

Jerry Nunn began working as a Ski Patroller in 1940 at age 18. Despite having 7 children in her family by age 30, Jerry continued to Patrol. Beginning her career at the small Soda Springs ski area on Donner Pass, she transferred to Sugar Bowl in the late 40s then over to Squaw Valley in the mid 1950's. Working at the larger resorts piqued her interest in avalanche control so Jerry applied for the Forest Service's Snow Ranger certification course in Alta, Utah in 1957. The course was run by Alta snow safety specialists Monty Atwater and Ed LaChapelle. Almost barred from the course because she was a woman, Jerry went on to become the first female Snow Ranger and also the first Snow Ranger in the far West. For approximately the next decade, Jerry gave snow safety courses to ski areas, highway and railway departments and mining operations. It was only in late 60s that these courses were taken over by Norm Wilson- a protégé of Atwater. Having impressed Atwater sufficiently during their 1957 meeting in Utah, Jerry worked with his avalanche crew when the Olympics came to Squaw in 1960. Atwater retired from the Forest Service in the mid 60s and focused on consulting work and on his pet project, the Avalauncher. Jerry assisted Atwater with manufacturing and sales, netting dozens of customers around the world. One of the launchers Jerry sold in the mid 70s ended up in the hands of the French Atomic Energy Commission. An engineer there went on to develop the first breech loading Avalauncher in the later 70s. Jerry's multi-decade dedication to both practicing and educating on a variety of topics related to avalanches garners her the well deserved Special Service Award of the American Avalanche Association.