



SKI TRACKS

Newsletter of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club
Box 431 • Corvallis, Montana 59828



MARCH 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Skiing on the Chief Joseph Trails this winter has been simply wonderful. It's been some of the best in recent memory and it just keeps snowing and snowing. If it keeps up, we may be on the trails until the end of April — now that would be something!

In addition to our groomed trails (thanks, guys), there are several well established trails in the immediate area of Chief Joseph that are not groomed. During the early days of the Club (was that really more than 20 years ago?) those trails provided a major portion of the skiing for our members.

On the south side of Highway 43 is the trail to Anderson Mountain and trails along Richardson Creek, Cabinet Creek, May Creek, and a trail along the crest of May Ridge. Each winter these trails still receive plenty of visitors, mostly skiers and people on snowshoes. Several years ago, a small dedicated group of our members marked these trails with blue diamonds. They are pretty easy to follow, especially if someone else has already left tracks.

On the north side of the highway is the Gibbons Pass Road, the Shoofly Trails and the track along Trail Creek Road. Both roads, Gibbons Pass and Trail Creek, receive a substantial amount of use by snowmobilers during weekends. That's beneficial because it keeps the roads nicely packed so skiers like us can easily follow them on weekdays.

A few days ago seven of us "allowed" Bill Sweet to lead an outing to Hogan Cabin. We began at Chief Joseph and followed Gibbons Pass Road before taking a short cut-off down to the cabin. Someone had rented the cabin the night before and shared its warmth during our lunch break. What a treat! After lunch, with a strong wind at our backs, the ski along Trail Creek Road to Highway 43 was perfect. Yes, it was the wind and not our highly-refined skills which receive credit for us reaching our vehicles half an hour ahead of schedule.

If you haven't been to Hogan Cabin or experienced skiing on the other ungroomed trails close to Chief Joseph, I highly recommend giving it a try. It's pretty easy to twist Bill Sweet's arm for directions, if you need someone to show the way. He knows and loves those trails. Thanks for a great day, Bill!

/s/ Michael Hoyt

MARCH MEETING

Thursday, March 10, 2011

7:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
1220 W Main Street, Hamilton

Program: Entomologist Joel Egan of the USFS Forest Health Protection is eager to speak to the Club about the recent mountain pine beetle activity and its implications on areas of the Bitterroot NF that the ski club is most interested in. He will bring a power point program with many visual aids to discuss the problem across the Rocky Mountains and he will include recent aerial survey data from bug flights through the Bitterroots.

The Phantom Philanthropists Strike Again

Twice in recent weeks the grooming crew have received gifts from anonymous donors. Most recently, again from Club members who wish to remain unknown, Jim Aronson, Mel Holloway, John Holloway, John Love and myself were each handed a cash gift in appreciation of our efforts on the trails. We thank each and everyone who contributed to this most generous gift. This came as a complete surprise and it will take plastic surgery to get the smile off our faces. Obviously we don't do this for the money, although we often say our salary doubles every year. The cash will probably go to taking wives/girlfriends out to dinner to help make up for their never knowing when the crew members will show up in the evening. You know you're spoiling us. We love it!

The Trail Report: The grooming season is winding down rather rapidly. Usually mid to late March ends our regular efforts to groom and set tracks on the trails. It's often a bitter sweet event to put the machines away for the last time of the season. We've been able to overcome some difficult challenges and we've had some very good days. It's always rewarding for us, on Friday night, to leave the trails in as good a shape as we can make them. Mother Nature doesn't often leave them that way for long but

Nordic skiers are an understanding lot. We've had some very good snow this season and the skiing has usually been superb. We couldn't ask for anything better than that. So, with the end nearing, we want to

thank everyone for their support, their appreciative comments and the smiles, waves and thank you's we get when we pass on the trails. Have a Great Summer!!

/s/ Mel Mooers

Rescue of an Injured Skier

Saturday, February 12, 2011, was a gorgeous day for a ski trip for the ladies. We had been out together twice before this year and enjoyed it immensely! Some of us are downright hooked and have been up almost every weekend.

Today started out so beautiful as we met up and piled into one vehicle to set out for a beautiful ski.

We piled out, geared up and set off for the freedom that cross country skiing brings to all of us. A new friend joined the group today and we were teasing her about the initiation process she was facing. Little did we know....

Having skied for over an hour, we were heading to the warming hut. We had enjoyed the sunshine and the snow on Timber Trail and Solitude. At Windy Corner, we made the decision to take Vista View and start our trek to the Warming Hut for a bite to eat. In our group of five, two of us made it around the bend but the third person took a terrific tumble on a pair of new skis she was demoing. She did an aerial stunt that would have amazed judges! The landing, however, did not stick! Terrible news for her knee and we knew it immediately.

We built a bench out of some of our skis and got her out of the track. Two women stayed behind (one was a nurse I will invite to travel with me wherever I go!). The other two headed for a rescue sled. We had passed a sled on Timber Trail but thought for sure they would have one at the Warming Hut so we skied there for help.

This is where everything went like a perfectly coordinated and rehearsed rescue! We made it to the Warming Hut and started telling everyone of our plight. The ski gods were watching over us as George Masnick and Tom Anderson retrieved a sled from the basement and strapped it on immediately to assist us. I actually thought they were there waiting for just this type of emergency. It wasn't until we were skiing back and I asked Tom how many times they had done this that I found out they were just up skiing for the day.

The two men, aided by their scout Reisa Kahn, pulled off a perfect emergency response rescue! We are still full of gratitude and amazement. While this rescue was taking place, one heroic member of our group skied to the parking lot and hitched a ride to the ski resort where the husband of our injured friend was enjoying his day. The ski patrol tracked him down and just as they were pulling into the parking lot, our rescue team was skiing out.

Even if this had been practiced by professionals, I don't believe it could have worked out better! Our friend had a broken leg that required surgery but was a trooper the whole time—even cracking jokes to lighten the mood. Looks like a long road to recovery, but we will be back!

Thank you a million times for your heroic efforts George, Tom and Reisa. You are our Heroes! Love, Diann, Karla, Corrinne, Nancy and Sherrie.

/s/ Sherrie Adolphson

FEBRUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

February 10, 2011

by Kay Fulton

President Mike Hoyt called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. There were approximately 60 people in attendance.

Treasurer's Report by Reine Hilton: Income, \$2,310.46; Expenses, \$1,574.12; Checking, \$9,728.61; Savings, \$7,606.56

Membership: Jack Losensky reported that there are now 334 members.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST:

The Extravaganza Committee reported that \$2,764.85 had been made on the ticket sales. The Valley Bike Store of Hamilton was the business selling the most (Naughty Moose and Blacksmith Brewery came in close behind). **The drawing was held at the end of this evening. Names to be announced after the winners are contacted.**

Volunteers needed to coordinate the May Potluck, May 12th, and a location for this event is being sought. Please contact Kay Fulton if you can help @ 642-3794.

Upcoming Programs: Ginny Deck reported the subjects of the next two meetings: Pine Bark Beetle Problem by Joel Eagen, an Entomologist and Adventure Cycling Company.

Additional Instruction for new skiers: Mike reported that a few people have volunteered to provide instruction on an individual basis to people requesting assistance. Give him your name if you are willing to help and he will connect potential students with instructors so arrangements can be made. There was also some discussion about assisting with school age children.

Trails Report: Mel Mooers reported that there were six (6) inches new this week and that the base is just less than six (6) feet. The moose seem to have moved out. 1,107 people have signed in this season. On Saturday, the 30th, he did a survey of the number of skiers signing in. 38% of the people he counted signed in. That is consistent with previous years' counts. 20% of those signing in were members.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ski Lessons: Mel Holloway reported that there 61 students and he thanked everyone who helped. Mike has a thermos that was left, if anyone lost it.

Pictures for the Potluck: Mike is still hoping to get more pictures of people at the ski area that he can put into a program for the potluck. He has 149 so far, but would like close to 300. If you can, send them via e-mail in JPEG & at the highest resolution. Be sure to include place, date, and people's names.

Sonny LaSalle thanked people who helped shovel off the roof of the hut two weeks ago.

PROGRAM: Bitterroot Valley Hydrologist Tracey Turek, owner of Water Right Research LLC, presented a very informative program on hydrology. For additional information, she can be contacted at 406-239-5141 or turekwater@msn.com.

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Warming Hut Reservations (USFS Wisdom)		689-3371

Membership Renewals / Dues

Annual Memberships EXPIRE November 1!

Renew your membership now!

INDIVIDUAL \$15 • FAMILY \$25

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL \$30

SUPPORTING FAMILY \$40

LIFE MEMBER - \$500

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Nov. 1, 2010 - Oct. 31, 2011

MAIL TO: Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club
PO Box 431, Corvallis, MT 59828

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Type of Membership: _____
(Listed above)

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Newsletter preference: (Check all that apply)

Send by USPS _____ Send by e-mail _____