



UPSLOPE

Newsletter of the PATC

Ski Touring Section

Visit Us On the WEB at <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/>

October 2008

- Next UPSLOPE is November...

Trip Schedule

Work Trip Reports

Ski Trip Reports

STS Ski Fair Starts the 2008 Ski Season

Saturday, November 1 12:30-4:30 PM

PATC HQ — 118 Park Street, Vienna, VA



Eat your heart out, Whitegrass – we've got you beat by a month. The official ski season starts with the STS Ski Fair at the PATC headquarters. The frisky groundhogs predict that this year's winter will be one of the coldest and snowiest in years. Come early for a sacrificial ceremony for Ullr to grant us a long season of deep, white, fluffy snow (lots for Chip, none for the roads). Share tales and photos of your favorite trips. Be among the first to apply for trips scheduled from December 2008 through March 2009. STS trips are a travel bargain, fun, friendly, and led by members with years of experience and lots of stories to tell.

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What's in store?

- * Exciting trip reports from Doug (adventure skiing) and Rob (Yellowstone / New Hampshire – if you haven't signed up, eat your heart out)
- * Meet the trip leaders and share what they have in store for you this year
- * Sign up for the trips before they fill up (“I missed it by *that* much!”)
- * Watch XCzone videos – Ultimate skiing and fun videos
- * Learn simple ski conditioning exercises
- * Learn how to start XC skiing – gear, safety, lessons
- * Renew your membership for another year of skiing and friendship
- * Find out about the latest clothes and equipment
- * Bring in your equipment to the ski swap to sell or exchange—create your own economic recovery program that works
- * Buy the latest ski wear from Open Air Wear
- * Share your favorite yummy at our pot luck

If you'd like to be a part of the Ski Fair or would like to lead a trip, leave a message for Bert at (703) 715-8534.

Where: PATC Headquarters, 118 Park Street, Vienna, VA 22180, across from the Whole Foods and next to Safeway

How to get there: Getting to the fair is easy, but depends upon your starting point! Take the beltway (495 – outer loop from Maryland over Cabin John bridge) to Interstate 66 west in Virginia. Get off at the first exit – Nutley Street north (243 Vienna) exit. Go north just over 1 mile passing two traffic

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Between the Poles; Notes from the STS Chair

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Most of us are happy members of the Ski Touring Section. Like any organization, STS has to grow to remain vital. While the snow is sometimes discouraging, it is important to constantly put ourselves before the public so that others who are, or could be, interested in our sport can learn about us and join in. To that end, I've started a recruitment drive to attract new members to STS. The first step was developing a new membership brochure and a recruiting poster. These materials will help us spread our image to ski shops, outdoor sporting goods stores, other outdoor clubs, social groups, and many other venues at which we



can expect prospective members' eyes to light.

Many thanks to the design skills and willingness of Ralph Heimlich in putting these two documents together. Now it is up to each member to help spread them around and get them seen by folks who could be our next ski partners. Call me to get a supply a brochures to pass out and a poster or two to put up in your favorite haunt. Everyone can do their part in getting the good name and good programs of PATC-STS out where the public can better recognize them. Yours in Snow,

Peggy



Providing ski touring opportunities for all skier levels



**PATC
 Cross Country
 Ski Touring Section**

The Ski Touring Section (STS) is part of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC). Operating since 1974, STS has introduced Washington-area residents to cross-country skiing and provided cross-country ski opportunities for all levels of skiers.

We offer:

- Organized trips to the snow, far and near.
- Instruction on learn-to-ski trips and at ski touring centers at our trip locations.
- UPSLOPE, our newsletter.
- A LISTSERVER communicating information electronically to the cross country skier community about impromptu ski trips, gear, and shopping tips.
- Meetings, socials, and other events.
- Opportunities to lead trips and help run STS
- Spirited camaraderie of an eclectic group of snowy-weather enthusiasts.

Online at:

<http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski>

Contact:

Who here?

STS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL\$ DUE!



Yet another membership renewal period is beginning for the Ski Touring Section of PATC. Memberships expiring in 2008 must be renewed before 1 January 2009 for membership to continue into the upcoming ski season. The countdown is on!

To check your membership status, examine the mailing label on your last UPSLOPE. If you see a four-number field other than 0812 (0912, 1012 etc) you dues have been paid up beyond 1 January and there is no need for you to renew at this time. However, "0812" is the magic indicator that your membership expires when you hear the

strains of Auld Lang Syne in 2008. For those of you receiving UPSLOPE electronically, your expiration date was included in the forwarding email header sent by Ralph our loyal and talented newsletter editor. Since you may not have saved that information, feel free to contact me at dlesar@comcast.net for your dues status.

For a handy membership renewal form with my address and dues amounts, visit <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski> and press the prominent red button on the upper right of the club's home page.

Happy Autumn to all of you and hope that the winter is wintry ...

Doug Lesar
 STS recordskeeper / duesmeister

Ski Fair



(Continued from page 1)

lights. Turn right at the third light onto Route 123 (Maple Avenue). Continue in the right-hand lane for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile or count traffic lights. Turn right at the fourth light onto Park Street. The PATC headquarters is the second building on the left, a red brick two-story structure with parking in front. There is ample parking in the area. It is convenient to park at the nearby SAFEWAY or Whole Foods.

Two Ski Areas in Canada To Consider



Sovereign Lake Ski Area

Six years ago, after 15 years of chasing snow all over the US, I discovered the Silver Star-Sovereign Lake Nordic Trails in British Columbia. These are two intersecting trail systems which total 100 km of groomed trails on the sides and around Silver Star mountain. Lodging is available either in the village of Silver Star—walk in walk out onto trails—or in the village of Vernon. I stay about 2 weeks and usually rent an apartment in Silver Star. In 2005 Sovereign Lake hosted the Nordic World cup. See <http://www.sovereignlake.com/> and <http://www.skisilverstar.com/>

This past summer I biked the 200 km linear trail, also known as Le Petit Train Du Nord in Quebec. The trail passes through the Laurentian area and is maintained for cross country skiing in the winter. In the Laurentians, near Mt. Tremblant, we stayed at a small forested inn, CROISEE DES CHEMINS with a great owner-chef, open summer for cyclists-winter for Nordic skiers.

The inn's owner, Claude, may be contacted at <http://www.alacroiseedeschemins.com/> If any member is interested in leading a trip to either of these sites I can provide further info.

JEAN MIELCZAREK
evenings at 703-280-1007



Sign up for the PATC-ST\$ List \$erve

There is an email list server for announcements and discussions of interest to Potomac Appalachian Trail Club—Ski Touring Section members and friends. This unmoderated list can be used to announce activities which may be of interest to members and can be used during the snow season to organize ad-hoc outings. All mail sent to patc-sts@4gh.net will be automatically forwarded to everyone on the list as email. The list has an automated subscription. To subscribe, send a message to majordomo@4gh.net with the following in the body of your message:

subscribe patc-sts Your Name <your_email@your.isp>

In order to prevent misuse of this facility you will receive a confirmation message which you will need to respond to in order to confirm the subscription.

New PATC Website and Link to PATC-ST\$ Website

PATC has completely redesigned the website. The new site is at <http://potomacappalachian.org/> and a new link to the STS website at <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/> [note the “.us” versus the old “.net”] on this new page for the Ski Touring Center: http://potomacappalachian.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=26&Itemid=41.

Check out the new website!

Give Back To White Grass Trails



If you have not as yet participated in one of the annual White Grass Ski Touring Center's trail clearing work trips, I invite you to consider joining the fun this year in Canaan Valley, November 15-16, 2008 when STS will send a group to help with some of the work. Many of you have probably enjoyed skiing at White Grass and know what a great job they do maintaining their excellent trail system. To prepare for the season, lots of effort needs to be put in to clear the trails of debris, dig out and replace water crossing "bridges," clip low hanging branches and brush growing in the trails, chainsaw dead trees, etc., etc. Each weekend in November, groups including the STS, congregate at White Grass to help Chip Chase, Mike, and their great crew get this work done.

Folks bring their sleeping bags and pads to sleep inside the lodge wherever they can carve out some space, or in tents or vehicles on the grounds - the only time this is allowed. STS members arrive Friday night or Saturday morning,

make sandwiches from White Grass-supplied lunch fixings to take in their daypacks and then set out at about 9 am in small groups with Chip or one of his crew for a full days work. Laura Chase usually fixes a big pot of her sumptuous homemade soup for a snack for returning workers, then we head out for a group dinner at one of the local spots, return to the lodge for conversation over a beer or glass of wine or head to the Purple Fiddle for the great music du jour there, then return to a dark, starry sky and the lodge to recharge the batteries for a slightly shorter day of work on Sunday.

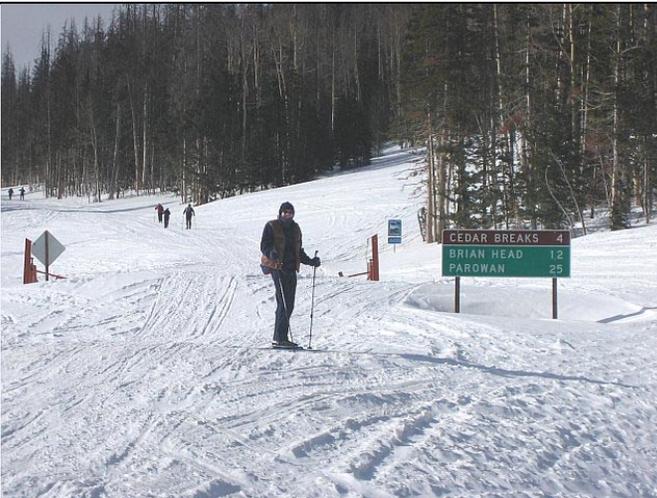
A dedicated group of volunteers is already forming for the weekend -it would be great to have your participation too! This is a wonderful opportunity to become more familiar with the White Grass trail system, or to be introduced to a great area to cross country ski if you are a newbie. Please send me an e-mail or give me a call if you want me to add your name to the list or if you would like additional information. I will try to facilitate carpools with people who live near each other.

Lynn Yates

towson.lynn@gmail.com

410-296-2988 (h)

410-628-2701 (o)



Trip members began skiing north up Utah Route 148 toward Cedar Breaks National Monument. Photo by Rob Swennes

Dry Snow Skiing on the Colorado Plateau

March 2008

by Rob Swennes

The last ski trip of last winter for the Ski Touring Section was a Western excursion to Bryce Canyon National Park and Cedar Breaks National Monument in southern Utah. The trip dates were Tuesday, March 4 through Sunday, March 9. STS sponsored a similar trip to this area two years ago. This year's event was even better. The skiers were: Ann Hitchcock, Barbara Mandula, Mark Delfs, Renate Kloeppinger, Rainer Kurtzel, Steve Bergstrom, Nicole Fall, Margie Perko, Tom Revesz, Jim & Jojie Houghton, Bozena Sarnecka-Crouch, Carroll Ridenhour, Len Henzke, and me as trip leader.

Most of the group flew from the D.C. area to Las Vegas on Tuesday evening. Upon our arrival in Tinsel Town, we gathered our baggage, leased our mini-vans, and spent Tuesday night in a comfortable, convenient motel in north Las Vegas. Wednesday morning after breakfast we drove north on I-15 to Cedar City, Utah and then turned east on Utah Route 14 into the mountains toward Bryce Canyon National Park.

From a skier's perspective, snow or no snow is driven by one overarching principle in Utah – altitude. The elevation at Cedar City is 5800 feet. Not a flake of snow in the air or on the ground. Forty minutes later we stopped in a frozen, snow-covered landscape at 10,000 feet to begin our first skiing. There was no habitation for at least 10 miles in any direction and several feet of packed snow on the ground. We were on our own—and loving it.

We skied northward on Utah Route 148 toward Cedar Breaks National Monument. Route 148 in wintertime is unplowed and used primarily by snowmobilers. We did not see any of them on that weekday afternoon, and traveling on their old tracks was a mixed blessing. At least there was no risk of getting lost. Eventually most of the group decided to head east away from the roadway so as to ski in some unbroken

(Continued on page 8)

2008-2009 Ski Trip Schedule**PATC/STS 2008 – 2009 Ski Trip Schedule**Add \$10 for non STS members. \$9 for membership.

(*) indicates trips requiring PATC membership

Dates	Nov. 14-16 (Friday and Saturday nights)
Trip	White Grass Trail Maintenance and Clean-up
Lodging	White Grass Lodge (sleep on the floor), sleep outside (in tent, or car), stay at campground or motel. Your choice
Description	Help Chip get the ski touring center ready for the WHITE winter wonder land. Great camaraderie, great cause, lot'sa mud.
Leader	Lynn Yates <towson.lynn@gmail.com>
Cost	Your transportation and food

Dates	December 31 - Jan.4 (Wed-Sun, 4 nights) Cancels if no snow.
Trip (*)	Tug Hill Region, Pulaski, New York – (*)
Lodging	Brenda's Motel – 3 bedroom house with full kitchen for our own breakfast, store lunch food etc. and eat dinner (bring your food), lvg rm w/fireplace .There are also 6 motel rooms with private baths and use of house kitchen. We will be using both.
Description	Skiing at Osceola and Salmon Hills touring Centers, as well as Winona State Forest, and Barnes Corners. Enjoy a NewYear's Day wine and cheese party and group pot luck dinner.
Leader(s)	Peggy Alpert & Steve Brickel 301-946-4497 mountainmama15@verizon.net
Cost	\$240 –Lodging only, assuming minimum of 8 participants.

Dates	January 9-11 (2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA.
Lodging	Quality Inn in Somerset, PA in the heart of Laurel Highlands. Rooms are double occupancy, non-smoking with 2 double beds. Amenities are indoor pool, hot tub, exercise room, and restaurant with bar. There are many good, reasonably priced restaurants in the area.
Description	Ski at groomed Laurel Ridge State Park and Forbes State Forest (no charge). Skis can be rented at Laurel Ridge SP. Other ski areas: Laurel Mountain, Kooser State Park, and Hidden Valley (XC and downhill). All levels of skiers can be accommodated
Leader(s)	Carol Ruppel carbrw@verizon.net phone: 202-244-5984
Cost	\$90 per person for lodging only, assuming minimum of 10 participants

Dates	January 9-11 (2 nights) no trip cancellation
Trip	Western Maryland.
Lodging	Stay in the newer Motel section of the 180 year old Casselman Inn in Grantsville, MD. double rooms w/private bath, phone and color television. Original Inn has a parlor, gift shop, bakery and Mennonite dinning room, serving hearty meals. There are other restaurants in the area. Have dinner at the Inn on Friday evening. Dinner on Saturday at a local restaurant and tourist spot. Breakfasts will be taken at the Inn.
Description	Ski New Germany State Park, a rugged backwoods area with 12 miles of trails suitable for skiers of all levels. Many trails are groomed and maintained. Trail fee is approximately \$5. Skis, poles, boots and sleds are available for rent near the park, but participants will save time and money by renting at home and bringing equipment. Other cross country and downhill ski areas are nearby. If conditions are not skiable we will hike in New Germany State Park and Savage River State Forest. Space is limited. There will be a waiting list.
Leader(s)	Larry Doff, 703-615-3195, LDoff@yahoo.com
Cost	\$80 per person for lodging only, assuming minimum of 10 participants.

Dates	January 16-19 (MLK JR. B-day 3 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Quality Inn in Somerset, PA in the heart of Laurel Highlands. Rooms are double occupancy, non-smoking with 2 double beds. Amenities are indoor pool, hot tub, exercise room, and restaurant with bar. There are many good, reasonably priced restaurants in the area.
Description	Ski at groomed Laurel Ridge State Park and Forbes State Forest (no charge). Skis can be rented at Laurel Ridge SP. Other ski areas: Laurel Mountain, Kooser State Park, and Hidden Valley (XC and downhill). All levels of skiers can be accommodated. Weekend of the famous Fire and Ice Festival in downtown Sommerset
Leader(s)	Kathy and Elliot Brumberger kathybrum@comcast.net 301-774-7412
Cost	\$190 for lodging only, for minimum of 10 participants

2007-2008 Ski Trip Schedule (continued)

Dates	January 15 – 20 (5 nights) No cancellation
Trip (*)	Jackson, White Mountains, New Hampshire (*)
Lodging	Condos in the Jackson-Glen area
Description	Ski one of the most scenic venues on the East Coast--the White Mountains of N.H at cross-country ski touring centers such as Jackson (http://www.jacksonxc.org/), Bretton Woods (http://mtwashington.com/xcountryski/) and (http://www.xcskinh.com/bear_notch.cfm) in nearby Bartlett, NH. In case of icy conditions near Jackson, we may ski further north at The Balsams in Dixville Notch, NH (http://www.thebalsams.com/) at a higher elevation. Many backcountry ski and snowshoe trails are in the area, such as AMC lodge at Pinkham Notch
Leader(s)	Rob Swennes 703-532-6101 robertswennes@hotmail.com or Keith Chanon, keithchanon@yahoo.com , 703-752-0245.
Cost	\$450, for ground transportation from the DC area, lodging (5 nights), and in-house food and beverages. Skiers pay for STC fees, any restaurant meals, and incidental costs. Check with trip leaders if you drive your own vehicle or stay only 4 nights. Participants will travel by rented minivan to NH on Thursday & return on Tuesday. Four full days of skiing in NH!.

Dates	Jan 23 – 25 (2 nights) cancels if no snow.
Trip	Canaan Valley / Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Talley Ho Lodge, Thomas, WV
Description	Our main destination will be White Grass Ski Touring Center in Davis, WV., where you may rent skis and also get instruction. There are always Blackwater Falls State Park, the trails around Canaan Valley Lodge and down hill at Timberline.
Leader(s)	Bob Leaf 301-977-6561; roberto.leaf@gmail.com
Cost	\$85 per person (lodging only) for a minimum of 10 participants

Dates	Jan. 23-25 (2 nights) cancels if no snow
Trip	Learn-to-XC Ski Wknd, Laurel Highlands of SW PA
Lodging	Downtown Somerset, PA, ½ hour drive from ski area.
Description	Join a dozen or more students enjoying two days of beginner- level instruction from seasoned volunteers, ranging from dry land to fixed stations to instructional tours, emphasizing safety and fun. Leader will determine if conditions are ski-able for trip or not. Will cancel for poor conditions.
Leader(s)	Greg Westernik at (gmwester@gmail.com), (571-276-7978).
Cost	\$80 fee covers lodging, and instruction. Assuming a minimum of 10 participants

Dates	Jan. 30-Feb. 1 (2 nights) No cancellation
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge Each room has a private bath, phone and color television. Lodge amenities: game room, sitting room with fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub, fitness room. The Lodge restaurant offers breakfast, lunch and dinner
Description	Ski beautiful Blackwater Falls State Park (www.blackwaterfalls.com). There are over twenty miles of trails for beginners and more experienced. Many of the trails are groomed and maintained. A sledding hill is available when snows are sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds are available for rent at the Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center. If conditions are not skiable we will hike in the adjacent Monongahela National Forest (www.fs.fed.us/r9/mnf),
Leader(s)	Larry Doff, 703-615-3195, LDoff@yahoo.com
Cost	\$106 per person for lodging only, assuming a minimum of 10 participants.

Dates	Jan. 30-Feb. 1 (2 nights) cancels if no snow
Trip	Western MD.
Lodging	Oak-Mar Motel, Oakland Maryland
Description	Ski back country trails at Backbone Farm guided by the proprietor; also close to Swallow Falls and Harrington Manor State Parks' trail systems.
Leader(s)	Harvey Walden 301-588-0262
Cost	\$75 per person lodging only, assuming a minimum of 10 participants.

Dates	Feb 5-8 (3 nights) No cancellation
Trip	Canaan Valley, WV
Lodging	Canaan Valley State Park -four-bedroom deluxe cabin with well-appointed kitchen affords an opportunity for homey in-cabin meal(s) if group desires.
Description	One of the most convenient lodging locations in Canaan Valley for skiing at White Grass, the downhill resorts, and points in between. Good trip for eclectic skiers open to a mixture, of cross-country with telemark skiing and/or lessons at Timberline downhill area. Preference given to high skill-level skiers or mid-level skiers with high adventure quotient (contact leader for details)
Leader(s)	Doug Lesar 301-587-8041 dlesar@comcast.net
Cost	\$115 per person lodging only, assuming minimum of 8 participants. Note three-night stay

2007-2008 Ski Trip Schedule (continued)

Dates	Feb. 6-8 (2 nights) cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Quality Inn, Somerset PA in the heart of Laurel Highlands. Non-smoking, double occupancy rooms w/ 2double beds. Amenities are indoor pool, hot tub, exercise room, restaurant with bar. Many good, reasonably priced restaurants are in the area
Description	Join XC ski buddies gliding over 40 mi. of trails at favorites such as Kooser and Laurel Ridge State Parks, Roaring Run Natural Area, North Woods, Laurel Mountain, & Hidden Valley .
Leader(s)	Greg Westernik (gmwester@gmail.com), (571-276-7978)
Cost	\$90 per person for lodging only, assuming 10 person minimum.
Dates	February 13-16 (3 nights) (President's Weekend) cancels if no snow
Trip	Canaan Valley, WV
Lodging	Tally-Ho Motel, Thomas, WV
Description	Our main destination will be White Grass Ski touring Center in Davis, WV. where you may rent skis and also get instruction. There is always Blackwater Falls State Park, the trails around Canaan Valley Lodge and down hill at Timberline.
Leader(s)	Kathy and Elliot Brumberger kathybrum@comcast.net 301-774-7412
Cost	\$128 minimum of 10 participants.
Dates	February 13-16 (3 nights) no cancellation
Trip	Ski -Dance Camp Harmony - Laurel Highlands
Lodging	Camp Harmony: Small lodge with communal social rooms and dormitory-style sleep rooms; 8 meals included.
Description	The 25th Ski-Dance Weekend at Camp Harmony has cross-country skiing, sledding, contra dancing, and music making. Have lots of fun outdoors and indoors in a beautiful rustic setting. Dance to live music in the evening by Dave Weisler and the Avant Gardeners. Bring your talents and instruments to share. Trip begins on Friday evening with an informal potluck supper and dance and ends on Monday with lunch. Camp Harmony has over 100 acres available for cross-country skiing, slopes for sledding and several different types of habitat. Other cross-country and downhill skiing areas are nearby. Check out the website, www.skidance.com for more information and a registration form. The weekend will NOT be cancelled for lack of snow.
Leader(s)	Eliot Appelstein, (301) 984-6855, eliotapplestein@verizon.net & Bob Mathis, (301) 589-7539, talibob@starpower.net
Cost	Adults \$170 (\$160 for STS/Sierra Club members), Children 3-13 yrs. \$75, Infants – 2 yrs \$5
Dates	February 13-21 No cancellations
Trip (*)	Yellowstone / Tetons, Wyoming (*)
Lodging	Kelly Inn in West Yellowstone and Days Inn in Jackson
Description	The principal focus will be on backcountry skiing in both locations. West Yellowstone also offers a superb groomed trail network. There will be 6.5 days of skiing and/or snowshoeing. Skiers will fly to Salt Lake City and rent minivans for the drive up to West Yellowstone. Groomed trails (35 km.) are available on the edge of town in the Rendezvous ski complex (http://www.rendezvouskitrails.com/). An hour's drive north lies Lone Mountain Ranch (http://www.lmranch.com/) with its 85 km. groomed ski trail system plus separate snowshoe trails. Many options exist for backcountry skiing into Yellowstone Nat. Park. In Jackson Hole there are 17 km. of groomed trails at the JH Nordic Center (http://www.jacksonhole.com/info/ski.nordic.asp#cross) and many backcountry skiing options in the Grand Tetons Nat. Park.
Leaders	Rob Swennes, 703-532-6101, robertswennes@hotmail.com
Cost	\$575, includes lodging, breakfasts (8 days) and ground transportation out West. Skiers pay for air transport, other meals, any trail fees, and incidental costs.
Dates	Feb. 20-22 (2 nights) No cancellation
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge. Each room has a private bath, phone and color television. Lodge amenities: game room, sitting room with fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub, fitness room. The Lodge restaurant offers breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Description	Ski beautiful Blackwater Falls State Park (www.blackwaterfalls.com). There are over twenty miles of trails for beginners and more experienced. Many of the trails are groomed and maintained. A sledding hill is available when snows are sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds are available for rent at the Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center. If conditions are not skiable we will hike in the adjacent Monongahela National Forest (www.fs.fed.us/r9/mnf).
Leader(s)	Larry Doff, 703-615-3195, LDoff@yahoo.com
Cost	\$106, per person for lodging, assuming minimum of 10 participants

2007-2008 Ski Trip Schedule (continued)

Dates	February 27 - March 1 (2 nights) No cancellation
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Camp Sequanota, a rustic conference center nestled on a private campus within four miles of our ski area. Non-smoking double rooms, with private baths, adjoining a great room with huge fireplace, ideal for group cohesion. A HEARTY BREAKFAST IS INCLUDED Saturday and Sunday morning. Several wonderful restaurants are nearby, with an "upscale" dinner planned for Friday evening and a "down-home", raucous dinner planned for Saturday evening.
Description	Ski the groomed trails at Laurel Mountain State Park, starting from the Warming Hut, at which snacks are available. Trail fee is approximately \$5. Ski rentals are available nearby, but participants are urged to rent skis in their local area. Skiers seeking more challenging ski areas will find them at Laurel Ridge and Forbes State Parks. Downhill ski areas are also nearby. All levels of skiers can be accommodated. This trip will go, snow or no. If conditions are not skiable, we will hike the Laurel Ridge area. A detailed trip itinerary, prepared in accordance with expected weather, will be provided to all registrants approximately one week prior to the trip.
Leader(s)	Larry Doff, 703-615-3195, LDoff@yahoo.com
Cost	\$60 per person includes lodging and two breakfasts, assuming a minimum of 12
Dates	February 27-March 1 (2 nights) Cancel if no snow.
Trip	Western Maryland
Lodging	Oak-Mar Motel, Oakland MD
Description	Ski back country trails at Backbone Farm guided by the proprietor; also close to Swallow Falls and Harrington Manor State Parks trail systems.
Leader(s)	Harold Datz 703-742-8938 harold.datz@gmail.com
Cost	\$75 per person lodging, assuming 10 participant minimum

(Continued from page 4)

Heavier clouds gathered and replaced the previous clear sky. Soon we had blowing snowfall and even colder temperatures as we skied a large loop and then headed back down Route 148 to our vehicles. In the exposed areas we had to don everything we had brought onto the trail in order to cut the biting wind. The temperature was in the lower teens. It took another hour of driving to reach our lodgings at Ruby's Inn just outside Bryce Canyon National Park.

On Thursday morning after touring the Visitors Center inside Bryce we were of different minds as to where to ski first. So we broke into smaller groups to enjoy the day. I went with Renate, Rainer, and Carroll to check out the red clay hoodoo cliffs for which Bryce Canyon is world famous. We had bought inexpensive wire crampons at the Ruby's Inn general store for use on the trails leading down into the canyons. They were a wise purchase, since even using ski poles for support it was difficult to negotiate some of the sloping ice and mud-covered trails. We hike the Queens Garden trail which had been recommended to us by a park ranger that morning.

After lunch we opted to ski for the afternoon. Within the national park (which lies at 8000 foot elevation) there were many miles of open snow-covered meadows and surrounding conifer woodlands that almost audibly cried out "Ski me!" There were no bad places to ski—so long as one stayed away from the canyon edge. Though no new snow had fallen in Bryce in several weeks, it was easy to set track. This phenomenon would make no sense to those who have only skied in the East. But out West and at higher elevations the snow is, in many respects, dry. Some years ago I argued this point with our son, who has done Alpine skiing in several locations out West. But now I'm a believer. When snowpack at high elevations out West gets above freezing during the day, it forms a crust that is far thinner than the dangerous ice sheets that form in the East. Thus it is often far easier to break through them and set track even in snow weeks old.

The four of us enjoyed exploring Bryce NP and soon reached a barbed wire fence marking the park's boundary. A tree had fallen crushing part of the fence near us, so, given the deep snow, we skied right on through into the Dixie National Forest. We continued our exploration in the gently rolling woods and meadows till reaching a high viewpoint. On three sides we could see the stunning landscape of trees, mountains, cliffs and sky stretching with great clarity 30 or more miles into the distance.

Friday the group opted to ski up at Cedar Breaks National Monument (10,000 ft. elev.). It is an easy 40 minutes drive from Ruby's Inn—

(Continued on page 9)



In time, a fuller compliment of skiers reached this point: Carroll, Ann, Bozena, Steve, Nicole, Jim, Rob, Rainer & Mark photo by Rob Swennes

2007-2008 Ski Trip Schedule (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

assuming there is no snow falling or drifting along the way. But we had a bright blue sky and miles and miles of deep snow-covered terrain to ski in. Most of the skiers stayed together and explored whatever looked interesting in the landscape around them. Several feet of snow were on the ground, and in some shaded spots it was rather powdery. I led the group to some of the locations the group of STS skiers had visited two years before. One of these was a modern vacation home—closed for the winter—with a sun-warmed Trex deck that offered a snow-free spot to enjoy the lunches we had packed. Near the house I spotted a moose and asked others if they could see it. It was in fact a heavy iron sculpture of a moose on the lawn of the house but buried so deeply in snow that only the antlers were visible.

Later near the Cedar Breaks cliffs we stumbled upon a National Park Service tent. We learned later from others in our group that it is manned on weekends by members of the Cedar City, UT Nordic ski club. One of the club's goals is to have some formal cross-country ski trails developed and signed in the greater Cedar Breaks area. Since snow remains at this high elevation until May each year, proper signage should be all that is needed once permission for the trails is obtained. At the end of the day's skiing, Steve Bergstrom and Nicole Fall broke out a couple of bottles of red wine from their van, and we all toasted the day's success.

Though Ruby's Inn has a fine restaurant, there was some rebellion in the ranks regarding eating our evening meals there. The cuisine is – Western, with heavy emphasis on meat and potatoes. There were few alternative places to eat within 30 miles, and those we did track down offered the same kind of food. But in the Inn's general store, some of our skiers found Lean Cuisine meal options much more to their taste. So on evenings a segment of our group opted to microwave dinner in one of the motel rooms and socialize with wine and beer purchased from the store. Everyone was happy.

On Saturday the group chose to ski again in the Bryce Canyon park. We parked and clambered up the 3+ feet of snow along the side of the road to begin our day's trek. Once again we reached the park boundary (another barbed wire fence). It was amusing to see the various techniques used to clamber over (with skis on) this fence half buried in the snow. Barbara Mandula and Jojie Houtman chose to snowshoe that day and were happy doing their own explorations in the area. In early afternoon we regathered at the vans since half the group had arranged to fly back from Las Vegas late that night rather than on Sunday afternoon. Those staying cleared the deep snow from a picnic table nearby and sat down for lunch before more skiing. The rest of us packed our gear and said our good-byes to them.

This was a wonderful trip in every respect. If easy skiing, stunning scenery, guaranteed snow, and the vastness of the West are what you are looking for, Bryce and Cedar Breaks high on the Colorado plateau have it all. The availability of direct flights into Las Vegas plus the ability to do this trip in early March also make it a natural excursion for STS members. With luck, the Section will offer the trip again in March 2010! To see pictures of this Bryce Canyon trip on Kodak Gallery, go to

http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=givist5q_4wxhv176&x=0&y=4dj8zv&localeid=en_US.



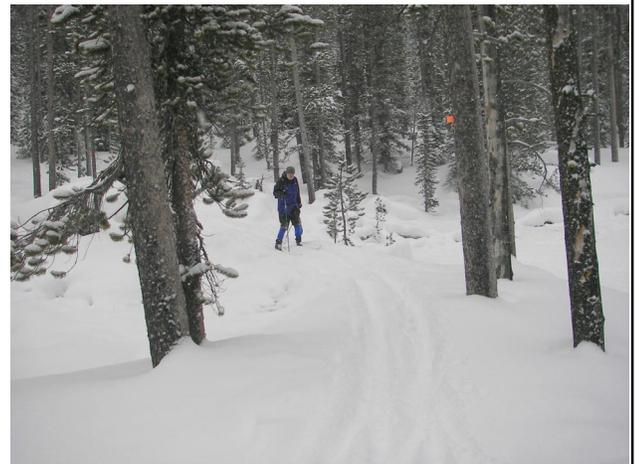
A cold bleak wintry day.
The earth is deep in timeless sleep
Trees without leaf
Earth without flower,
Gone are the pleasures of Summer's warmth.

But wait! There lies a ski trail through the wood.
Beckoning with fresh tracks on glistening snow.
I cannot fathom where it leads,
I do not know what lies ahead.
But the mystery brings magic to the moment;

I am transfixed by all I see.
Thus Winter's death holds vibrant life.
Earth's icy grip yields happy heart.

You who despair of a weary world,
Look for the ski-trail through the wood.
There is wondrous warmth in Winter's chill,
There is joy in a journey to a place unknown.

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PATC-Ski Touring Section
c/o Doug Lesar
2507 Campbell Place
Kensington, MD 20895



To:

PATC Ski Touring Section Membership Form

The PATC/STS provides quality services and benefits to its cross-country skiing members while promoting and supporting the PATC and cross country skiing in general. Whether a novice, recreational, citizen racer or telemark skier, STS has something for every XC skier. Imagine yourself floating on the snow, climbing across hill and dale in the quiet of winter, stopping for lunch in brilliant sunshine on a vista with a view of snow-covered ridges and valleys stretching to the horizon, and then making a descent back to home. Our membership enjoys ski touring in the hills with the comradeship and safety of a group. When you become a member, you receive all issues of the club's newsletter UPSLOPE and other useful information. UPSLOPE is published six times a year by PATC/Ski Touring Section, a non-profit, educational and recreational group of cross-country skiing enthusiasts based in the Maryland, DC, Virginia, PA and West Virginia areas. UPSLOPE provides information about STS trips and events (e.g., Learn-To-XC-Ski weekends, Telemark instructional clinics, and mini-week ski trips). One year membership runs from October 1st through September 30th of the next year. If you join in April or later, your one year membership will run through September of the next year. To insure uninterrupted membership for more than one year, you may provide advance dues for up to three years. To join, select your desired membership category and term from the table below, complete this Form legibly, and send it with a check appropriate to your membership choice (payable to PATC Ski Touring Section) to:

PATC-Ski Touring Section, c/o Doug Lesar, 2507 Campbell Place, Kensington, MD 20895

Membership Classes

Membership Categories	1 Year Only	2 Years	3 Years
Individual	\$ 9	\$17	\$25
Family	\$13	\$24	\$35

PLEASE PRINT or TYPE THE INFORMATION BELOW !!!

Name(s): _____ Request is for: _____ - NEW Membership: _____

Address: _____ Today's Date: _____ - New Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ - Renewal: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Add me to Annual member directory but do not list my: Home Ph.: __ ; Work Ph: __ ; Email: __; Postal Address: __

If checked, add me to STS LISTServ so I can get infrequent, adhoc announcements of local XC Ski activities: __

If checked, add me to STS Bulk Email list so I get official club announcements important to all STS members: __

NEW: If checked, send my UPSLOPE only electronically (no paper copy) to save the club copying and postage: __

STS is an all-volunteer organization. We cannot function without the assistance of our members. If you are interested in volunteering to help STS in any of the following areas, please check the box and you will be contacted:

STS Officer _____ Publicity _____ XC Ski Instructor _____ Web Assistant _____ Ski Trip Leader _____ Special Events Coordinator _____