



# SKI TRACKS

Newsletter of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club

Box 431 • Corvallis, Montana 59828

March, 2004



## EDITOR'S NOTES

### **An Open Letter of Gratitude by Daniel G. Dodds:**

"I'm overwhelmed by the way so many people responded to my physical ordeal that took place on Vista View trail. Diane & Gayla were the first to arrive and attended to me along with my friend Terry until a man returned with the sled and sleeping bag. Meanwhile Sean, his wife & daughter stopped and gave me two jackets to help me stay warm and their cell phone for emergency use. Somebody contacted Lost Trail's emergency team and requested assistance. Halfway back to the parking lot, after being pulled by people unknown to me, snowmobiles show up and take me the rest of the way. There are not one, but two, ambulances awaiting my arrival. I felt so taken care of all along the way that words can't express my deepest appreciation and sincerest gratitude to each and everyone who participated in my "rescue". Though I declined the use of the ambulances, please know that I'm doing well, and slowly but surely getting back my stamina and well-being. My world is a better place knowing that these loving and caring people are just around the corner. A big kiss and hug to everybody who helped".

## **February Meeting Highlights**

**February 2, 2004**

**By Kay Fulton**

President Sonny LaSalle called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Approximately 82 people were in attendance.

### **Treasurer's Report by Jean Lippert:**

Income, \$792.00; Expenses, \$867.81; Checking, \$3,355; Savings, \$6,592. Some funds will be moved from checking to savings. Someone deposited \$187 into the checking account without informing Jean. Please let her know if you did it and what it is for. Membership Report by Leo Joron: Leo reported that membership is at 415.

### **Old Business:**

Working with the Forest Service: Sonny elaborated on information in last month's newsletter regarding "Cost Share" and possible future expenses. Apparently, in the beginning of the ski area, for six years there was no volunteer agreement and then for 8 years there was one. During that time there were no problems, law suits, accidents, etc. Now, with cost share, the Club would need to purchase Workmen's Comp and Tort Liability. The Forest Service does not want to continue the volunteer agreement and therefore

## **MARCH PROGRAM**

**Thursday, March 11 at 7 P.M.**

**First Presbyterian Church,  
1220 West Main Street in Hamilton.**

### **Slide Presentation of Denali Climb**

Ever wonder what the world looks like from the highest mountain in North America? Come and find out at the next meeting of the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club as Bob Schumaker gives an exciting slide presentation about his climb of Denali. The party of 11 ascended Denali via the West Buttress route, but only 6 of the 11 climbers reached the 20,300 ft. summit. Despite doing the climb in May they experienced a temperature of minus 22 degrees on the summit day, topping off this memorable 3 week adventure. For more information call Diane Boyd at 443-5227.

**Note: Summer reservations for the warming hut will run June 1 through Labor Day weekend which is Sept. 6. Reservations will be taken on April 12, 2004 beginning @ 7:00 a.m. Call 689-3371.**

Arlee Staley, BMC, Beaverhead-Deer Lodge NF, Wisdom RD, (406) 689-3243. [astaley@fs.fed.us](mailto:astaley@fs.fed.us)

think they will be out from under any liability. The Club has begun investigating insurance and so far has found only one company that would cover us. Sonny and Gordon have done a national search. The company is House of Insurance with Bill Rummel. It would cost about \$750 per year. Another company refused because we do not charge and said that all the people using the area should sign releases. The Cost Share would help with this expense. They are working closely with the Forest Service on this. Apparently the Idaho Forest Service has already applied for a grant which would be a 50/50 split on a new grooming machine. We have not heard from Montana on this. Currently the Club is working with four different Forest Service districts: Bitterroot, North Fork, Beaverhead/Deer Lodge and Wisdom.

### **Planning Committee on Fees Report by Leo Joron:**

Findings and Suggestions included: 1. Need for new grooming machines; approx. \$8000 each; 2. Set up an equipment reserve fund to maintain equipment; 3. The \$6000 in savings could be a basis for the equipment fund. 5. Income from Ski Races, Extravaganzas and life memberships would

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## HIGHLIGHTS *(continued)*

be for the equipment fund; 6. Dues are the same as 14 years ago. Suggest increasing each category by \$5.00 beginning 2004-2005. 8. Set up a "Ken Fortney Lifetime Support" level, which would be above and beyond the existing life membership.

**Discussion and Motions followed:** Norma Gilmore motioned to raise the Lifetime membership to \$1,000; Hilton Gardner amended that to \$500. This motion was passed. Ed Curran made a motion to raise each category of membership to \$5.00; Joe Navarro seconded that and it was passed. As for the Ken Fortney Fund, it was agreed that the Committee should explore this further now that we have adjusted the fees.

### **Trails Report by Gordon Reese:**

The Forest Service has agreed to evaluate the "hazardous trees" on the edges of the trails which can dump heavy amounts of snow and fall on the trails. A count has been made on Lost Trail Loop alone and 460 trees were identified to be within 8 feet on either side of the trail that would need to be removed. The Forest Service would handle this cutting and will continue to analyze the area.

**Program:** Diane Boyd presented an outstanding slide show on Wolves in Romania. Diane was in Romania in 1994 and shared some fascinating information on the country, people and wildlife.

## TONY'S TIPS

### SKI LESSON REMINDERS

Every year in late Jan. the club offers free cross country ski lessons to the general public. From what we can see, this has been a worthwhile endeavor and the turnout was great this year. Whether you are a student or an instructor (or just a skier!), there's lots to learn about proper ski technique. Here are a few general and basic "pointers" that may make your skiing experience a little more pleasurable and/or exciting! Getting started: Make sure you are dressed properly – i.e. utilize wicking layers against your skin, then insulative layers, wind protection if necessary, proper head coverage, etc. Hydration is of utmost importance and this does not include the cup of coffee you drink on the drive to the trailhead! Loosen up by either doing a few simple stretching exercises or by starting off nice and slow.

Gliding on the flats: **WEIGHT TRANSFER!** This means that as you ski along, you are committing your full weight from one ski to another. As you glide, you are balancing for as long as you can on one ski before "kicking" down and transferring the weight up and

over onto the other ski. You can really get a feel for this by skiing without poles on level terrain. Try to glide for as long as possible on each ski. **POLE UTILIZATION** - proper skiing technique means you are using all four limbs! Arm swings should be pendulum-like with relaxed shoulders. Plant your pole beside your foot and push off from that pole at the moment you are transferring your weight from one ski to the other. Follow through by "flicking" your hand back past your hip, then let it relax a second before the pendulum swings back up for the next pole plant.

Going uphill: As you start to climb up a hill, you will need to quicken your tempo and step down harder onto your waxless pattern or wax pocket to engage it into the snow. This will enable you to climb up without the dreaded slipping ski. The other contributing factor to slipping is whether or not your body is in the right position. It is imperative that your upper body remain upright and that you "pop" the waxless pattern or wax pocket straight down under your full weight, one ski at a time in order to get a good grip. There is a tendency to lean forward at the waist which will put your weight too far forward and you can not fully engage the pattern into the snow and therefore you can not get a solid kick. Your back could also end up getting very

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## Membership Renewals / DUES

**Annual Memberships EXPIRE November 1!**

**Renew your membership now!**

INDIVIDUAL - \$10 • FAMILY - \$20

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL – \$25

SUPPORTING FAMILY – \$35

LIFE MEMBER – \$100

### Membership Dues

**Nov. 1, 2003 - Oct. 31, 2004**

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 \_\_\_\_\_

sore, so it is best to keep your upper body upright. Some hills get so steep, you can no longer go straight up (no matter how sticky of wax or how aggressive your waxless pattern is) so you will need to do a herring-bone. Just take your time, weight your poles properly, and get into that rocking back and forth rhythm. We all get to do this - and you have to admit, it does make a pretty cool pattern!

Going downhill: Getting into as LOW and STABLE position as possible will make downhill less intimidating. Practice getting into this position before bombing down a hill. Bend your knees, keep the upper body upright, drop your butt!, and keep your hands and poles low and out to the side. Start on a short hill with a run out until you feel comfortable, then tackle something longer or steeper. If the trail is wide with no set track, you can do a full snowplow to keep your speed in check. If there is a set track, you can keep one ski in the track while the other one is out to the side creating a half snowplow.

These are just a few of the basics that you hear about. Believe me, there are many, many more bits of technique advice out there, as well as many good instructional resources such as videos. One thing about cross country skiing for sure is that it is one of the best forms of exercise (both physical and mental!) AND there is really no end to what you can learn. Enjoy your winter on skis!

## BITTERROOT XC SKI CLUB

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