

The ALS Association  
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## **Local adventure sports legend takes up the fight against Lou Gehrig's Disease, named honorary chair of inaugural 'Ski to Defeat ALS'**

Longtime Portland resident and famed adventurer Fred Noble has cheated death many times in more than 50 years of dangerous and extreme backcountry skiing, paragliding, mountain climbing and wind surfing.

At age 74, Noble now finds himself in a fight for his life after being diagnosed in December with ALS, the fatal neurodegenerative muscular disease best known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Well known as a sort-of pied piper for adventure sports, Noble has shifted his life's mission to raising awareness about ALS and the work of The ALS Association and its Oregon and Southwest Washington chapter.

"I always thought I'd die a violent death," Noble said. "To me this is much more civilized. I have time to get my affairs in order and celebrate a life well lived with everyone. It's a new beginning. I'm really focused to try to find a cure for ALS. This way my spirit will live on forever."

Noble is a ski legend, having pushed the limits of backcountry and extreme skiing both locally and around the world. He's also famous for his paragliding excursions and efforts to make wind surfing in the Columbia River Gorge more accessible to the public. His travels have brought him to 85 countries, and his indomitable spirit has inspired and brought joy to countless friends around the globe.

"Fred knows that he has lived the life he always wanted, and has no regrets," said Lance Christian, the executive director of the local ALS Association chapter. "He sees this diagnosis as a new chapter of his life where he can continue to make a difference."

### **What is the Ski to Defeat ALS?**

Ski to Defeat ALS is a team and individual skiing and snowboarding event to be hosted at **Mt. Hood Meadows** on **Saturday, April 14, 2012**. Participants engage in competitions for most dollars raised and for most vertical feet skied or ridden. For more information about the event, visit [www.SkitoDefeatALS.org](http://www.SkitoDefeatALS.org).

### **About ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease)**

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that slowly robs a person of the ability to walk, speak, swallow and, eventually, breathe. With no known cause or cure, a person can expect to live typically 2 to 5 years from the time of diagnosis. ALS has no racial, ethnic or socioeconomic boundaries — and in only 10 percent of cases there is a family history of ALS. Today, there are approximately 30,000 people in the US living with ALS and 5,600 people in the US are diagnosed every year. At any given time, there are an estimated 500 families living with ALS in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

### **About The ALS Association Oregon and SW Washington Chapter**

Since its inception in 2002, our local chapter of The ALS Association is the central source for services and education for people with ALS, their families, caregivers, and health care professionals in all of Oregon and the six counties of SW Washington. The progression of ALS varies significantly from one person to another. Responding to each person's individual needs, our local chapter is available to provide vital services and reliable information.