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Ski for Light, Inc.® Fact Sheet

What is Ski for Light?

Ski for Light, Inc.® (SFL) is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization founded in 1975. The organization hosts an annual, week-long, recreational cross-country skiing opportunity for blind, visually- and mobility-impaired adults working in partnership with experienced, sighted skiers. The goal of SFL is to teach participants how to cross-country ski in an atmosphere that encourages each participant to recognize that they can usually accomplish much more, both on and off the snow, than others may have told them was possible. New participants are encouraged to embrace the SFL motto, "If I can do this, I can do anything," in all aspects of their lives.

Beyond daily cross-country ski instruction and outings for both the novice and experienced athlete, SFL also offers a wide variety of workshops and cultural activities designed to promote education and interaction. Participants are also introduced to the Norwegian culture and heritage that are integral to cross-country skiing and SFL.

Run entirely by volunteers, SFL has positively affected thousands of visually- and mobility-impaired people along with the guides who ski with them. While Ski for Light refers specifically to the annual week-long event, held in a different U.S. location every year, SFL has also inspired the creation of nine independent state and regional organizations. Located in the Northeast, Upper Midwest, Rocky Mountains and Pacific Northwest, these offshoots offer ongoing weekend and week-long programs to teach disabled individuals to cross-country ski.

Why was it started?

To promote physical fitness among visually- and mobility-impaired adults in an environment where "we can't" is replaced by "we can." SFL places an emphasis on exposing new people to the sport of skiing, thus making the idea of physical fitness available to people who have not had the opportunity to participate in sports previously. In many cases, ongoing SFL participation results in new friendships, increased energy, boosted morale, rewarding careers and fuller lives.

Who participates?

Approximately 300 people participate, including visually- and mobility-impaired skiers, guides and other volunteers. In addition to the U.S. and Canada, Ski for Light participants hail from Norway and several other European and Asian countries.

When is the next event?

January 31 – February 7, 2010

Where?

Location: Wasatch Mountains of Northern Utah

Nordic Center: Soldier Hollow Cross-Country Ski Resort in Midway

Lodging: Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Provo

Background information:

Ski for Light was founded in 1975, and is based on a Norwegian program called the Ridderrenn. The Ridderrenn, annually hosts more than one thousand disabled skiers and guides from more than a dozen nations. Many Sons of Norway members and lodges support and are active in SFL.

On-line Media Center:

www.sfl.org/press.html



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