities: "Basic backcountry avalanche education skills and awareness", "Cool film footage", "Terrain and skills overview", "Take-away literature", and "Question and answer session". It also specifies the target audience: "For skiers, snowboarders, snowmobilers, snowshoers, hikers... and all winter mountain enthusiasts." The poster includes the logo for the Friends of the Utah Avalanche Center, which consists of a stylized mountain range with a white path leading up to a peak. The text "FRIENDS OF THE UTAH AVALANCHE CENTER" is positioned below the logo. At the bottom, it states "FREE ADMISSION" and "Open to students, faculty and the public..." followed by the slogan "Spread the word. See you there!"

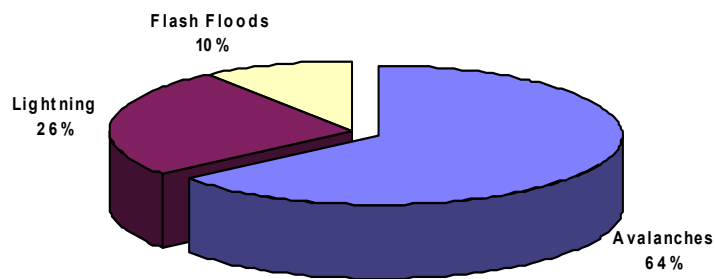
The poster used to advertise upcoming awareness talks. Courtesy of the Friends of the FSUAC and Black Diamond.

U.S. Deaths per year 1995-2005



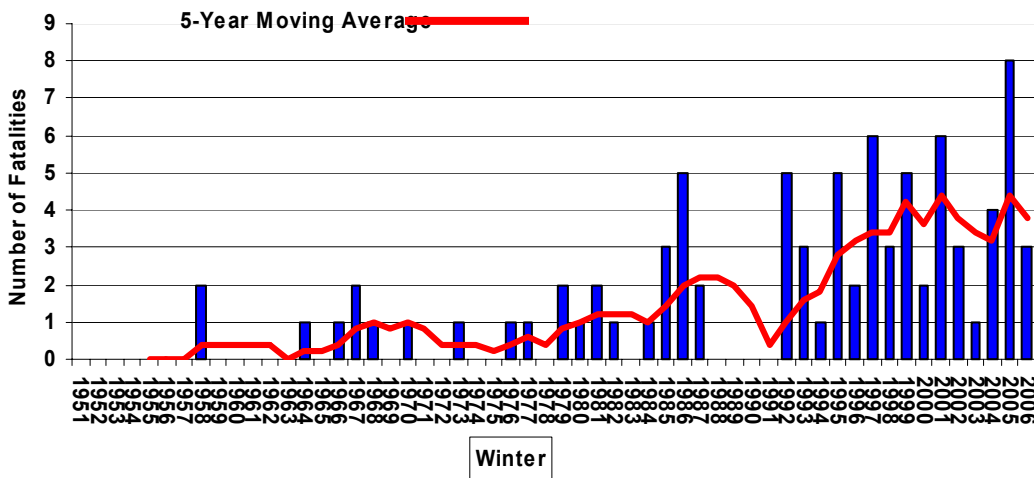
Over 25 people in the US are killed annually in avalanches.

**Utah Deaths by Natural Hazard
1/1/1995 - 5/1/2006**



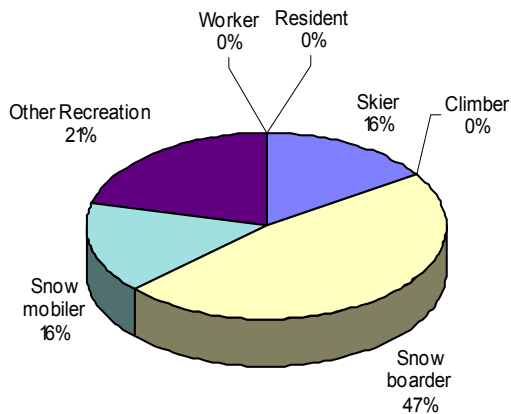
**Backcountry avalanches kill more Utahns'
than any other natural disaster**

Avalanche Fatalities in Utah 1951-2006



Nationally and locally, avalanche fatalities have been on the rise for the past 50 years. Advances in gear technology helped spike fatalities beginning in the early 1990's.

Utah Avalanche Fatalities by Activity
2001-2006
19 Total Fatalities



Unlike most other western states where snowmobilers lead the list in avalanche fatalities, the past five years statistics have been a telling tale for Utah's backcountry snowboarders. The combination of youth, lack of experience and often times, not a very "avy-savvy" user group, all conspire against these young riders. Since the inception of Know Before You Go, two years ago, not one teen has been killed in an avalanche.



Rescuers searching for survivors of the Aspen Grove avalanche. This tragedy was the impetus for the Know Before You Go program development.

Bruce Tremper photo

On paper and in theory it all sounded good, but several challenges lay ahead. How would we get into the school system, who would do all the leg work for avalanche footage and video development, and finally the age old question... where will the funding come from? With the backing from the Friends of the FSUAC, Bruce proposed they hire Craig as a contractor for the summer of 2004 and he would take charge of coordinating the program. Bruce would act as a technical advisor to the project. The rest, as they say, is history.

Partnerships and Funding

Past and present and future-

The “Know Before You Go” program was established in the summer of 2004 and funded solely by donations and in-kind support. The majority of the annual operating budget is generated from a fundraising dinner held at Snowbird in February. However, like any new product to hit the market, financial support hasn’t been all that cut and dry.

While preliminary funding from the Friends of the FSUAC got the project off the ground, it took visionary partners who trusted us to come on board and partner with this innovative program. Fortunately, Backcountry.com saw the need and planted the first seed monies, getting the venture through its initial stages. They trusted the reputation of the FSUAC and thought we had the expertise to give this program the attention to detail it deserved. Little by little, donations started to come in as people began to hear about this exciting new program. R.E.I. who has been a partner with the FSUAC for many years, were next to come on board with another generous donation.

Also, over the years, Craig developed great working relationships with the Utah Snowmobile Association (USA) and wanted to get them involved. Bridging the gap between motorized and non-motorized users, the USA stepped up to the plate and applied for an education grant from the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA). This organization represents the four major snowmobile manufacturers and has two grant cycles each year in which they grant monies for certain projects, usually education or safety related. This was the first avalanche project of its kind to ever receive grant monies from this organization. This unto itself was a major breakthrough for the program because it showed the strong commitment the snowmobile community has to avalanche safety and the well developed partnership the FSUAC has with the USA.

In the fall of 2004, the Division of Utah State Parks and Recreation came on board as a partner and donated more money than all the other partners combined! The productive, fruitful relationship with State Parks and particularly Fred Hayes, the OHV coordinator, goes back several years. This significant donation was vital to the longevity of the program and all the hard work that went into it.

A few new ski industry partners came to our rescue in the summer of 2005. First was Brighton Ski Resort, a long time partner of the FSUAC in avalanche education. While previous in-kind support included lift tickets and parking for the Friends three day Level One avalanche awareness courses, last year Area Manager Randy Doyle agreed to help the program out financially. In addition, Brighton's proactive approach to avalanche education with their employees is a benefit to anyone working there. For the past two years, Brighton invited Craig to provide an avalanche presentation to its employees. There's a twofold benefit to everyone attending. Not only do attendees take with them life saving skills, at the end of the talk they're also rewarded with a free day pass at the resort. Positive incentives like this help us to further spread the avalanche message and pack the house with several hundred employees each year.

Ski areas are an important partner in the avalanche equation and we're thrilled to see the additional financial support this year from Deer Valley, The Canyons and Ski Utah. Bob Wheaton, Scott Pierpont and Nathan Rafferty respectively, were instrumental in getting their organizations to donate monies and we look forward to their continued partnership.

Craig also applied for a grant through the Park City Chamber of Commerce which helped to supplement a number of Summit County talks and defray video re-editing costs. In addition, Kennecott Copper donated funds to help with avalanche presentations on the west side of the Salt Lake valley.

Finally, in-kind donations from Wasatch Backcountry Rescue (WBR) facilitated the program on the road. WBR contributed a PowerPoint projector in 2004 and purchased a laptop computer for the 2005 season. This summer we hope to procure some other odds and ends, making an all inclusive package presenters can grab and go. Support from valued partners like WBR help to make this program a success!

New Partnerships

Late this spring a new partnership was formed with the Jim Shea Foundation. Jim, an Olympic gold medal athlete and Park City resident, wanted to get involved in avalanche education. His foundation, mainly aimed at youth programs, contacted Craig wanting to partner with the friends and Know Before You Go.

We thought this was great a opportunity to add the notoriety of an Olympic athlete to an already popular program, helping us reach out to even more young adults. Craig worked with the foundation, teaming up with Jim for his third annual Shea Foundation Golf Tournament held at the Park Meadows Golf Club in Park City. Brighton, Deer Valley and Ski Utah, partners with the friends for years, helped to sponsor the 17th hole.



The 17th hole placard at the Park Meadow Golf Club showing our golf tournament partners.
Anita Gordon photo.

A sweltering July day brought out nearly 130 golfers and Craig greeted them all, explaining the program and updating them about our new partnership. In addition to helping the friends with fundraising functions, Jim will be our keynote speaker at this years February fundraiser. Due to scheduling conflicts, we need to change venues and look forward to partnering with The Canyons and The Grand Summit Hotel for this years gala event.



Craig works the crowd, explaining the program and its partners to a group of golfers playing through the 17th hole. Anita Gordon photo

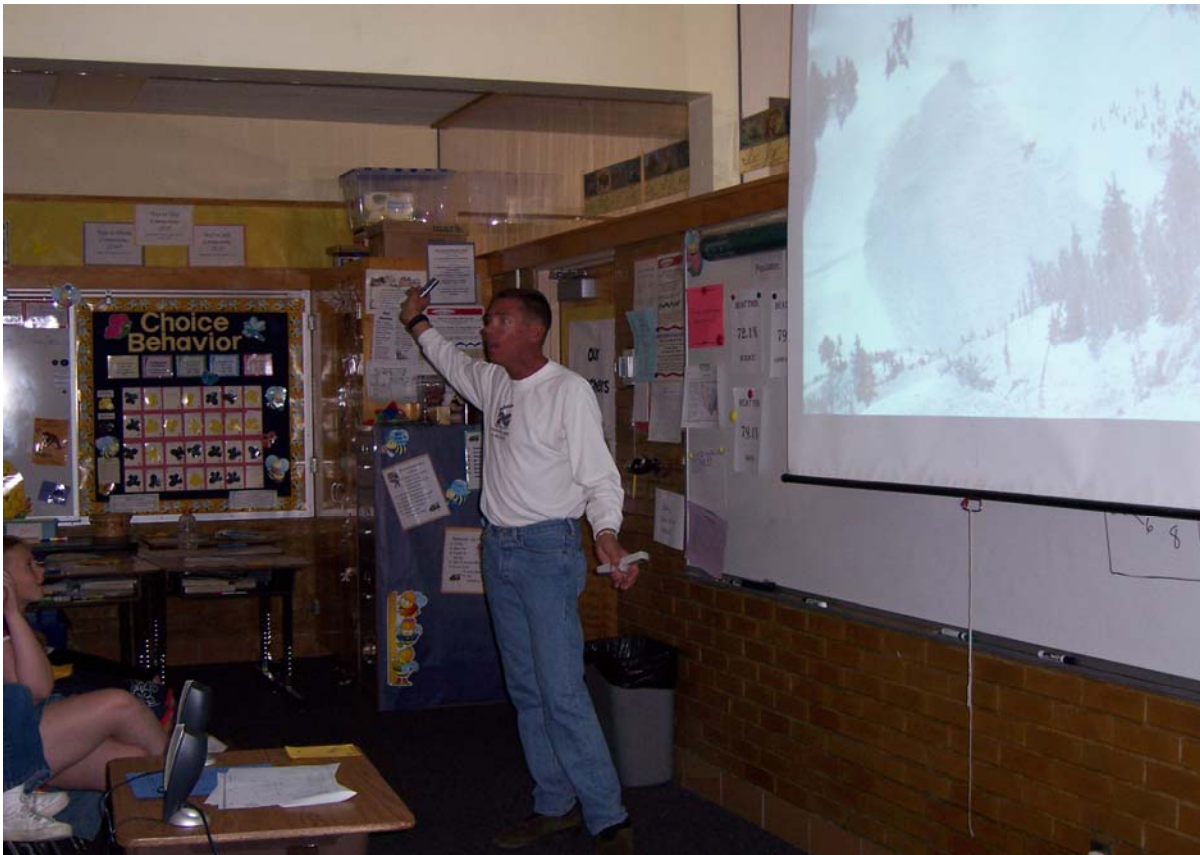


Craig and Olympian Jim Shea take a break from the links. Anita Gordon photo

Program Development

Prior to its phenomenally successful first year, Know Before You Go was a tough sell. Craig worked diligently to open the door of the school system and it wasn't always an easy task. After all, we were up against some stiff competition. The only programs welcomed by the Utah schools on a massive scale before were those that taught drug, alcohol and tobacco avoidance. This was a different type of program. However, once on the road, the programs dynamic message along with a very active avalanche year of 2004-05, propelled the program into the Utah schools spotlight.

With a seasons worth of presentations under our belts, we regrouped; saw what worked and what didn't and made the necessary tweaks to the original PowerPoint presentation, while keeping with the same basic avalanche curriculum message. In addition, the original video was re-edited over the summer of '05, adding a few more interviews and new avalanche footage. The PowerPoint presentation will get a face lift this summer to keep the message fresh and up-to-date.



Craig presents the new version of the program to a group of fascinated students.

Carole Brown photo

Video development, editing and re-editing

The video was a tremendous hit not only with students, faculty and administrators, but also with other avalanche professionals. After premiering a rough cut version at the 2004 Jackson Hole ISSW, every regional avalanche center wanted a copy. A finished version was available in November and about 150 copies were issued to snow professionals not only in the US, but in Canada, New Zealand, France, and the Netherlands. Our first go around was an international hit!

Original high quality footage came from TGR, Steve Kroschel, Steve Winter, and Richard Cheski. Craig also had some good rescue footage donated by KTVX News 4 Utah and KSTU Fox 13 News Utah. Jim Phelan, David Craig and Greg Painter chipped in with some amazing snowmobile footage that's always a crowd pleaser. New footage this year came from Ben DeJong, Andy Jacobsen, Tahoe Films, and Canadian Mountain Holidays. The piece was edited by Craig and Video Wholesale of Salt Lake City. All the footage was donated for non-profit avalanche education.

Craig saw the need to fill in some gaps and last summer conducted interviews with some of the world's top riders- Kasha Rigby and Jeremy Nobis world renowned extreme skiers, and Doug Andersen a radical snowmobiler featured in a number of popular action sports films. In addition to some exciting new footage, Craig interviewed two young avalanche survivors, putting a local face to a near catastrophic event.

After all the interviews were shot and additional footage gathered, it was off to the editing bay where the raw footage was sifted through and rough edited. We wanted to maintain the flavor of the original video and didn't have the funds or time to re-invent another version. Sounds simple on paper, but in reality it was an all encompassing, time consuming project. Craig saw the completion of the video paramount to getting a well rounded message out to a vast and diverse group of users.

While the editing began in late summer, the final version wasn't available until around Christmas. The new video was again distributed to avalanche centers and educators in the U.S. and abroad and met with rave reviews. We don't foresee any new edits in the near future.



Craig preps local snowmobile avalanche survivors Ben DeJong and Trace Workman for their on camera interview.

Mark Greer photo

Nuts and Bolts- Personnel, presentations and scheduling

The first year objective of Know Before You Go was to reach out to 5,000 students. Word got out about the program and we easily doubled our intended goal, speaking to over 12,000 students. Like a rock star with a hit album wondering if they could be as successful the second time around, we set our 05-06 season sights on just trying to tie the watermark set the year before. Over the summer and fall, Craig lined up a host of new schools to visit and a number of schools we spoke to last year invited us back to present to a whole new audience. By seasons end we were able to eclipse last year's wildly successful start by giving 110 presentations, reaching out to just over 18,500 students.

The program is well represented with snow professionals from Ogden to Payson to Park City to Salt Lake City. Up north, ski patrol personnel from Snow Basin included Doug Wewer and JR Fletcher. In the Salt Lake area Dean Cardinale, Mike Morris, Dusty Sackett and Ralph Whatley from Snowbird as well as Gabe Garcia from Alta helped to cover a bulk of the talks. Darce Trotter who worked as snow safety and ski patrol director at Sundance for nearly two decades provided immeasurable assistance by covering talks in the Heber Valley, Park City and Provo areas. Finally, in Park City, a natural choice was to have Jake Hutchinson help us out. He's the snow safety and ski patrol director for The Canyons. Jakes local expertise was utilized in Summit and Salt Lake Counties. This dynamic team of dedicated snow professionals deserves a tremendous amount of credit. It was their hard work and commitment to avalanche education that makes the program so successful.



Craig shows an advanced group how avalanche beacons work at an on snow clinic held at Snowbird Ski Resort.

Dunfill Inc. photo

Know Before You Go Avalanche Education 2005-06

Date	Staff	Event	No. people
10/12/2005	Gordon-	Mt. Nebo School District Phys Ed Personnel Training	29
11/15/2006	Gordon -	Kamas Ranger District Staff	13
11/21/2005	Cardinale-	Park City High School (4 talks)	378
11/22/2005	Hutchinson-	Park City High School (4 talks)	342
12/1/2005	Gordon-	Realms of Inquiry School	63
12/7/2005	Gordon -	Timponogas Regional Hospital	73
12/8/2005	Gordon-	REI	41
12/12/2005	Garcia-	Herriman Junior High School (2 talks)	856
12/13/2005	Gordon-	North Summit Middle School	320
12/13/2005	Gordon-	North Summit High School	472
12/15/2005	Gordon-	South Summit Middle School	370
12/15/2005	Gordon-	South Summit High School	441
12/16/2005	Gordon-	Brigham Intermediate High School (2 talks)	1015
12/20/2005	Sackett-	Churchill Junior High School	250
12/22/2005	Hutchinson-	Rocky Mountain Middle School (2 talks)	626
1/4/2006	Gordon-	Olympus Junior High School	900
1/5/2006	Morris-	Eastmont Middle School	967
1/5/2006	Trotter-	Salem Stake Center	37
1/6/2006	Garcia-	Ogden High School	113
1/9/2006	Garcia-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	120
1/9/2006	Whatley-	Indian Hills Middle School (2 talks)	1200
1/10/2006	Trotter-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	107
1/10/2006	Gordon-	Goldman, Sachs and Company	28
1/11/2006	Cardinale-	Kennedy Junior High School (4 talks)	602
1/12/2006	Morris-	Kennedy Junior High School (4 talks)	645
1/12/2006	Trotter-	Novell	30
1/13/2006	Gordon-	Centerville Junior High School	1052
1/13/2005	Hutchinson-	Butler Middle School	1105
1/14/2005	Gordon-	Rowland Hall- Saint Marks Middle School Ski Team	22
1/17/2006	Wewer/Fletcher	Bountiful Boy Scouts	33
1/18/2006	Trotter-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	141
1/19/2006	Morris-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	156
1/19/2006	Trotter-	Mount Nebo Boy Scouts	22
1/19/2006	Gordon-	Westminister College	42
1/20/2006	Gordon-	Park City High School (2 snowpit talks)	44
1/23/2006	Garcia/Whatley	South Davis Junior High School (6 talks)	591
1/23/2006	Gordon-	Park City High School (1 snowpit talk)	29
1/25/2006	Gordon-	Evergreen High School	852
1/25/2006	Gordon-	University of Utah Snow Dynamics	21
1/27/2006	Gordon-	Oakley School	113
1/27/2006	Gordon-	BYU College	82
1/31/2006	Gordon-	Salt Lake City Boy Scouts	57
1/31/2006	Trotter-	Heber Boy Scout Leaders	35
2/1/2006	Gordon-	McGillis School	51
2/1/2006	Gordon-	Brighton Ski Resort	156
2/6/2006	Wewer/Fletcher	Hill Airforce Base	51
2/8/2006	Gordon-	Vernal Junior High School (2 talks)	782
2/8/2006	Gordon-	Vernal Western Park Public Talk	37
2/9/2006	Gordon-	Brighton Volunteer Ski Patrol	92
2/9/2006	Sackett-	Salt Lake Realtors Association	15
2/10/2006	Gordon-	Steeps Camp- Snowbird	24

Date	Staff	Event	No. people
2/11/2006	Gordon-	Kamas Ranger District Goodwill Riders Program	18
2/13/2006	Whatley-	Grantsville Middle School	480
2/13/2006	Whatley-	Grantsville High School	864
2/14/2006	Gordon-	Park City Learning Center	38
2/15/2006	Trotter-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	124
2/15/2006	Sackett-	Sandy Boy Scout Group	85
2/15/2006	Trotter-	Utah Valley State College	11
2/16/2006	Morris-	Treasure Mountain Middle School (4 talks)	119
2/18/2006	Gordon-	Rocky Mountain Search and Rescue Dogs	21
2/24/2006	Gordon-	Steeps Camp- Snowbird	22
3/3/2006	Trotter-	Wasatch Academy	10
3/23/2006	Morris-	South Ogden Junior High School	822
4/3/2006	Gordon-	Eagle Bay Elementary	102
4/4/2006	Wewer/Fletcher	Smithfield Boy Scout Group	29
4/5/2006	Gordon-	Steeps Camp- Snowbird	8
4/27/2006	Gordon-	Itineris Early College High School	72
7/06/06	Gordon-	Nat'l Wildlife Foundation-Snowbird	38
Total # of talks-110			Total # of people 18,567



Gabe Garcia, assistant snow safety at Alta Ski Resort, describes what it's like to be out on the snow during the heat of the battle in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Steve Seckinger photo



Craig Gordon accepts the Backcountry Awareness Proclamation while sharing a laugh and a handshake with Utah's Governor Jon Huntsman. From left to right- Tim Garcia, Faye Kruger, Jon Huntsman, Craig Gordon, Roger Kehr, Jerry Mika and Bruce Tremper look on.
Roger Kehr photo

February Fundraiser:

Roger Kerr, the mastermind behind the February fundraiser, is Snowbird Expeditions program director and we are truly indebted to him. Colleen Graham, the Friends president, teamed up with Roger and their hard work and dedication to avalanche awareness brings a diverse group of users together for this very special one night event, whose proceeds go directly to program's operation and expansion budget. Roger's extraordinary, unselfish efforts coupled with a near sellout crowd, show just how much the community backs this successful program.

Once again this year, Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort partnered with the Friends of the FSUAC to help host the second annual Know Before You Go fundraising dinner. The event, held in February in conjunction with Backcountry Awareness Week, was well attended and raised \$13,000. This years theme revolved around Mount Everest with guest speakers Apa Sherpa, who has reached Mt. Everest's summit fifteen times, and Pemba Doma, the first woman to summit from the north side of the mountain. In addition to being a wonderful humanitarian, she has led two successful Nepali expeditions to Everest. The keynote speaker was Conrad Anker, a world renowned mountaineer.



Keynote speaker and world renowned climber Conrad Ankar, Bruce Tremper and Craig Gordon agree on the choice of beverage for the evening.

Roger Kehr photo

Future Direction

We would like to see the Know Before You Go program become a mainstay in the Utah school system. On the heels of another successful season, we expect we'll be busier next year as even more schools have expressed interest in the program. Also, working in conjunction with the Utah Board of Education, Craig will develop a sound curriculum and hopes the program will pilot as a state-wide, 8th grade physical education elective for the 2007-08 school year. This would be the first of its kind in the nation and could act as a successful model for other mountain communities to follow. The future for Know Before You go looks bright and the message is well received. As a matter of fact, in the past two years we've talked to nearly 31,000 young adults and not one teen has been killed in an avalanche! We look forward to the challenge of keeping Utah's youth on top of the greatest snow on earth, rather than buried beneath it.

Presentation reviews

Treasure Mountain International School's eighth grade physical education classes were fortunate to have received the "Know Before You Go" program this year. Craig Gordon and his knowledgeable staff presented a beautifully poignant PowerPoint program to our students. This year we structured the sessions with only one or two classes at each presentation. All kids seemed to be able to relate on some level; being snowboarders, skiers, snowmobilers, or snowshoers. This program addressed all.

I heard so many questions from our students that may not have been asked in a larger setting. Several of the presenters discussed avalanche transceivers and how they work. This fit in beautifully with previous curriculum on how waves travel. In future presentations it would be great to have some transceiver practice and to have examples of the equipment that out-of-bounds enthusiasts should carry.

Thanks again for this spectacular program, we are looking forward to another year with you in our physical education program. Our kids need to know before they go.

Susan Graves-Henneman
Treasure Mountain International School
Park City, UT

Dear Craig,

Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to come present information on avalanche awareness. These students love to play in the snow and we have been studying Utah and features of the earth including some weather. The information that you shared was a great extension of what we have been studying.

Thank you for your enthusiasm as well. You kept the interest of each of the students and answered most of their questions in a very respectful way. I appreciate your help in teaching them how to behave for visitors as well. It was also good for them to hear about your educational background and your experiences that lead up to your choice of occupation. Thanks again for all you did.

Sincerely,

Carole L. Brown
Holbrook Elementary

Hello Craig,

I heard great things about your presentation with many people remarking, "I never knew..." or "Wow! I never thought..." about avalanches. I heard that it was intense! I hope you found our participants as enjoyable as they found you and your work.

Thanks again,
Andrew Pinger - Manager, Education Outreach Events
National Wildlife Federation

Young Intermediate School's response to Craig Gordon's Avalanche Awareness Assembly

“It was unbelievable! There was an extreme high interest in the assembly. I didn't realize how many snowboarders we had in our school. The assembly was so good for our students. The timing for the assembly was just right—right before Winter break in December. It was just awesome!”

-- Gary Allen, Principal-Administrator

“It was a very informative and fun assembly. The kids thought it was a cool assembly. I often think about what was said in the assembly. The knowledge that I learned from the assembly could possibly save my life someday. It was well worth the time to have this assembly.”

--Clark Funk, P.E. Educator

“In twenty years as an educator, the avalanche assembly was the best assembly I've ever seen! It was incredible! It was not just what the student's needed to see and hear, but the teachers, as well. The video presentation was not only captivating, interesting but highly informative and very well done. It was spectacular!”

--Ron Goodrich, TLC/Shop Educator

“This assembly has made an everlasting impression in my mind. I will never forget the message that was put across. This assembly should be mandatory for all schools to see—6th through 12th grades, along with their parents, too. It can and will save people's lives. The footage shown in the avalanche video is phenomenal! The educational value placed upon this assembly is priceless.”

--Raquel Fuller, Health/P.E./Dance Educator

“I loved it! It was nice that the video had real footage of people caught in avalanches. No reenactments. Some of the people in the movie were professional skiers, snowmobilers, and snowboarders. The scenery was incredible. It was a cool assembly.”

--Mike Hollingsworth, Science Educator

Craig,

Your Avalanche Awareness Program "Wowed" our 5th graders here at Eagle Bay Elementary. The presentation was all they talked about the next day, and many of them told me that they learned things they didn't know before! (good timing too, I printed off the article about the latest avalanche and the students grabbed them right up)

We definitely want you back next year. I have emailed the Davis School District SEM coordinator, Becky and asked her to distribute information about your program to all the SEMs in the Davis School District, so that they may have you come present to their schools next year! Thanks again,

Sincerely,

donna Forshay

SEM

Eagle Bay Elementary

Farmington.

Craig,

It's been a few weeks since you were here for the presentation, but I wanted to say thanks again for being here. I continue to get great feedback about how good the presentation was how much people learned, and what a great presenter you are. We're already looking forward to next year's show!

Be safe out there,

Steve

Craig-

Thanks so much for the presentation. I wish that every high school kid in Utah could see that, and maybe a few lives would be saved!

Thanks again!

Nanette

Hi Craig,

"fan mail" letter from the avalanche talk..... Nov 9, 2005.....

Your presentation was easy to understand with many of the basic rules to be aware of.

Your talk with color pictures was hard hitting with real positive actions to be considered.

Your method of communication was clear and very much understandable.

Your time was not long winded.

Your thoughts will be long remembered.

Thank for coming to our Cascade Drift Skippers (CDS) here in the Seattle area.

You may use my letter to promote "Avalanche Awareness."

Your welcome,

Richard Elkins

WSSA Board District

Hello Craig,

I am sending a few articles from our newsletters that relate to your November, 2005 visit. They are not as inclusive as we truly feel or do they include as many of the facts. We appreciated your coming to talk to us so much. We found your information more than interesting and much more informative than hoped. It was so more to the point of our experiences than we had even anticipated; we could relate and find useful all that you presented.

We were especially anxious to learn from you and hoped you would bring information to us that would be useful and beneficial. We were definitely not disappointed. As you know, we had recently lost two dear young friends, one a past president. Both young men were the most excellent riders and we all felt the sadness of the loss. We were anxious to learn how to help prevent such a tragedy. You were more than helpful and we appreciate your expertise, open presentation style, friendly open conversation, and willingness to share your knowledge, yet forcefully coming to the point. Thank you for your generosity. Your ability to hold the audience with spellbinding attention for more than an hour, which the audience sat totally quiet with rapt concentration, was, I can tell you, totally rare and unusual in our group.

We had one of the largest turnouts in our club's history. We had folks from other clubs attend plus a few members from the Mountaineers and all comments were positive. Your talk promoted much discussion and interest in more safety-related events. Our recreation has always promoted safety, our club especially. Elwood Hunt, Past President of CDS, most especially has promoted safety in our sport and he felt very strongly after experiencing your talk at the ISC that you would be an asset for our local members. Elwood was correct.

Rebecca Hunt

May 25, 2006

Utah Avalanche Center
2242 West North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

To Whom It May Concern-

Winter at Westminster, a winter program hosted by Westminster College, invited Craig Gordon to present the *Know Before You Go* safety principles to our group of college students on January 19, 2006. This presentation was timely, as the students were about to embark on a series of backcountry adventures. Craig's energy kept the students engaged and ultimately sparked a four-month conversation about avalanche safety, preparedness and awareness.

Winter at Westminster just completed another successful year. This program was considered a success because the students received an educational experience that took their knowledge beyond the classroom, and the students returned home safely.

I recommend anyone who is considering venturing out into the backcountry to participate in the *Know Before You Go* program. This is powerful presentation makes you more aware of how to enjoy the backcountry while being safe. It's been a positive impact on the Winter at Westminster program, and I know it's message is important for all winter outdoor enthusiasts to hear.

Thank you-

Sarah West
Director, Office of New Ventures
Westminster College

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***Thanks to all of you who are saving lives preaching
the avalanche gospel!***