



# UPSLOPE

## Newsletter of the NORDIC Ski Touring Section of PATC



Visit Us On the WEB at <http://www.patcskitouring.us>

April 2024

### UpComing Attractions In Fall UPSLOPE

- Plans for Ski Fair
- 2024-25 Season Schedule

### Central Oregon Ski Trip 2024

By Ed Johnson

Central Oregon is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise, as my wife Donna and I, are discovering since moving here from Annapolis in August 2023. The Cascade Range divides Oregon into the wet, western region and the dry, eastern region. Bend Oregon (3,500ft), the destination of this STS trip, lies in the dry eastern high desert (snow shadow of the Cascade Range) and just 24 miles east of Mount Bachelor (9,068ft) with its famous alpine and Nordic ski areas.



Ed and Brent break for lunch atop Vista Butte photo by Ed Johnson

Typically, in late February and early March, the 24-mile drive west from Bend to Mount Bachelor parking lot will begin with dry pavement (no ground snow) in Bend and increase to a snow base of 10-feet at Mt



Snow at Mt. Bachelor Bela and Brent photo by Ralph Heimlich

Bachelor. Despite this being an El Nino year, snow conditions were in this normal range. On the arrival weekend, there was an additional 1 foot of snow fall at elevations above 5,500 ft, but by Wednesday and through the remainder of the trip we were very fortunate to have sunny bluebird days with spectacular views.

Along the 24-mile Century Drive there are six [sno-parks](#) (parking areas at ski and snowshoe trail-heads maintained by the Oregon DMV and the US Forest Service). Two sno-parks (Meissner and Wanoga) offer groomed Nordic trails, the other 4

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### APRES SKI PARTY Sunday, April 21, 2024

#### Meeting at 4PM Potluck at 5:30 PM

This is a POT LUCK PARTY: Everyone is to bring a dish or edible contribution that others will enjoy, either beatifically healthful or sinfully rich—Your choice!

The Section will provide beer and wine

**Driving directions:** Capital Beltway to Exit 44, Georgetown Pike, Rt. 193. Turn onto Georgetown Pike inside the Beltway, toward Langley, not outside toward Great Falls. Almost immediately, turn left onto Balls Hill Rd (north toward the River, not south toward McLean). Take the first left off Balls Hill Rd, which is Live Oak Road, a bridge going over the Beltway, and then paralleling the Beltway. Take first left, onto Green Oak Drive. Follow to end of cul de sac, and take the driveway to the left of the large eagle statue/sculpture. Catherine's house has the green roof, number 7035 Green Oak Drive. Her phone is 703-827-0370.

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**FROM THE SLOPES – Chair Notes**

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Hi Nordic Skiers!

I hope you are all well and enjoying Spring as it begins bloom. I like the changing of the seasons but my preference is from Fall to Winter. ☐ We had many Nordic ski trips planned for this season, both locally and across the country, even to the West Coast. It seemed to me that our mid-Atlantic January 2024 was above average and opened the door to some fantastic snow. Our trip to Canaan Valley January 5-7 allowed us to get a good solid day of skiing in at Whitegrass (after a few raindrops the day prior). Greg's trip to Laurel Highlands likely had reasonable conditions and Ralph's Blackwater Falls Cabin Trip had excellent conditions. I even tried to talk Ralph into letting me sleep on the floor of his cabin as all the Davis and Canaan Valley accommodations were booked up. So, I ended up staying at a bed and breakfast south of Canaan arriving in the middle of a snow storm in the middle of no-where (near Bowden, WV). The place is on a farm by the Dry Fork River and a couple of us ended up skiing right out the backdoor the next day all around the farm land and on local trails as the snow was so good. Wonderful views of the Dry Fork River. And, we didn't have to fight the Whitegrass crowd! It was a bluebird day and I recruited some new STS members, I hope. (Will have to check with Doug Lesar, STS Membership Guru). So, if the snow is there, be ready!

Yet, February in the local area was not quite so snowy or cold and things didn't work out as well. Thankfully, we had a few outstanding excursion trips planned and executed with some excellent snow. You will be able to read about Ralph's Lapland Lakes, NY, trip, and Ed's Central Oregon Trip in this edition of the Upslope. We appreciate Ed Johnson's continued association with the Ski Touring Section even after he moved to Oregon from Annapolis and for leading a trip this year! The heart of the STS is our trips and we couldn't do it without our trip leaders. So, please thank them when you see them and consider being a trip leader or co-leader yourself. And, I want to also thank the STS officers as they are the foundation for the club and we wouldn't have it without them! Thank 'em when you see 'em, as well.

I'd also like to invite you all to the 2024 Après Ski event at Catherine Payne's home on Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. We'll have a formal meeting at 3:30 pm and the potluck dinner at 5:30 pm. See the announcement on p.1. I hope you can make it and please bring your pictures on a thumb drive as we'll have a laptop and projector to share the memories. Catherine is so kind to share her home once again. See you there!

Steve  
 STS Chair



**Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Viva! Vienna! Celebration May 25-27**



The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club will be participating in the annual Viva! Vienna! Celebration over Memorial Day weekend this year, May 25 – 27<sup>th</sup>. The Ski Touring Section will host an outreach table in the PATC Headquarters building at some point during the celebration.

Last year, Ralph Heimlich and Steve Jarvis attended and shared about the STS and Nordic skiing and that PATC actually had a ski club! We'll let everyone know the details and potential volunteer opportunities as we get closer.

If interested in volunteering at this event, please fill out this [volunteer form](#) and select an open time slot. Any questions or concerns can be directed to [communications@patc.net](mailto:communications@patc.net).

**Blackwater Falls; February 2-4, 2024 Trip Report**

by Greg Westernik

I cancelled this STS WV February trip due to too much unskiable snow, especially in easier flats and almost no safe downhill directional skiing at Whitegrass Ski Touring Center, and essentially no skiable stuff at Blackwater Falls SP, save for the Sled Hill.

I did a reduced group private trip of 5 STSers (Lynette Linn, Steve Vikell, Dick Simmons, Althea Johnston and myself), down from the original 14 STSer participants. Dick and Steve did most of XC skiing as snow was best above the 4,000 foot level. Alternative activities included but were not limited to: hiking in search of Blackwater Falls SP waterfalls (Lynette found 3), finding a cranberry bog along Yellow Birch trail, snatching snow briefly at the Blackwater Sled Hill and nearby trail, taking a \$5 lift from Canaan alpine ski lodge to Whitegrass Bald Knob area, and doing a naturalist interpretive tour on the Whitegrass-Timberline trail with Chip Chase in tow.

There were snow flurries on Friday from noon thru 5 pm with almost no accumulations and below freezing, then mostly below freezing early in mornings and evenings on the weekend with temperatures approaching 40 degrees in the afternoons. Naturalist Pauline at Blackwater Falls SP was very helpful in confirming the state of signing on the Yellow Birch trail.



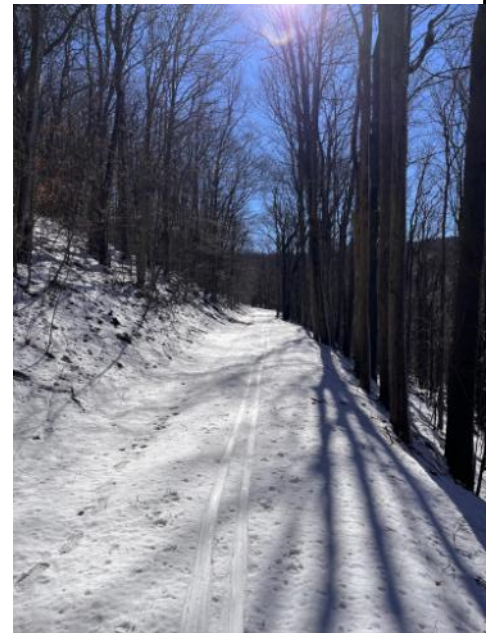
Trail walk Althea, Steve, Lynette, Dick, Chip Chase



Sunlight on Three-Mile Trail photo by Dick Simmons



Apres Ski! photo by Dick Simmons



Three-Mile Trail on February 3 photo by Dick Simmons

**Ski Dance Report**

Ski-dance turned out to be excellent. In recent years due to the poor (or no snow) the weekend should have been renamed the hike-dance weekend. As we drove up Friday night there wasn't any snow in the Laurel Highlands. Just as we entered Camp Sequanota a few flurries began to sprinkle our camp. Much to our surprise the next morning we awoke to about seven inches of snow! We were able to give ski lessons for the beginners at Camp Sequanota. In the afternoon we took the beginners up to Forbes State Forest to Lippo's Loop where the ski conditions were excellent.

The evening program started with a wonderful sing-a-long that was followed by some folk dancing. We had some fantastic musicians and callers. All and all - a good time was had by all.

If anyone wants to assist with teaching next year please let me know.

Bob Mathis

**North Conway, New Hampshire February 12-17, 2024 Trip Report**

By Dick Simmons

Northern New Hampshire has beautiful scenery, including views of snowcapped Mt Washington and numerous Nordic and downhill skiing venues. Jackson Ski Touring Center alone has over 50 trails covering over 100km. January weather in North Conway was marginal for skiing, so Rob Swennes' planned trip did not go out. Four of us (Rob, myself, Ron and Jan Tucker) decided in mid-February that we would do a non PATC/ STS trip to the same area. We met on Monday February 12 and skied the Great Glen trails on February 13. Skiing was good – trails were firm and fast with 100% coverage.

Wednesday, Rob and I skied Jackson STC's Ellis River trail, which follows the river for most of the way. The folks at the lodge told us we could avoid the big meadow next to the lodge (a little icy) by parking at the Red Fox Inn just down the road. It was a good choice but has a hill that was a little challenging to ascend due to the hard packed conditions. Afterward, Rob and I drove to the imposing and historic Bretton Woods Resort for a beer and chowder overlooking the golf course and ski trails. Ron and Jan returned to Great Glen for snowshoeing. That evening Ron and Jan hosted dinner in their condo. Good food and good company.



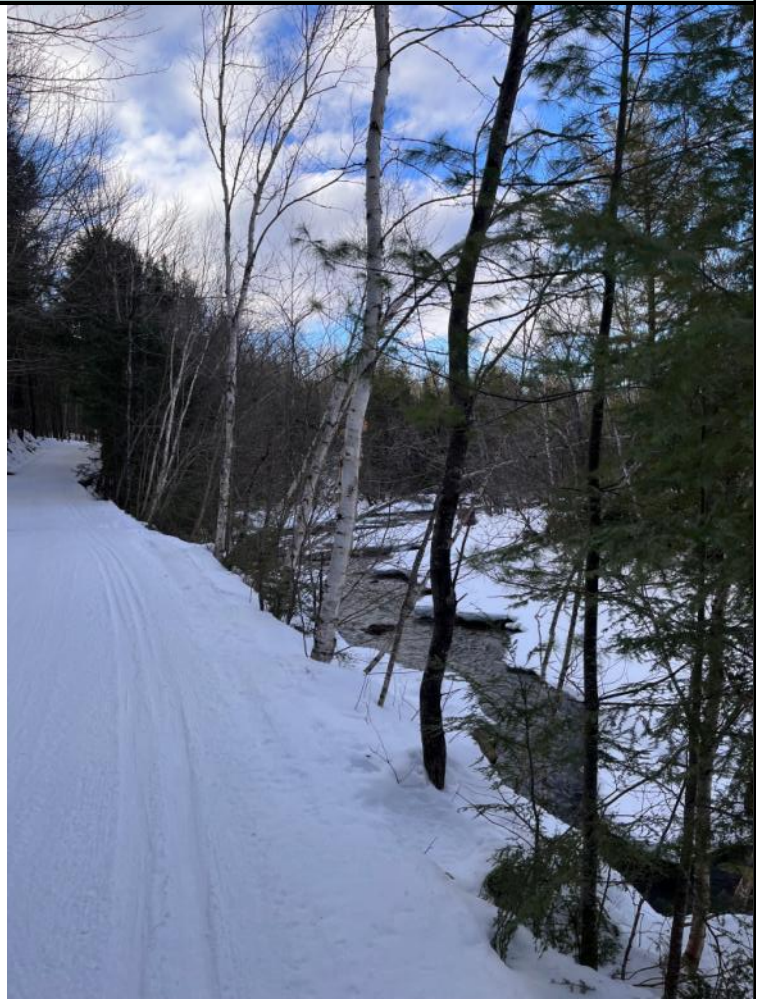
Jan and Ron at Great Glen photo by Dick Simmons

Whitaker Woods, a park right in North Conway. Trails were groomed for skate and classic skiing and well maintained. There are novice, intermediate and advanced trails all thru the forest. This is not a large area, but for a couple hours it was perfect.

A couple of notes on accommodations: The White Trellis Motel appears to be closed. There was no activity the several times we passed by. Rob and I stayed at a Comfort Inn which included breakfast. Prices were reasonable except for Friday night which was double the weekday rate. North Conway has plenty of lodging choices, restaurants and ski shops. The Colonial Motel had reasonably good reviews and looked busy most nights. Golden Gables has a nice appearance from the outside. Eagle Mountain House is a comfortable historic lodge adjacent to Jackson STC. Their clam chowder hit the spot after skiing.

Thursday and Friday, I downhill skied at Attitash which was great – bluebird day on Thursday and 4 inches of powder overnight for Friday. Wind on Friday had shut down most lifts at Wildcat, but had little impact on Attitash.

Saturday I went out at sunrise and skied



Ellis River Trail, Jackson STC photo by Dick Simmons



Rob and Dick at Jackson STC

**Central Oregon (cont.)**



**Ralph and Brent at Ray Benson Sno-Park where the Pacific Crest Trail crosses** photo by Ed Johnson

*(Continued from page 1)*

Sno-parks (Swampy, Vista Butte, Edison, Dutchman Flat) offer well marked backcountry (ungroomed) trails of varying difficulty from novice to expert. The groomed trails at the [Mount Bachelor Nordic Center](#) require you to purchase a ticket.

In 2020, Ralph Heimlich led the [STS Sisters trip](#) staying about 30 minutes northwest of Bend. We joined STS in 2021 and have participated in numerous STS trips led by Ralph. We decided to step-up and lead a trip here in Bend as payback for the wonderful skiing/snowshoeing opportunities we've enjoyed. I encourage you to step-up and lead a trip too.

Ten STSers (Linda Erbe, Lee Greathouse, Ralph Heimlich, Brent LaHaie, Bela Mariassy, Rick Royer, Doug and Marcie Schubert, Edna Trimm, and Barry Weston) joined this trip and flew into the regional airport at Redmond, OR. Five of the 10 STSers rented vehicles

and carpoled the ~20 miles from the airport to Bend. On a clear day the drive from Redmond offers spectacular views of many snow-capped Cascade peaks (Mount Jefferson, Washington, Three-Fingered Jack, and the Three Sisters).



**Doug and Marcie from Swampy Sno-Park** photo by Linda Erbe

Arriving Sunday, grocery shopping was the order of business before the 4pm check-in time at both rental properties. STSers shopped and bought their breakfasts, lunches, snacks, and beverages. Six-dinners were already planned and purchased by Ed and Donna for preparation by the group each evening on an alternating house#1/house#2 schedule. The last evening meal was dinner out on the town at a nearby local eatery ([The Grove](#)).

After checking-in to their respective rental houses, house#2 carpoled the 2 miles to house#1 to eat evening meals as a group. Ed stopped by to greet the group Sunday evening (and each evening thereafter) to recommend day trips. The following day, Monday, everyone went to [Meissner Sno-park](#) (15 miles west on Century Dr). Typically, folks broke into groups of 2, 3, or 4. On Tuesday, most folks went to

[Swampy Sno-park](#) to ski or snowshoe.

On Wednesday 4 of us drove to Santiam Pass where we promptly got stuck in the recent snowfall at [Ray Benson Sno-park](#). Fortunately, we were able to free ourselves and descended to [Upper Three Creek Sno-park](#) and safely parked. While skiing the 5.5-mile round trip to [Jefferson View Shelter](#) we passed two couples on their final day of a [Three Sisters Backcountry Hut to Hut trip](#), a 22-mile 3-day/2-night trip. Something to consider for future trips perhaps. Barry and Rick re-visited Swampy Sno-park to ski this time.

Thursday, brought a range of activities, some folks went to the [High Desert Museum](#) (Ralph and Bela), [Lava Butte](#) (Edna), others like Rick and Barry challenged themselves by summiting [Tumalo Mountain on snowshoes](#); 4 miles round trip with a ~1,300 ft elevation gain. They were rewarded with spectacular views. Ed and Brent, summated [Vista Butte](#) on cross country skis; 4 miles round trip with a 720 ft elevation gain and great views from the trail and summit. Doug, Marcie, and Linda attempted to

*(Continued on page 10)*



**Edna snowshoeing at Swampy Sno-Park** photo by Edna Trimm



**Barry, summit of Tumalo Mountain with Mount Bachelor background** photo by Rick Royer

## Blackwater Falls Cabin Trip January 19-21, 2024 Trip Report

by John O'Keefe

In contrast to many West Virginia trips this season, the snow gods smiled on this trip, perhaps even cackled a bit as the group trickled in through the windy, snowy roads to the well appointed cabin at Blackwater Falls. Our fearless leader, Ralph Heimlich, had delicious bean soup and salad waiting.

Saturday morning the group embarked to ski to several scenic overlooks. The trails were not groomed but one of our skiers, Rick Royer, volunteered to break the trail and delighted in crunching the newly-fallen snow. We feasted on the quiet trail through the forest and admired not just the vistas, but the natural beauty of the woods.

Even with temperatures hovering around 5 degrees, we kept warm as we glided through the terrain. After lunch at the cabin, some scattered to try other trails closer to Blackwater Lodge and a few took advantage of the hot tub and pool there.

Those who came a day early enjoyed the extensive (and groomed) trail



On the trail (Brent LaHaie, Monica and John O'Keefe) photo by Ralph Heimlich

system at White Grass and the warm hospitality of owner Chip Chase. They managed to go on the routes less traveled by to soak in the solitude high above the valley.

Two lovely dinners and interesting conversations made the excursion even more of a treat. A big thanks to Ralph Heimlich for cooking two yummy dinners and arranging such a fine trip.



Slim pickens at the Deluxe Cabins photo by Ralph Heimlich



Toward Pase Point photo by Ralph Heimlich

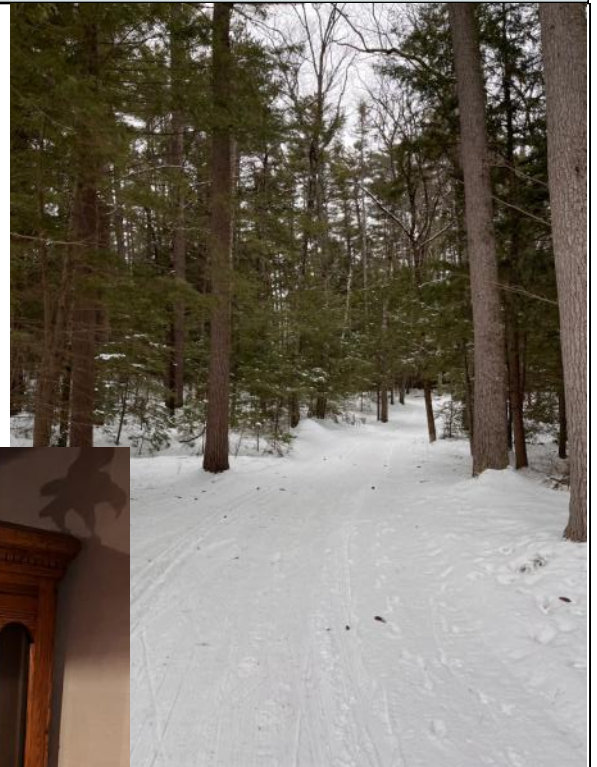


On the Elakala Trail near the Lodge on a snow shoe photo by Ralph Heimlich

**North Conway, NH (cont.)**



**Mt. Washington from Attitash Ski Area** *photo by Dick Simmons*



**Whitaker Woods Trail** *photo by Dick Simmons*



**Phone booth at Eagle Mountain Lodge** *photo by Dick Simmons*

**New Photo Galleries and Video on our Website**



**Ed Johns with his Go-Pro strapped on** *photo by Ralph Heimlich*

New photo galleries and video from this season's ski trips are online at our website. Albums from the Bend, OR, Lapland Lakes, NY, and Blackwater Falls, WV, January trip are posted. There are also two new videos from the Bend trip and a video from the Blackwater trip.

Check them out at <https://patcskitouring.us/photo-gallery/>

While you are there, check out the whole collection of photos and videos from past trips. I especially like the Go-Pro videos produced by Ed Johnson. Ed wears his Go-Pro right on his chest and captures a near-constant stream of action while he skis. His editing skills are impressive and the final product gives a very good idea of what it was like on the trail each day and the trip overall. Good armchair adventure, and very useful when planning a trip to a new area for skiing.

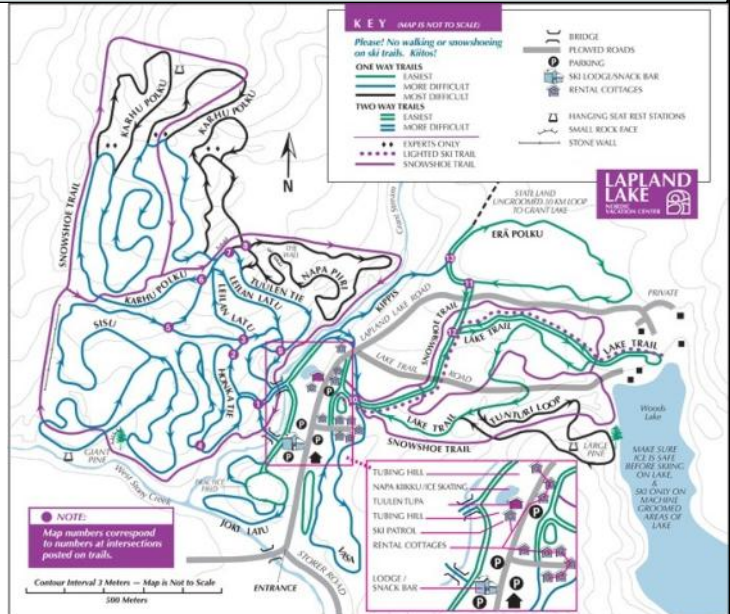
If you have photos or video from a recent trip, send a link to the downloadable source to Ralph Heimlich and I'll put it on the website.

## Another Successful Lapland Lakes Ski Trip

by Ralph Heimlich

The third running of the PATC-STS ski trip to Lapland Lakes was held on February 10-16, 2024, attended by X skiers: Althea Johnston, Brian O’Konski, Joy Saari, Doug and Marcie Schubert, and led by Ralph Heimlich.

Finnish-American Olympic skier Olavi Harvonen founded Lapland Lake Resort in 1978, and designed its trail system. Lapland Lake has 50 kilometers of on-site ski trails, with classic and skate-skiing, plus connecting trails to adjacent off-site wilderness trails, the Northville-Lake Placid Trail, as well as separate snow-shoe trails. The Lake Trail is lit at night, for starlight skiing. It has 11 separate housing units (cottages) called by the Finnish term *tupa*, that accommodate groups ranging from 2 to 10 people. Of course, they have an authentic Finnish sauna, an outdoor fire pit, plus a full-service rental and sales shop.



Lapin Farmhouse photo by Al Larsen

Even the ADK had issues with snowfall this year in the East: While there was adequate snow cover on the trails that were open and groomed (the black diamond extensions were closed), We had no fresh snow during our stay until the very last night.

There are basically two sets of trails at Lapland Lake, with a very large set of combinations and permutations using those two. One is flatter and referred to as the “Lake Side”. Very scenic, including a wide-open view from a lake edge. The other set is referred to as the “West side”, and has more intermediate and expert trails. By choosing one turn instead of another, one loop instead of another, we could cover much the same territory on a subsequent day but have it seem totally new. The trail system was well thought out by ol’ Olavi. A whimsical and fun feature was coming across a giant swing that served a resting spot on one of the trails.



Althea, Doug and Marcie on the Giant Swing photo by Ralph Heimlich



Althea’s delicious Valentines Day Cake photo by Ralph Heimlich

We enjoyed delicious meals we made ourselves (shrimp mac and cheese, beef stew, vegetarian chili, hearty mine-strome soup) and Althea made Valentines Day memorable with a delicious homemade Red Velvet heart cake.

Many found snow shoeing the preferred option. We all participated in a snow shoe of the Northville-Lake Placid trail, starting from the Benson Road trail head and shoeing back to our Lapin



Ralph, Joy and Brian snow shoeing picture by Doug Schubert?

(Continued on page 9)



**Lapland Lake (cont.)**

*(Continued from page 8)*

Tupa. This involved a bit of scrambling on steeper pitches, and a somewhat hair-raising crossing of an ice-encrusted two-log bridge over an icy stream. Nobody died!

Some of us enjoyed the genuine Finnish sauna, with temperatures reaching near 200 degrees (F not C). I encountered some long-time Cornell faculty who we discovered overlapped my time high above Cayuga's waters.

Sure enough, on the last night of our stay, the lacy, lazy, large snowflakes began to ascend. We took the opportunity to night ski the Lake Trail 1.4 miles to frozen (but not hard-frozen) Woods Lake and back. Very exhilarating, especially getting back to the glowing fire!

Lapland Lakes Nordic Resort rates highly as a go-to ski destination for these snow-deprived latter days of Mid-Atlantic skiing. It combines comfortable accommodations, affordable prices, and highly skiable groomed trails in a triple-threat that is hard to beat.



Althea and Joy cross the icy bridge as Brian and Doug look on *photo by Ralph Heimlich*

**Cascade Panoramas**



Brent, Ed, and Bela at Upper Three Creek Sno-Park *photo by Ralph Heimlich*



Barry on Tumalo Mountain *photo by Rick Royer*

**Central Oregon (cont.)**



Smith Rock State Park hike Misery Ridge loop trail *photo by Rick Royer*

ski [Dutchman Flat](#) but the snow crust had not melted by the time they arrived and so they descended to [Swampy Sno-Park](#).

Barry and Rick took great photos again on Friday of their snowshoe trip to [Tumalo Falls](#) and upstream until the going got difficult. Saturday, Barry and Rick left the skis and snowshoes behind to hike Misery Ridge and the River Trail at [Smith Rock State Park](#). Brent biked to the summit of Pilot Butte for great views and visited other spots in Bend including Pine Mountain Ski Shop to add new boots to the skis he bought here.

As Ralph noted in his 2020 trip write-up, the Redmond airport is a short drive from rental properties and easy to navigate due to its small size, but the flight options are limited. This may change for the better in years to come. Redmond was recently approved for federal funding to upgrade and enlarge the airport. We'll see.

I think it was a successful trip. Folks said they had a good time and by the photos and videos I would have to agree.

YouTube Videos:

Ed [Ed and Brent practice ski turns in fresh snow at Swampy Sno-park](#)

Ed [Skiing to Jefferson View Shelter from Upper Three Creek Sno-park](#)

Ed [Ray Benson Sno-park with Ralph, Brent, Ed, and Bela](#)

Ralph [Upper Three Creek, OR 2024](#)



Barry and Rick hiked to Tumalo Falls and beyond *photo by Rick Royer*



Lee at Lavalands National Monument and Cinder Cone Butte *photo by Ralph Heimlich*

Ralph [Bend Ski Trip Video](#)



Bela, Ralph, and Brent at roadside park near Sisters *photo by Ed Johnson*

**PATC-Ski Touring Section**

**c/o Doug Lesar**

**14 Bitterroot Court**

**Rockville, MD 20853**



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 3-5 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, 14 Bitterroot Court, Rockville, MD 20863

### Membership Classes

<u>Membership Categories</u>	<u>1 Year Only</u>	<u>2 Years</u>	<u>3 Years</u>
Individual	\$ 15	\$29	\$43
Family	\$19	\$36	\$53

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 New Yahoo Group so I can get infrequent, adhoc announcements of local XC Ski activities: \_\_\_
- 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:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STS Officer           | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity       | <input type="checkbox"/> XC Ski Instructor          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web Content Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Ski Trip Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events Coordinator |