



SKI TRACKS

Newsletter of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club

Box 431 • Corvallis, Montana 59828

December, 2004



NEWSLETTER NOTES

Haven House has expressed their appreciation for the donations of food items. We are encouraged, but not required, to continue to donate when possible. It all goes for a good cause.

NOVEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

President, Sonny LaSalle, called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. Approximately 60 people were in attendance. This was the annual membership meeting with raffle of door prizes.

Treasurer's Report by Jean Lippert:

Income, \$1471.90; Net Income, Expenses, \$204.85; Net Income, \$1267.05; Checking, \$1140.90; Savings, \$2,506.97

Trails Report:

Hazard Trees are down and will remain until summer. All the signs were moved from one place to another. It took two crews to complete. The new snowmobile has been purchased. It is a Skidoo. The old machines have been tuned up. We may sell the Polaris. The brakes on the trailer have been replaced and the axil repaired.

Upcoming Events:

The Races will be held on December 18th. Annie circulated a sign-up sheet.

The Extravaganza Tickets are on sale now. The Extravaganza will be March 4th.

New Business:

Mary Ellen Reese distributed the new trail maps which are a BRIGHT pink. Allegra did the printing. Mary Ellen encouraged everyone to patronize the sponsors and noted some of the new ones.

Program:

Norma Gilmore presented an interesting slide program on her trip to the Galapagos Islands November, 2003. She made it sound and look like a fascinating place to visit.

Throughout the evening, raffle tickets were drawn for 31 wonderful door prizes. Thanks to all of you who donated such nice gifts and congratulations to the winners.

(See list on next page)

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE CLASSIC SKI RACE

We've set the date for our annual classic ski race for Sat., December 18th. This 10 or 20K race starts from the cabin at 11a.m. and will be followed by a hearty lunch for all competitors and volunteers. Cost will be \$15 per person with proceeds going towards the grooming fund. If you would be willing or interested to help with the race, please sign up at the Nov. club meeting or contact Tony Neaves @ 375-0852.

DECEMBER PROGRAM

POTLUCK & PROGRAM THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2004

First Presbyterian Church
1220 West Main Street in Hamilton
6:00 p.m. potluck - 7:00 p.m. program

A Potluck starts at 6:00 P.M. and the program at 7:00 P.M. featuring local mountain climber and "mountain goat" Mario Locatelli, showing slides of mountain goats and describing some of his mountain climbing exploits, including a harrowing escape from a major avalanche.

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT SONNY

We have new snow at Chief Joe but not enough to ski. Gordon and crew have done some trail packing on the upper trails but we need lots more snow. The December meeting will be the 9th at the same location but there is a time CHANGE. We will start at 6:00 P.M. with a pot luck so bring your favorite dish to share as well as your table service. Remember we cannot have any alcohol at the church. We will also hold elections for president and treasurer. So far Jeanne Lippert and I are the only two candidates for those two positions. Part of the new challenge cost share agreement with the Forest Service requires us to provide a vehicle for towing the snowmobile trailer and the FS will reimburse us for the rental cost as well as for oil & gas for grooming. Dennis Havig, Wisdom District Ranger, has informally proposed a charge system for non-hosting people staying at the Hut in the winter. Two people would be free, as hosts, and additional people would pay a nominal fee. This is only in the discussion phase and I would like to know your opinion. We will discuss this at the December meeting and your views are needed so please send me an e-mail or call if you can't be at the meeting. Take care and have a great Christmas. Sonny

DENNIS HAVING MESSAGE

November 29, 2004

Dear Nordic Ski Club Members

It is hard to believe that it is time to get out the ski equipment out and the Christmas decorations. Unfortunately the snow is still thin at Chief Joseph Pass but it won't be long.

There are several accomplishments that I would like to report. First, there was a lot of good work preparing the cabin for the winter. The firewood supply should keep everyone warm thanks to the hard work of many of the club members. Thanks.

(Continued on page 2)

ITEM

Peanut Butter Cookie Mix
 Basket of Mt. Jams
 Jar of Honey
 Flathead Cherry Wine
 Rhubarb Wine
 Elderberry Wine
 Pumpkin Butter
 Wood Carving of Sawmill
 Candle Set
 Hyatt Vineyard Wine
 Carmel Almond Toppers
 Hand Warmers
 1 Hour Flight W/Bob
 2 Coat Hooks by Glen
 Sula Country Store Gift Cert. for 1 night & breakfast
 Second Sula Store Certificate
 Gift Certificate
 Peanut Chews
 Gift in Pac Man Paper
 Petrified Wood by Earl Harper
 Plum Syrup
 Quilt Block Project
 Cookies
 Apple Pie
 Chocolate Cheese Cake
 2nd Chocolate Cheese Cake
 Handmade Neck Scarf
 Fords Gift Certificate
 Therapeutic Massage
 Rental of 2 Pairs Cross Country Skis
 Rental of 2 Pairs of Snowshoes

DONOR

Earl Phillips
 Nola Gerrard
 Jean Lippert
 Sonny LaSalle
 Toddy Perryman/Patrick Leonard
 Toddy & Pat
 Annie Creighton
 Bill McCrum
 Vicki Angus
 Jan & Dan Driscoll
 Mel Mooers
 Rae Dennis
 Bob Schumaker
 Glen Gilmore
 Sula Store
 (same)
 Ed & Ann Curran
 Annie Creighton
 Joyce Johnson
 Kay Fulton
 Bob Caphanna
 Pat Hastings
 Joan Cox
 Mary Ellen Reese
 Linda Stout
 Linda Stout
 Judy LaSalle
 Marge Lewis
 Michel Spurgin
 Valley Bike
 Valley Bike

WINNER

John Horwich
 Jean Lippert
 Linda Oeters
 Mel Mooers
 Bill Stout
 Joan Cox
 Michael Spurgin
 Nola Gerrard
 Nancy Maruska
 Barbara Schumaker
 Marge Lewis
 Jean Swan
 Leo Joron
 Mary Ellen Reese
 Murray Cox
 Sula Store Toddy & Pat
 Jim Swan
 Lou Lippert
 Ed Curran
 Pat Hastings
 Annie Creighton
 Judy LaSalle
 Steve Slocum
 Kay Fulton
 Dan Driscoll
 Joyce Johnson
 Hazel Pfluger
 Norma Gilmore
 Bill McCrum
 Paul Maruska
 Ed Hastings

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, 2005 - Oct. 31, 2006

MAIL TO: Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club
 P.O. 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 _____

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Vice-President Mel Mooers	961-3163	
	m.mooersmt@juno.com	
Treasurer Jeane Lippert	642-3379	
	jeaneenaej@juno.com	
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Programs Bob & Barbara Schumaker	363-0364	
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Publicity Diane Williford	363-6290	
Races Tony Neaves &	375-0852	
	Annie Creighton	
	montannie2@yahoo.com	
Trails Gordon Reese	642-3007	
Webmaster Pat Patterson	363-4192	
	CLP@bitterroot.com	
Website http://www.bitterrootxcskiclub.net		
Warming Hut Reservations (USFS Wisdom)	689-3371	

Dennis, continued from page 1

Second, a Forest Service saw crew felled over 800 hazard trees along the ski trails at Chief Joseph this fall to improve the safety of skiers. Trees with large mistletoe brooms were dropped to keep the snow that accumulates on the brooms from falling on a skier or the volunteers as they groom the trails. Our plan is to salvage these trees in the summer of 2005 and make use of this wood.

We have also made some real progress this summer on creating a new agreement between the three National Forests and the Nordic Ski Club. This week, we are setting down to review the Challenge Cost Share document and see if it meets everyone's needs and is a document we can all sign.

In the past we have had both Challenge Cost Share agreements to cover the Gordon Reese Cabin construction and Volunteer Agreements to cover the trail grooming. In the future we hope to have one document that will serve to cover grooming and other activities on the trail system. We have several good frank and constructive meetings with your club leadership to hammer out an agreement.

Under the agreement, the club would obtain workman's compensation insurance for the volunteers thus greatly reducing the exposure of the Forest Service to injury claims. This is important to the Forest Service as we are self insured and any injury or accident would come directly out of our operating funds for recreation and trails in the coming years. I want to point out that we have a great safety record which is a credit to the grooming crew.

The agreement also eliminates the need to use a Forest Service vehicle to tow the grooming equipment to the parking lot. This use of a government vehicle also exposes the Forest Service to liability and has become unpopular in some quarters and has been the subject of several congressional inquiries and comments from people critical of what they view as "preferential treatment of cross country skiers". They point to the fact that in Montana, snowmobilers have a system under which a good deal of the cost of snowmobile grooming is paid for by users. I know how this makes you feel, but it is the world we live in and this agreement will help to resolve these concerns and reduce liability.

We have also modified the agreement from first review, to keep Tort Claim liability on the Forest Service, and shift the burden of some of the expenses of grooming to the agency.

I spent today at a budget meeting where our preliminary Forest budget is down \$2.5mm. We hope to see and frequently do see additional funds during the year as the federal budget is allocated out to the Forests; however all the National Forests in Montana are going to have to tighten their belts. If you watch the news and read the papers you can understand why.

In the long term I hope we can work out a system to increase user fees at the Gordon Reese cabin to pay for the grooming and the vehicle that is used to tow the equipment to the trailhead. I am exploring a fee for people using the cabin in the winter in excess of the two hosts that are currently trading there work for the use of the cabin. Effectively it would be a guest fee. These funds would go directly back to the club through the Challenge Cost Share Agreement to pay for the cost of gas and vehicle rental. Summer rental receipts; currently pay for propane, toilet pumping, cleaning materials and supplies.

I hope to attend one of your future club meetings to review these proposals with you and answer other questions that you might have. By then the Challenge Cost Share Agreement should be in place and I want to hear your thoughts on the winter user fee.

I am excited about the upcoming season. I hope you have a great holiday season. See you on the trails. Once again I would like to thank those of you who work to make the Chief Joseph trail system and the Gordon Reese Cabin the fine facilities that they are.

DENNIS HAVIG
Wisdom District Ranger
Wisdom Montana

TONY'S TIPS by Tony Neaves

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED "KICK"?

Probably the most misunderstood term used while discussing nordic skiing is the kick part of the kick and glide. Are we talking about a kick like a soccer player would do, or in the other direction like what a mule would do? Actually, it should be like neither example! The kick is what is happening when the ski is pressed DOWN to engage the grip wax or grip zone (fish scales). Engaging the wax or scales into the snow enables us to stride forward and maintain momentum, otherwise known as glide.

The kick is created by a combination of slightly dropping your weight while straightening your leg at the same time. Think of the motion required to do a one legged hop forward. At the moment of greatest pressure on your foot is when the ski will have the most potential grip to the snow. This gives us a solid platform to stride forward with onto the other leg.

Where most people have trouble (slipping) is when they wait too long to initiate the "kick" down, and/or they try to push back on the ski after it has gone behind the hips. What happens here is that your weight is not in the right place to be able to engage the wax or scales into the snow. Timing is a very important part of it, as well as the tempo.

When climbing hills, the kick needs to be sharper and short in order for the ski to stick. Long, slow strides will not work and you will find yourself slipping out in frustration. Again, try to remember the ski only grips when it is right under your hips with all your weight on one ski at a time. As soon as you have to slow down or stop on an uphill, you will lose grip. The same will happen when you begin to do the slightest herringbone, at which point you will need to rely solely on ski edge pressure and a lot of arm strength!

There are other factors affecting kick like the camber (arch) of your skis. Camber is what enables you to glide up off the kick wax or scales. Without it, you would have a very slow ski which would drag constantly on the wax or scales. If your skis are too stiff for your body weight it will take more effort to stick the wax down onto the snow. On the other hand if your skis are too soft in camber, the grip zone will drag on the snow. This may make climbing easier, but you will not get to experience that pure and exhilarating thing called glide!