



UPSLOPE



Newletter of the **NORDIC Ski Touring Section** of **PATC**

Visit Us On the WEB at <http://www.patc.net/chapters/ski/> and at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PATC_STS

October 2011

UpComing Attractions In Winter **UPSLOPE**

- Report from the Ski Fair
 - Snow forecast
 - Stories
- More destinations...near and far

DID YOU SAVE THE DATE? THE STS SKI FAIR IS HERE!

SATURDAY — NOVEMBER 5 12:30-4:30 PM . PATC HQ — 118 Park Street, Vienna, VA

Whether you're looking for basic information about cross country skiing or gear, want to know more about local destinations, meet new people or see old friends, or just have a good time, come and enjoy the Ski Fair. Enjoy talks on ski gear, ski destinations and score some bargains on Open Air Wear ski clothing while you're at it. Be among the first to sign up for trips scheduled from December 2011 through March 2012. STS trips are a travel bargain, fun, friendly and led by members with years of experience. Consider yourself a Nord-wannabe? No problem! We have learn-to-ski trips designed just for you.



Bring your checkbook to sign up for trips and begin or renew your membership, and buy or swap for used cross country. Bring snacks to share. (For last-minute shoppers, there's a Safeway and a Whole Foods nearby.) STS will provide coffee, tea and so-das.

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Ski Touring Section Dues are DUE!!

Are you looking forward to winter? Hope that you are. This is not only the time of year to begin thinking about ski trips, but is the also the time when STS memberships are due for renewal. Formally speaking, memberships expire on 30 September but we have always granted a long grace period until New Year's Day.

Instructions for renewing and membership rates appear in the UPSLOPE and on our web site. Those who receive UPSLOPE by traditional mail should look at the numeric code on their mailing label. If it reads "2011-12" you are due for renewal ASAP. If it reads 2012-12, 2013-12 etc. you have a multiyear membership and need not do anything at the moment. (I realize that the 2011-12 code may be confusing; the "12" at the end denotes the month of December, not the year 2012. My little database entry system ran afoul of the calendar this year! Will try to correct that for the next UPSLOPE).

If you receive UPSLOPE electronically, your forwarding email should have clearly denoted your expiration year.

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STS membership coordinator

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From the Slopes-Chair Notes

After a month of warm rain in September, the weather is finally cooling off and making us think of SKIING! It won't be long till we can put on those skinny skis and commune with Nature in winter. But how good your wintertime outdoor experience will be depends upon what arrangements you have made to ensure that you will enjoy good snow.

November 5th many members of the Section will meet once again to enjoy the annual Ski Fair. It takes place that afternoon at the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club headquarters at 118 Park Street in Falls Church—a block from the W&OD bike trail. Don't hesitate to bike over if so inclined. We'll have some light refreshments, but the big draw is the offered trips and the chance to speak with trip leaders and friends from years past. We'll have several short photo presentations on some of the upcoming excursion trips. They should help answer questions you may have about a particular trip.

Most of the Section's offered trips take place in the mid-Atlantic region in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Some totally book out at the Ski Fair since the lodging space is limited. Don't make the mistake of coming without your check book! You are only on a trip if you have put down the required deposit for the trip. We don't want you to have to race back to Maryland in order to get it.

Also remember that if you want to sign up for an "excursion" ski trip outside the mid-Atlantic regions, you must be a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) and not simply the Ski Touring Section. Most Ski Touring Section members are already members of PATC.

Be sure you understand the cancellation rules regarding each trip you sign up for. Cancelling can be fairly easy if the trip lodging is in a local motel that has a liberal room cancellation policy. But this is not the case for most of the trips out of region where the group may stay at an in-park hotel or a rented chalet. The Section has to put down a nonrefundable deposit on all of these places, and in many cases the lodging has been paid for in full before we even show up to ski. So if you have to drop out not long before the trip takes place, you may still be responsible for your share of the lodging cost. The funds refunded to you will likely be less than what you originally paid in. Fortunately it's rare to have one of these distant trips cancel out due to lack of snow. If exceedingly risk adverse, consider commercial trip insurance. The low cost of the Section's planned trips make these outings planned by experienced skiers a real bargain for those who love to ski.

If a new member of the Section, please track me down at Ski Fair and introduce yourself. We are always looking for new skiers and want to make you welcomed!

In snow,
 Rob Swennes



PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule

People not STS members, add \$10 per trip.

Note: STS membership is only \$9 per year! (*) indicates trips requiring PATC membership

Dates	Nov. 5, 2011 Ski Fair 12:30-4:30 Cancels if snow! Just kidding!
Where	PATC Headquarters, Park St., Vienna, VA 12:30 – 4:30
Description	Sign-up for your ski trips – bring your check book. See pictures of trips, talk with trip leaders, hear “snow” tails of incredible distances travelled in deep white stuff. Eat food, be happy.
Cost	Free
Dates	Nov. 11-13, 2011 (Friday and Saturday nights)
Trip	White Grass Trail Maintenance and Clean-up
Lodging	Lovely house near Timberline, stay in White Grass lodge, or camp at White Grass
Description	Help Chip get the ski touring center ready for the WHITE winter wonderland. Great camaraderie, great cause.
Leader	Lynn Yates, towson.lynn@gmail.com
Cost	Your transportation and food
Dates	Dec. 30, 2011 - Jan. 3, 2012 (4 nights, Friday-Tuesday) Cancels if no snow
Trip	(*)Tug Hill Region, Pulaski, New York
Lodging	Double Eagle Lodge in Pulaski for 3 nights, with breakfast. Bathroom in each room. Headwaters Motor Lodge for one night (Jan. 2) in Booneville (w/pastries and beverages in AM).
Description	Skiing and snow shoeing at Osceola ski touring center, Winona State Forest and Barnes Corners in the Pulaski area and on the BREIA trails in Booneville. Enjoy a New Year’s Day wine and cheese party/ group pot luck dinner. Check with Peggy for food suggestions/need. Transportation by carpooling.
Leader	Peggy Alpert & Steve Brickel, 301-946-4497, mountainmama15@verizon.net
Cost	\$280 (double/triple occupancy) Lodging and food as indicated above, assuming minimum of 8 participants. Additional cost will be the shared amount of the forfeited portion of the deposit if we cancel for lack of adequate snow.
Dates	Jan 6-8, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow.
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge (www.blackwaterfalls.com). Rooms have 2 beds, private bath. Lodge amenities include game room, great room w/ fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub, fitness equipment. Hearty meals available at Lodge Restaurant.
Description	For all skier levels. Ski Blackwater Falls State Park with twenty + miles of trails, Canaan Valley trails, and White Grass Ski Touring Center. Sledding hill is available when snow is sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds can be rented at Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center.
Leader	Carol Ruppel, 202-244-5984, carbrw@verizon.net
Cost	\$120 per person for lodging only, double occupancy, assuming a minimum of 8 participants. Participants make car pooling arrangements. Bring food for eating on the trail. Trail fees and dinners extra.



Crystal Lakes, PA



White Grass, WV

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	Jan 6-8, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Quality Inn, Somerset, PA. Amenities include an indoor pool, exercise room, and restaurant with bar. In the evening, we'll check out one of the good, reasonably priced restaurants in the area.
Description	Ski Laurel Mountain, Laurel Ridge State Park, and other area parks. Limit 12 participants. Sign up deadline is December 26, 2011. We will assess snow prospects and make a go/no go decision by December 28.
Leader	Jennifer (Jen) Bine, 703/533-2436, jenjobine@gmail.com
Cost	\$90.00 Per person for two nights, double occupancy; includes continental breakfast. Limit of 12 participants. Transportation by car pool facilitated by trip leader. Trail fees and dinners extra.
Dates	Jan 12-16, 2012 (Thursday- Monday, 4 nights) MLK Weekend No Cancellation
Trip	(*)Jackson, White Mountains, New Hampshire
Lodging	Rented house and 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 Bear Notch (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 resort in Dixville Notch, NH (http://www.thebalsams.com/) at a higher elevation. Many backcountry ski and snowshoe trails are in the area, such as near the AMC lodge at Pinkham Notch.
Leader	Rob Swennes, 703-532-6101, robertswennes@hotmail.com
Cost	\$280 includes lodging (4 nights), and in-house food and beverages. Note: Participants requiring a single bed must pay an additional \$75. Others will share queen sized beds or larger. Skiers pay for their transportation to/from/around NH, ski touring center (STC) trail fees, any restaurant meals, and incidental costs. Those interested can share rented vehicles from Washington area to NH & back. This surface transport cost is \$195/person. Participants will travel to NH on Thursday & return on Monday. Drivers of STS-leased vehicles will be rebated part of the trip cost. Three full days of skiing in NH!
Dates	Jan 13-15, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA Learn-to-XC Ski
Lodging	Super 8, downtown Somerset PA
Description	Join a dozen+ students enjoying 2 days of beginner- level, free instruction in cross-country skiing from seasoned volunteers, ranging from dry land to fixed stations to instructional tours, emphasizing safety and fun. Learn more in two days than years of skiing on your own.
Leader	Greg Westernik, 703-763-3833, gmwester@gmail.com
Cost	\$85 covers only lodging, double occupancy
Dates	Jan 13-16, 2012 (MLK Weekend Friday-Monday, 3 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Quality Inn, Somerset. PA. Amenities are indoor pool, exercise room, and restaurant with bar. There are many good, reasonably priced restaurants in the area.
Description	Skiing at Laurel Mountain, Laurel Ridge State Park, North Woods, and other area parks. Also, events of the Annual Fire & Ice Festival in Somerset are available that weekend!
Leader	Brian O'Konski, 202-362-2982, brian1642@gmail.com
Cost	\$165 Lodging and breakfast, double occupancy (one person per bed). Transportation by car pool to be arranged. Bring food for eating on the trail. Trail fees and dinners extra.

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	Jan 19-22, 2012(Thursday-Sunday, 3 nights) No cancellation
Trip	Canaan Valley, WV
Lodging	Canaan Valley State Park Deluxe Cabin w/complete kitchen for breakfast, pot luck and/ or individual dinner.
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 on-trail cross-country, off-trail backcountry, and perhaps even telemark skiing and/or lessons at the Timberline downhill area (contact leader for details).
Leader	Doug Lesar, 301-587-8041, dlesar@comcast.net
Cost	Cost \$120 (double occupancy) per person lodging only, assuming minimum of 8 participants. Note three-night stay and carpooling to be arranged.
Dates	Jan. 20-22, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Crystal Lakes/Endless Mt. Area, PA
Lodging	EconoLodge, downtown Williamsport PA
Description	Join fellow skiers gliding at Crystal Lakes STC , with options for practicing teles down a defunct downhill & snowshoeing on the Loyalsock trail for those seeking more.
Leader	Greg Westernik, 703-763-3833, gmwester@gmail.com or phone
Cost	\$95 covers only lodging, double occupancy
Dates	Jan 27-29, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Western Maryland
Lodging	Oak-Mar Motel, Oakland, MD
Description	Skiing for beginner thru advanced at New Germany State Park (NG) and Herrington Manor State Park (HM). (Other nearby locations include White Grass and Savage River.) We'll stay at the conveniently located Oak-Mar Motel in Oakland, MD. Saturday we'll ski at NG, where ski rentals and lessons are available. This park has roughly 10 miles of trails, ranging from very easy to highly technical. Sunday we'll ski at HM, where ski rentals are available, but no lessons. This park has 5-6 miles of mostly easy trails, suitable for novice skiers. Attendees may follow this schedule or choose where to ski on their own. Friday night we'll dine at Uno's near Deep Creek Lake (optional), Saturday at the Cornish Manor in Oakland. The restaurant at the Oak-Mar is open for breakfast Saturday and Sunday. Cost of the trip includes lodging only.
Leader	Jim Houghton, 703-266-2209, deucepoints@gmail.com
Cost	\$75 covers only lodging, double occupancy
Dates	Jan 27-29, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge (www.blackwaterfalls.com). Rooms have private bath, phone, TV. Lodge amenities include game room, great room with fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub and fitness equipment. Hearty meals available at Lodge Restaurant.
Description	For all skier levels. Ski Blackwater Falls State Park with twenty + miles of trails, Canaan Valley trails, and White Grass Ski Touring Center. Sledding hill is available when snow is sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds can be rented at Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center.
Leader	Marcie Schubert, 410-536-5080; or Julie Nash, 703-481-0292, triadsnash@aol.com
Cost	\$127 (double occupancy) for lodging only, assuming a minimum of 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged. Bring food for eating on the trail. Trail fees and meals extra.

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	Feb. 3-5, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge. Rooms have private bath, phone, TV. Lodge amenities include game room, great room with fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub and fitness equipment. Hearty meals available at Lodge Restaurant.
Description	For all skier levels. Ski Blackwater Falls State Park with twenty + miles of trails, Canaan Valley trails, and White Grass Ski Touring Center. Sledding hill is available when snow is sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds can be rented at Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center.
Leader	Robert Leaf, 301-977-6561, roberto.leaf@gmail.com
Cost	\$120 (double occupancy) assuming a minimum of 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged. Bring food for eating on the trail. Trail fees and meals extra.
Dates	Feb 3-5, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Super 8, downtown Somerset PA
Description	Join fellow skiers gliding at usual favorites (e.g., Laurel Mtn, Laurel Ridge, Roaring Run, North Woods) with more kms of trails than you will ever ski in a weekend, plus options of Fri nite skiing at the Lodge and teleing a defunct alpine slope at Laurel Mtn if seeking more.
Leader	Greg Westernik, 703-763-3833, gmwester@gmail.com
Cost	\$65 covers only lodging, double occupancy
Dates	Feb. 9-12, 2012 (Thursday-Sunday, 3 nights/4 days) No cancellation
Trip	Canaan Valley, WV
Lodging	Canaan Valley State Park Deluxe Cabin: Each room has 2 double beds. The lvg rm has TV, phone, fireplace. There is a full kitchen. We will have a potluck dinner one night. After a long day of skiing we can use Lodge amenities: hot tub, sauna, and pool.
Description	Ski at White Grass, the cabin area at Canaan Valley State Park, and Blackwater Falls State Park. Enjoy the indoor pool and hot tub at the Lodge to sooth those muscles after a long day of skiing!
Leader	Kathy and Elliot Brumberger, 301-774-7412, kathybrum@verizon.net
Cost	\$120 Lodging only, double occupancy, assuming 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged.
Dates	Feb 10-12, 2012 (Friday-Sunday 2 nights)
Trip	Laurel Highlands, PA
Lodging	Super 8, downtown Somerset PA
Description	Skiing at Laurel Mountain, Laurel Ridge State Park, and other area parks.
Leader	Carol Ruppel, 202-244-5984, carbrw@verizon.net
Cost	\$70 Lodging only, double occupancy, assuming 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged. Trail fees and dinners extra.



Canaan Valley, WV

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	February 16-21, 2012 (Thursday-Tuesday, 5 nights) No cancellation
Trip	(*) Stowe, Vermont
Lodging	Arbor Inn (B&B), in the heart of Stowe. Community trail out the door.
Description	Over 200 miles of trails in the Green Mts. Ski touring Centers include Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe, Craftsbury, and Bolton. Back country and down hill also available..
Leader	Peggy Alpert, 301-946-4497, mountainmama15@verizon.net
Cost	\$405/person double occupancy. Includes lodging and breakfasts. Based on minimum of 8 participants. All other meals, trail fees and transportation costs will be additional. Mode of transportation is up to each individual and will be decided once the group is formed. For those who do not drive there, there will be group rental vehicles.
Dates	Feb 17-20, 2012 (Friday-Monday, 3 nights) Presidents' Day Weekend; Cancels if no snow
Trip	Blackwater Falls, WV
Lodging	Blackwater Falls Lodge. Rooms have private bath, phone, TV. Lodge amenities include game room, great room with fireplace, indoor pool, hot tub and fitness equipment. Hearty meals available at Lodge Restaurant.
Description	For all skier levels. Ski Blackwater Falls State Park with twenty + miles of trails, Canaan Valley trails, and White Grass Ski Touring Center. Sledding hill is available when snow is sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds can be rented at Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center.
Leader	Al Larsen, 703-807-1639, alarsen120@aol.com
Cost	\$195 (double occupancy) assuming a minimum of 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged. Bring food for eating on the trail. Trail fees and meals extra.
Dates	Feb 17-20, 2012 (Friday-Monday, 3 nights) Presidents' Day Weekend; No Cancellation
Trip	Ski-Dance Weekend. Laurel Highlands area, PA
Lodging	Camp Harmony, PA a beautiful rustic setting
Description	28 th annual cross-country skiing, contra dancing, and music making. Lots of fun outdoors and indoors in a rustic setting. Dance to live music in the evening by Dave Weisler and the Avant Gardeners. Bring your talents and instruments to share. Lodging dormitory-style at Camp Harmony. Trip begins on Friday evening with an informal potluck supper and dance and ends on Monday with breakfast; 7 meals included. Camp Harmony has over 100 acres available for cross-country skiing, slopes for sledding and several different types of habitat. Laurel Ridge, Laurel Mts. and Forbes State Forest areas are nearby. Check website, www.skidance.com for more information and registration form.
Leader	Eliot Applestein, 301-984-6855, eliotapplestein@verizon.net; or Bob Mathis, 301-589-7539, tali-bob@starpower.net
Cost	Adults: \$170 for STS/Sierra Club members (\$180 non-members); Children ages 3-13: \$80; Infants - 2 years: \$5



Laurel Highlands, PA



Blackwater Falls State Park, WV

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	Feb 18 – 26, 2012 (Saturday - Sunday, 8 nights) Presidents' Day Weekend; No Cancellation
Trip	(*) Pagosa Springs, Colorado
Lodging	Motel in Pagosa Springs and final night in Albuquerque
Description	This is a week-long backcountry Nordic skiing trip with snowshoe options. Pagosa Springs (elev. 7100 ft.) is nestled into the scenic San Juan and Weminuche mountains in southern Colorado. Cross country skiing in this area begins in mid November and lasts well into March or later. Some ski tracks are set up at Wolf Creek Pass (elev. 10,800 ft.) north of town, which last winter had 400 inches total snowfall. Downhill skiing also offered at the pass. Nordic skiing trails are set north of Durango, CO, and exploratory treks into the backcountry areas are widely available. A half-day visit to Mesa Verde National Park is an option. The thermal spring baths in Pagosa Springs are one of the great attractions of this area. We will likely tour the old section of Santa Fe on the drive back to Albuquerque.
Leader	Rob Swennes, 703-532-6101, robertswennes@hotmail.com
Cost	\$550 includes motel lodging in Pagosa Springs (7 nights) and Albuquerque (1 night) plus vehicle transport for the days out West. All rooms have two double or queen-sized beds. Priced based on two people per room. Skiers pay for their airline transportation to/from Albuquerque, any ski touring center (STC) trail fees, restaurant meals, and incidental costs, such as thermal spring bathing. Pagosa Springs motel includes a minimal continental bkst.
Dates	Feb 24-26, 2012 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow
Trip	Canaan Valley, WV
Lodging	Canaan Valley State Park Deluxe Cabin: Each room has 2 double beds. The lvg rm has TV, phone, fireplace. There is a full kitchen. We will have a potluck dinner one night. After a long day of skiing we can use Lodge amenities: hot tub, sauna, and pool.
Description	Ski at White Grass, the cabin area at Canaan Valley State Park, and Blackwater Falls State Park. Enjoy the indoor pool and hot tub at the Lodge to sooth those muscles after a long day of skiing!
Leader	Kathy and Elliot Brumberger, 301-774-7412, kathybrum@verizon.net
Cost	\$85 Lodging only, double occupancy, assuming 8 participants. Transportation by car pool to be arranged.
Dates	Mar 1-5, 2012 (4 nights, Thursday-Monday) Cancels if no snow
Trip	(*)Tug Hill area of Upstate New York
Lodging	Super 8, downtown Pulaski, NY
Description	Join fellow skiers gliding at usual favorites (e.g., Winona St Forest, Osceola Tug Hill, BREIA, Barnes Corners) in the snow capital of NY state. One of the most reliable snow areas in eastern US during a ski race wknd.
Leader	Greg Westernik gmwester@gmail.com or phone 703-763-3833
Cost	\$160 covers only lodging, double occupancy



Pagosa Spring, CO



Tug Hill, NY

PATC/STS 2011-2012 trip schedule (continued)

Dates	March 2-4, 2012 (Friday and Saturday) No cancellation
Trip	Canaan Heights area trails
Lodging	Private vacation home at the top of the Northpoint development
Description	<p>I will lead trips both days from my house into the National Forest, offering ski circuits from 3-9 miles in length depending on snow conditions and group interest (see attached map). The circuits utilize unofficial trails maintained by local skiers and mountain bikers, connected by segments of official Forest Service trails, Canaan Loop Road and the gas pipeline that transects Canaan Valley. I describe these trails as "backcountry" because they are not regularly maintained or groomed; most would be rated green or blue, with one short steep pitch on the longest loop that could be sidestepped. Alternatively, White Grass and Canaan Valley/Blackwater Falls State Parks are nearby (and the parks can be skied to from the house). If there is insufficient snow at the house, skiing will be offered either at White Grass or the Weiss Knob area above the top of the Canaan Valley Ski Area. If there is insufficient snow anywhere in the valley, we will hike (either from the house or at one of the local state parks).</p> <p>Rooms available: 2 bedrooms with 1 queen bed each, 1 bedroom with 1 queen and 1 bunk set, and the eagle's nest with a double futon (up spiral staircase from the 2nd floor)</p> <p>Food: On your own; possibilities include group meals at the house or local restaurants</p> <p>Note: Because the house is at the top of Canaan Mountain, 4WD is definitely required at a minimum, with chains recommended as a back-up. However, there is parking available at the base of the development for those unequipped to drive to the top, and I can ferry folks up in my Highlander if necessary.</p>
Leader	Frank Fico 703-318-7998 ficofj@yahoo.com
Cost	Cost (per person, not including meals): \$150 single occupancy, \$100 double, \$75 triple (maximum 10 participants)

Picture Gallery



Nordic Skiing in Bavaria and Austria.

By Rob Swennes

It had been almost a decade since the Ski Touring Section last hosted a trip to the northern Alps. But this past winter we were determined to replicate the success of that earlier trip. A group of eleven skiers signed up for a week of winter fun in Europe. We stayed in four well-appointed vacation apartments in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany – a dozen miles north of the Austrian border. The skiing had been excellent in the area in December and January. By the time of our trip in mid February the weather had moderated somewhat, so we had to search further for good snow.

Most of the group flew from Dulles to Munich, rented vehicles, and drove the hour plus down to Garmisch. Caroline Neads was to join us from England, but her arrival was delayed for a few days. Some world cup skiing competitions were going on in the town when we arrived. But we were focused on arranging our own sweet snow experiences. The day after our arrival we looked over the higher elevation skiing options and decided to try the cross-country trails in Seefeld, Austria, which were several hundred meters higher in elevation than Garmisch. Seefeld had a wealth of skiing options and was a lovely tourist town. Unfortunately the skiing itself was somewhat marginal because of the warmer weather. We skied in smaller groups two or more times on a main route that was open. There were plenty of distinctive Austrian buildings, including churches, along the route, so we were able to absorb some European culture while enjoying the snow. For some of our group, such as Nathan Caldwell and Terri Fischer, this was their first visit to Europe. To others, such as Bozena Sarnecka-Crouch, it was a return home. After skiing, Barry Weston, Joy Saari, Rich Galloway and I adjourned to a restaurant patio of a sports club overlooking the Nordic ski trails and ordered some good Austrian beer and snacks to celebrate. Ordering and enjoying great German and Austrian beer became a daily requirement on the trip.

Fortunately it began snowing on the drive back from Austria to Garmisch, and it snowed most of that night. By the next morning we had received several inches of new snow in town. The buildings all had that Christmasy appearance that we always associate with old European villages in winter. Barry Weston and I walked over to the local bakery that morning to buy breakfast pastries and rolls that the group could use to make sandwiches. We were excited about the prospect of being able to ski close to Garmisch that day. The group decided to ski the complex of ski trails groomed between the tiny towns of Kaltenbrunn and Klais south of Garmisch. A huge, inviting Gasthaus in Kaltenbrunn that I had visited before was identified as our rendez-vous point for later in the afternoon. The skiing was great, with plenty of fresh snow (and some still falling) making the landscape a wintry wonderland.



Once we reached Klais, Barry wanted to press on further toward Mittenwald, but we were told that those ski trails had not been prepared. Several of us tried in vain to locate them, figuring that we would enjoy those trails even if tracks had not been set yet. We never found them, but we enjoyed examining various old buildings in the town, many with brightly colored Bavarian paintings on their exterior plaster walls and dates indicating when in previous centuries the building was constructed. On the trails back toward Kaltenbrunn I met up with several other of our skiers: Nathan Caldwell, Terri Fisher, Ann Hitchcock, and Mary Bielefeld. We were able to identify a side route that went through a tunnel under the highway and into a huge area of unbroken snow. Now we were doing effectively backcountry skiing, and it was a lot of fun (even if not fast). Nathan led us to one of the ubiquitous small German barns that dotted all the fields in the region. It had a broad overhanging roof that kept the snow off us while we ate our packed lunches (with snow still falling).

By the time some of us, including Erma Cameron, arrived back at the Gasthaus later in the afternoon, we were ready for some good beer and food. The German beers in the region were uniformly fantastic, especially the wheat beers. We never encountered a bad one. The Gasthaus interior was filled with distinctive Bavarian woodwork and other carvings, including some large, fantastic chandeliers carved like mermaids.

(continued)

Next day our ski group drove back into Austria to the vacation town of Leutasch, which is surrounded by a chain of very tiny hamlets, all interconnected by hiking paths, which in the winter become Nordic ski trails. The trails were all well signed, though it took us a couple of days to interpret all the information encoded on them. Once we parked our vehicles and checked out the large trail map showing the many route options, the group split into several smaller teams for the day's skiing. Some of us checked with an English-speaking woman at the Ziel (start/finish line of the trail complex). She recommended a series of trails that took us out of Leutasch, past a scenic onion-domed church and adjacent cemetery, and through a series of hills and valleys well away from habitation. I was skiing with Mary Bielefeld, and later we met up with Ann Hitchcock.

The Austrians had installed some interesting art work along one of the routes in an area where there were no buildings--other than the ubiquitous small field barns. We met and chatted with a young German skier who opined that the ski trails here in Austria were (in his view) inferior to those in Norway where he normally skis. We met the fellow again later near a local restaurant where we had decided to stop for a late lunch. He gave us several recommendations on what to order, since he had just finished a meal there. One of the more distinctive features on the trail was a series of wooden boxes on posts that contained a stamp and inked stamp pad that allowed you to record that you had skied (hiked in the summer) that far. I suspect the German population records these stamp marks in a small book. Lacking that, Mary and I simply stamped the back of our hands! All the STS skiers arrived back at the cars at the appointed time in late afternoon, and all were very impressed with the scenery and the trail conditions around Leutasch.

Impressed enough that we opted to return to Leutasch again the next day. We parked at a higher location along the trail complex on this visit. There were some lovely views down into the Katzenloch valley. Once again, we broke into about 5 groups for our day's skiing, but we kept meeting each other on the trails. Late that afternoon when all were tired, we skied (or walked) down to an old little inn (Die Ropferstub'm) located well away from any roadway. The ceilings were low (a good indicator of its age), the food and drink were good, and the hospitality was excellent. This whole region was a Nordic skiers paradise, and there were probably hundreds of skiers in the area taking advantage of it.

The next day found us back in Leutasch again, though the fresh snow that had fallen several days before was beginning to show wear. It was remarkable how many new routes for skiing we were able to find at this location without repeating the previous days' treks. As we had done on previous days, we identified a Gasthaus for the group to gather at late in the day so we could enjoy a good Austrian beer before the drive back into Germany. Though the Gasthaus was fine, our Austrian waitress was noticeably inhospitable to us. Even those who spoke no German could sense that. But she was the exception to the rule. Another interesting oddity to us was the number of skiers (and nonskiers) who relaxed whenever possible in a seat or on a bench directly facing the sun. We saw this time and time again. I began referring to them as the "German sunflowers". The reason for this custom is probably the small amount of bright sunlight that people living in Northern Europe receive annually, as opposed to those in Southern Europe or the U.S. Thus they were stoking up on Vitamin D while the sun shone.

When not skiing, we were entertaining ourselves and eating well. The vacation apartments were well stocked with dishes and cooking supplies. We used one of them as our main evening socializing spot. Several people pitched in to make dinner each night, having brought favorite recipes that they thought others would enjoy. We did not lack for beer and wine. Much of the group got deeply involved in trying a wide range of local bottled beers and passing judgment on which were their favorites. One night we walked to a nearby restaurant near the American base in Garmisch. The waitress was very jolly and dressed in local Bavarian costume. She mentioned that this was the Fasching (Carnival) season, and costumed parties were being held all around the town. Our final night in town we had a lovely dinner at a restaurant near the middle of Garmisch.

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On one sunny morning we spent a few hours touring Mittenwald, just north of the Austrian border, before driving on to ski. One highlight of that visit was our tour of the violin museum in the town, which records 500 years or so of violin making in the region. The collection of stringed instruments (and carved Carnival masks) was most impressive. Ann Hitchcock was impressed enough with the masks that she a few days later purchased one carved by a local artisan in Garmisch. Late in the week most of us visited the 1936 Olympics stadium in Garmisch and the nearby Partnachklamm (Partnach gorge). The latter in winter is a mass of churning water and ice formations--a local natural wonder.

Our last night was spent in Munich so that we could make the morning flight back to the U.S. We had most of the day in that city. The weather was atypically bright and sunny, so we took advantage of it to walk around the Altstadt (old town) section of that large metropolis. Several of us hankered to quaff a draft at the famed Hofbraeuhaus in Munich, but when we finally located that huge establishment, it was filled to capacity. All the folks appeared to be German, not tourists, which was a surprise. We moved on to visit other nearby plazas in this historic section of the city and finally found a spot to have lunch (and a final Bavarian wheat beer, of course!) at a restaurant (Luigi Tambosi am Hofgarten) close to some of the palaces of the former Bavarian kings. There were many rows of chairs set up on the plaza before the restaurant, and all filled with people with beer or coffee in hand--and facing south to catch the full sun on their faces. The German sun-flowers!

This was a great trip, and my thanks to all who made it possible, including Rich Galloway and Erma Cameron who drove our rental vehicles for the week.



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

October 2011



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

<u>Membership Categories</u>	<u>1 Year Only</u>	<u>2 Years</u>	<u>3 Years</u>
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:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> STS Officer | Public- <input type="checkbox"/> ity |
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