



# SKI TRACKS

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



JANUARY 2012

## JANUARY MEETING

January 12, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church  
1220 West Main Street, Hamilton

### PROGRAM

#### WHAT'S NEW IN SKI GEAR?

It's always good to keep up with the trends so this month Randy and Kerri Leavell, owners of Valley Bicycle and Ski Shop, will show us some of their new equipment for Cross Country Skiing. They will be glad to answer all our questions on the latest gear not only in skiing, but bicycling as well. And, they will have some good tips for us on ski prep and after ski stretching.

**Reminder!** Assistance from the Forest Service, with funding for trail and cabin maintenance at Chief Joseph, is in direct proportion to the number of people using those facilities. The data used by the Forest Service is taken from the sign-in records originating at the beginning of the trails at the parking lot. Therefore, Please sign in at the prominently-colored box every time you ski at Chief Jose and be sure to include the number of skiers in your party.

### President's Message

As I complete my first year as president of our Ski Club, a couple of things strike me. First, and foremost, is just how much I've learned over the last 12 months about the Club and its history. Much of what I've absorbed has come from long-time members willing to share their knowledge. But many of the details came from hours of searching through old newsletters, newspaper articles, and financial records. I still have a lot to pick up and would appreciate any historical (or other) information you have to share.

Another thing which became obvious to me is that there is a core group of special people who have gotten this Club to where it is today. Many of those same people are still active behind the scenes helping with the

day-to-day things which keep the Club functioning. They all deserve our unending respect. A special "thank you" goes to Gordon and Mary Ellen Reese plus Ed and Pat Hastings for their extraordinary driving force and for not giving up when, at times, things looked bleak during the early years.

Of course new people are beginning to volunteer their time to the Club but more are always needed. We all have lives outside of the Club and it's sometimes difficult to find the time to volunteer. But if you can, we can use your help.

The main task of our Club is to groom the trails at Chief Joseph Pass for cross-country skiing, both for Club members and for the general public. Everything we do revolves around that in one way or another. We always try to have fun along the way and, amazingly enough, that's not very difficult to do. I've never worked with a more fun group of folks and am enjoying myself immensely.

Grooming takes money and plenty of it. Fortunately the Club records show that, as a group, we've gotten progressively better at raising money. Every time a large expense has come along, the money has been found. As we continue to grow and the cost of living continues to increase, we'll have to remain focused on raising money.

The RTP grant we just received will certainly help defray our costs over the next couple of ski seasons, but we still require other funding sources. Each of our fund raisers, so far this year, has been more successful than ever before and it looks like the upcoming Extravaganza will outdo all those in the past. Our financial future is looking good.

We now have the Roller-Compacter, the purchase of which was authorized at the December meeting. Its addition to the groomer's arsenal of equipment will mean they're able to keep the "base" well compacted throughout the season.

You probably noticed the groomers have been setting four tracks on a section of the Continental Divide Trail close to the Cabin. That is proving to be quite popular as a "zone of instruction" for parents with small children. The groomers are also setting a double track around the full length of the Solitude Trail. People have been skiing that section of trail side-by-side for years. Now they have tracks. Good call, guys!!

If it seems like our Club has been receiving more publicity over the past several weeks, it's because Jim Greenfield, our new Publicity Coordinator, has been

hard at work renewing old contracts and making new ones. Good publicity and recognition of our Club's work in the community will be vitally important in the future as we attempt to attract new members and raise money. Thanks, Jim!

You might be interested to know that we now have a new Facebook Page. For those so inclined, you can find it by searching Facebook for the Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club. This is an experiment (with no monetary cost) to discover if it helps us communicate with each other and maybe attract new members. We don't expect everyone to use Facebook (I'm a holdout) but it's worth a try.

Deb Duffy, our Club's new secretary, is heading up the Extravaganza Committee this year with help from "The Two Linda's," Stoudt and Hoyt. This year's prizes include a night for four (4) at the Cabin (Paul Sharp's gourmet dinner included), a night for two at Triple Creek, choice of a night for two at either The Darby B&B or the Jackson House, a gift certificate for dinner at The Wild Mare, and a complete cross-country ski package from Bob Ward's. With such a wonderful set of prizes and publicity help from Jim Greenfield, I expect this year's event to be the Club's most successful fund raiser ever!

Purchase your tickets early, and often!!

/s/ Mike Hoyt

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## Trail Report — Be Careful What You Ask For!

After a few weeks of little or no snow, the weather gremlins made up for their frugality with 20 inches of heavy, wet snow. The snow depth varied around the Chief Joseph domain. Adding to the difficulty was the wind that helped put seven trees across the trails. Wading through snow that measured our inseams added another bit of difficulty to clearing the trees (at least two were forked trunks) from the trails.

Jim Aronson made a pass up and down Joseph Creek and around the Lower Loop Trail. He also put the emergency cache in place at the bottom of Banshee. Randy Leavell joined with his roller to help pack the new snow. Mike Hoyt filled in for John Love on one of the machines. Mike did a creditable job, for a rookie, in what I consider one of the toughest snow situations we've encountered.

Despite the slow going, we managed to get over all of the upper trails but did not attempt Banshee and Middle Forks trails. We considered that darkness and traction problems in the heavy snow made that unwise.

Snow continued to fall with temperatures in 28-32 degree range. At the end of the day, we figured that an additional 4-5 inches had fallen.

/s/ Mel Holloway

## Free Ski Lessons

The annual ski lesson day is Saturday, January 21, 2012 at Chief Joseph. These lessons are open to the public and all levels of expertise are welcome. This program of instruction has proven to be especially useful to beginners.

And there is, of course, a need for experienced skiers to help teach. Those interested in serving as instructors are to contact George Corn, 363-1163, or email [gcorn@bresnan.net](mailto:gcorn@bresnan.net). There will be a meeting of instructors on Wednesday, January 18 at 7:00 p.m. Location to be announced later.

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## 19<sup>th</sup> Chief Joseph Extravaganza Raffle on Fast Track for Grooming Funds

In addition to Chef Paul Sharp's fine cuisine, including a four-person gourmet dinner experience comparable to your memory's recollection of the best dining you have ever had and coupled with a night at the elite Gordon Reese Chateau, this year's prizes once again include a spectacular night for two at the Triple Creek Ranch luxury resort with dinner, libations and breakfast! Newly featured this year from Bob Ward & Sons is a complete cross-country ski package including skis, bindings, boots and poles valued at almost \$400. Bob Ward went beyond our request by offering completely different packages, depending on whether a lady or gentleman is the winner. Rounding out the selection is your choice of a night for two generously provided by Club member Inge Peterson, at her businesses, "The Darby Bed & Breakfast" or at the "Jackson House in Jackson." Pam Kaye, owner of The Wild Mare Restaurant in Corvallis, has graciously donated a dinner gift certificate. Tickets are still only \$1.00 or six for \$5.00. New innovative marketing specials at 12 for \$10 and 24 for \$20 are also available this year! If successful, next year may see a 30 for \$25 package. Remember to thank these sponsors with your appreciation and by patronizing their businesses.

Tickets will be available at 17 new locations this year bringing the total to 25. Seven of the new locations are in Missoula and two in Salmon, both areas had no selling locations last year. Prizes and ticket selling locations will be widely promoted with 200 large posters and 500 fliers throughout the Bitterroot Valley, Missoula and Salmon. As a proven selling incentive, the prize for the business selling the most tickets is once again a coveted night at the Gordon Reese Cabin. Your purchases through these strong supporters of the Club would be most appreciated.

Tickets will also be available in the parking lot on Saturday, January 21, when the Club hosts the annual nordic Ski Lessons at Chief Joseph Pass Ski Trails Area. Tickets will be for sale at the January and February

meetings, as well as at the Gordon Reese Hut. The drawing takes place at the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting so make your plans to attend and bring your checkbook to participate in the final buying frenzy. Mel Mooers was a Cabin night winner twice in past years with an aggressive ticket-buying strategy. Bring your elbow pads to even up your chances in the ticket line that night.

This is our main fund-raising event to stuff the treasury for on-going expenses to fuel, maintain and operate equipment for grooming the many miles of tracks

each week for the benefit of anyone and everyone who enjoys our fine Nordic ski trails. Now is the time to encourage your friends and those new faces you meet on the trail to buy tickets to help us make this the best **EXTRAVAGANZA** ever. Contributions, in addition to ticket purchases, are always welcome, too.

For those interested in purchasing tickets via e-mail, contact Earl Philips. For others wanting more information or to purchase tickets over the phone, contact Linda Stoudt @ 777-5958 or Deb Duffy @ 821-2276.

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## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

December 8, 2011

**President Mike Hoyt called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.** There were 56 people present. This was the annual Winter Potluck so dinner was first on the agenda.

**Membership Report:** Jack Losensky reported that we now have 301 members. He also informed the membership that he and Barb would no longer be doing memberships and that Earl Philips would be taking his place. Mike thanked Jack and Barb for doing such a good job.

**Treasurer's Report:** Reine Hilton reported: Income \$1,888; Expenses \$3,974

### Upcoming Events & Items of Interest:

Mike announced that he had just received a letter notifying him that the Club has been approved for a grant of approximately \$40,000 from the Department of Natural Resources. The funds will be for reimbursing the Club for the costs of grooming over the next few years.

Mike introduced Richard Stone who will head up a kids program and coordinate volunteers for the following events:

Skiing at Skalkaho on Tuesdays from 4 to 5

Jan 10, 17, 24 & 31 and Feb 7

An Early Out Field Trip to Chief Joe for 20 to 25 4<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> graders

Please contact Richard at 642-9648 to volunteer.

Mike introduced Jim Greenfield who has agreed to be the publicity coordinator as well as the map coordinator. Mike said that Jim did the majority of the work on the map. Jim reviewed the new map and explained a number of its features such as 50 ads and coupons; non-area tracks with gps readings, color and larger format. Over 2,000 have been distributed already and the ads netted about \$3,000 putting us \$500 ahead. Jim thanked Deb Leick, Eva Meng and Betty Rhodes for their help.

**Trail Report:** Mel Holloway reported that the trails are in excellent shape but there has not been any new snow for a while now. He said that they had gone down Middle Fork and Joseph Creek but will wait for more snow before doing more below. He introduced the groomers at the meeting: Joe Navarro, John Love, Kelly Zeiler. Jim Aronson is the other team leader. He thanked Tony and Randy for their time and use of their equipment. He also thanked Ginny Deck, Reine Hilton, Jan Driscoll, Marg Johnson and others who helped track the lower trails.

Mike raised the issue of purchasing a roller like the one used by Randy and Tony. The groomers felt that it compacts the snow more solidly and makes working with new snow much easier. Mel had recommended purchasing one. They cost \$1,650. There was discussion. Randy explained how the rollers work. It was moved and seconded that the Club approve the purchase. The motion was approved unanimously.

Sonny LaSalle informed the Club that the pine beetle devastation has just begun. For every dead tree seen this year, there will be 14 by next year. We need to get the Wisdom District to put together a plan to address all of the dead and dying trees. The Bitterroot District is doing so at Lost Trail.

There had been complaints to Mike about the electric pink color he painted the “sign in” box. He said he did it to help with the counts the Forest Service needs to do this year and he promised to change the color next year. He said that the Forest Service is considering funding another toilet at the trail head. Kay Fulton suggested that they use any additional money to fund someone to clean the existing toilet and that the Club should not continue to clean that toilet since it is such a public facility. Additionally, she suggested that hosts (Thurs or Fri) could be requested to clean the toilet at the cabin. Mike will follow up with the Forest Service.

**Program:** Steve Slocomb presented a very interesting program on the Hiawatha Trail, a “rails to trails” project. His descriptions of the tunnels and trails were very entertaining.

**NOTICE:** If you notice that the cabin needs any supplies (or maintenance) make it a point to call Paul Sharp at 406-531-0108 and alert him. Thank you.

### 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, 2011 - Oct. 31, 2012**

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 \_\_\_\_\_

### BITTERROOT XC SKI CLUB

President	Michael Hoyt	360-3803
	<a href="mailto:michael.hoyt@gmail.com">michael.hoyt@gmail.com</a>	
Vice-President	Earl Philips	369-0073
	<a href="mailto:philips@montana.com">philips@montana.com</a>	
Treasurer	Reine Hilton	375-1952
	<a href="mailto:hilton@mcn.net">hilton@mcn.net</a>	
Secretary	Kay Fulton	642-3794
	<a href="mailto:kayinmt@cybernet1.com">kayinmt@cybernet1.com</a>	
Membership	Jack Losensky	961-3757
	<a href="mailto:losensky@wildblue.net">losensky@wildblue.net</a>	
Newsletter		
Editorial	Pat Leonard	961-4959
	<a href="mailto:toddypat@bitterroot.com">toddypat@bitterroot.com</a>	
Production	Shermans	961-3355
Mailing	Barbara Losensky	961-3757
	<a href="mailto:losensky@wildblue.net">losensky@wildblue.net</a>	
E-mail	Reine Hilton	375-1952
	<a href="mailto:hilton@mcn.net">hilton@mcn.net</a>	
Programs	Ginny Deck	961-4829
	<a href="mailto:gindeck@cybernet1.com">gindeck@cybernet1.com</a>	
Instruction	George Corn	363-1163
	<a href="mailto:gcorn@bresnan.net">gcorn@bresnan.net</a>	
Trails	Mel Holloway	381-1334
	<a href="mailto:tromper@bitterroot.com">tromper@bitterroot.com</a>	
Trail Map	Jim Greenfield	363-2110
	<a href="mailto:jkgreenfield@q.com">jkgreenfield@q.com</a>	
Webmaster	Toddy Perryman	961-4959
	<a href="mailto:toddypat@bitterroot.com">toddypat@bitterroot.com</a>	
Website	<a href="http://www.bitterrootxcskiclub.net">http://www.bitterrootxcskiclub.net</a>	
Warming Hut Reservations		689-3371
	(USFS Wisdom)	