



# UPSLOPE



## Newletter of the NORDIC Ski Touring Section of PATC

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

March 2012

### UpComing Attractions in Next Year's UPSLOPE

- Ski Fair details
- Tentative trips

#### Inside this issue:

(blue links are live)

<a href="#">Your STS Officer Contacts</a>	2
<a href="#">From the Slopes</a>	2
<a href="#">Memories of Canaan Valley 2012</a>	3
<a href="#">Skiing to an ADK Great Camp</a>	4
<a href="#">Skiing Pagosa Springs, CO</a>	5
<a href="#">Minutes from 2011 Après Ski</a>	7
<a href="#">Reread for the upcoming mtg</a>	8
<a href="#">Skiing Pagosa Springs, CO (cont)</a>	9

### PATC-ST\$ Après Ski Party

If the fact that you have no more ski outings on your calendar didn't tell you this, the 80 degree temperatures this week surely did: it's time to declare this winter ski season at an end. If you're still waiting for it to begin, no one will snicker or chortle or guffaw. But we will tell you that it's time to wrap things up in our traditional STS way--



Mid-Atlantic Dregs, White Grass, March 22

with our annual apres ski gathering, or end-of-season party and meeting, on Saturday April 21. In what has become a favorite outing for many of us, we are once again gathering at the home of club member Catherine Payne, just off the Beltway on the Virginia side near the Rt. 193/GW Parkway exit, abutting Scott's Run Nature Preserve in a beautiful wooded setting, with access down to the river.

We will have a meeting of the entire club starting at 4:00 PM to discuss this year's outings, ideas for next year, election of officers, and any other business that needs to be addressed. We do these end-of-year parties as a "pot luck" event. So, bring a dish of your choosing—main dish, salad, or dessert, and maybe some drinks. As has become our tradition, in addition to the good food, we'll enjoy the fun of re-living this year's trips, and a reunion with your trip participants. Feel free to call me or e-mail me if you have questions: Al Larsen, STS Secretary, 703-807-1639; [alarsen120@aol.com](mailto:alarsen120@aol.com).

### APRES SKI PARTY NOW ON

## Saturday, April 21 2012 4PM

Please RSVP Al Larsen [alarsen120@aol.com](mailto:alarsen120@aol.com)

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

**Driving directions:** 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 north onto Balls Hill Rd (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.



Après Ski at Catherine Payne's house on the Potomac, 2009 photo by Ralph Heimlich

**ST\$ Officers**

**FROM THE \$LOPE\$ – Chair Notes**

**Chair**

Rob Swennes  
 H: 703-532-6101  
[robertswennes@hotmail.com](mailto:robertswennes@hotmail.com)

**Vice-Chair**

Jennifer Bine  
 H: 703-533-2436  
[jenjobine@gmail.com](mailto:jenjobine@gmail.com)

**Secretary**

Al Larsen  
 H: 703-807-1639  
[alarsen120@aol.com](mailto:alarsen120@aol.com)

**Treasurer**

Brian O’Konski  
 H: 202-362-2982  
[brian1642@gmail.com](mailto:brian1642@gmail.com)

**Trip Coordinator**

Kathy Brumberger  
 H: 301-774-7412  
[kathybrum@verizon.net](mailto:kathybrum@verizon.net)

**Webmaster**

Steve Brickel  
 H: 301-946-2520  
[sbrickel2003@yahoo.com](mailto:sbrickel2003@yahoo.com)

**Membership Coordinator**

Douglas Lesar  
 H: 301-587-8041  
[dlesar@comcast.net](mailto:dlesar@comcast.net)

**UPSLOPE Editor**

Ralph Heimlich  
 H: 301-498-0918  
[heimlichfamily@comcast.net](mailto:heimlichfamily@comcast.net)

**UPSLOPE**

**Mailing Coordinator**

Randy Kerr  
 H: 703-937-3920  
[lerrkerr@aol.com](mailto:lerrkerr@aol.com)

**PATC Liaison**

Vacant

**Publicity Coordinator**

Vacant

*Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?"*

The winter just past may have set a record here on the East Coast for not supporting our favorite sport—cross-country skiing. But there is no sense in crying in our cups. Let's look ahead to next winter and the prospects for plenty of skiable snow then. In that spirit we will be gathering at Catherine Payne's home on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> for the Ski Touring Section's annual meeting and our annual après-ski social. You are all invited (and please bring a favorite dish to share). That gathering is our best opportunity of the year to rub shoulders with folks we have skied with in the past and to share stories of the last 12 months or of earlier winter times.

And don't think Section members didn't ski this past winter. Many did. Despite little opportunity to enjoy skiable snow in the mid-Atlantic region, there was fine snow around the U.S. in areas more known for their dependable snowfall. Our traditional annual trip up to the White Mountains of New Hampshire was highly successful, notwithstanding the warm weather conditions in the weeks leading up to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. The New England area got a good snowstorm the day we arrived—good enough that our plane skidded on the snow-covered runway upon landing in Manchester. We were prepared for a hiking weekend, but were blessed with snow.

And several other out-of-area trips this winter also had good to great skiing conditions. You will read reports on some of them in this issue of *Upslope*.

So don't ask about the snows of the past. Think about the snows to come. Think about how you can ensure that when the white stuff flies, you will be there. If cross-country skiing is for you a kind of passion (as it is for many of us), then seek it out. Embrace it. If the snows play hard to get, follow them wherever needed in order to get the time you need enjoy the beauty of the world in winter.



I hope to see many of you on April 21<sup>st</sup> at Catherine's place. And as usual we invite skiers with digital pictures of this winter's trips to bring them along on a disk so we can share them with all.

Finally, on the subject of sharing, I'm happy to announce that the PATC Ski

Touring Section now has a presence on Facebook. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ski-Touring-Section-Potomac-Appalachian-Trail-Club/226549600733615#!/pages/Ski-Touring-Section-Potomac-Appalachian-Trail-Club/226549600733615#!/pages/Ski-Touring-Section-Potomac-Appalachian-Trail-Club/226549600733615?sk=likes> and check it out. Be sure to click on the "Like" button or link since that gives us "status" in the world of Facebook. As of today we have 10 "Likes" registered on the site. If we can get that number up to 50, we climb to the next plateau in Facebook's pecking order, which will allow other cross-country skiers to "find" our site more easily when they are on Facebook. Post a message or load some pictures showing what fun we have in the wintertime.

Yours in snow,

Rob

**Memories of Canaan Valley 2012**

**By Kathy Brumberger**

**CANAAN VALLEY STATE PARK TRIP: Feb 9-12, 2012**

Eight folks were hoping for snow on our trip to Canaan Valley State Park and we were not disappointed! We all arrived on Thursday and left on Sunday.

Friday the snow started, but just slightly, not enough to ski. The group snow shoed up 3 mile and other trails at White Grass. We had a tasty meal at White Grass Café on Friday night. Friday's flurries changed to significant snow that night and it snowed all day on Saturday! So, we took to the trails at White Grass. The wind was blowing all day but the skiing was good. On Sunday we skied in Canaan Valley State Park, blazing the trails as we went.

**CANAAN VALLEY STATE PARK TRIP: Feb 24-26, 2012**

Everyone seemed to enjoy the weekend even though there was not enough snow for skiing. We had a wonderful dinner at White Grass on Saturday night. Below are reports from the weekend's participants:



**Eight Skiers at Canaan, photo by Roger Hanson**

**ALICE:** Caroline and Alice arrived at White Grass on Friday afternoon and walked partway up Three Mile in a downpour. A few streaks of snow could be seen around the Snow Farm and none in the lower woods. Mud was the dominant substance. Friday night, a miracle! Three inches of snow. We took a short hike in the woods at Canaan and then decided to see what was happening at White Grass. A blizzard—or so it appeared because of the strong wind. The snow fences had caught enough snow to make the Snow Farm usable, so Alice braved the stinging wind to give it a try. It was okay as long as not one square inch of face was uncovered. Whiteouts were frequent. Retreat to the hot tub came next. Sunday dawned sunny and in the 20s. The Snow Farm was more attractive and we skied around the loop. Now it was too hot—no jacket or mittens needed, and grass and mud showing in the tracks. It was a lot of trouble for a little skiing, but made fun by our congenial cabin comrades.

**CAROLINE:** As for the trip, I would say the highlights were getting a glimpse of actual winter with the Great Saturday Blizzard that made a mere inch of snow seem like a Buffalo January. The wind picked up the few flakes and blew them around all day so that at times it was impossible to see more than a few feet ahead. Pretty as the effect was, the actual getting out into it and trying to hike wasn't all that comfortable, so I mostly stayed indoors. On Sunday, the wind stopped and the sun came out, but there was still just that lone inch or so of snow. I hadn't skied in about 20 years, so when I got out on the Snow Farm at Whitegrass, I didn't exactly distinguish myself, and in fact nearly extinguished my tailbone on a patch of ice. Nevertheless, it was a lovely scene and a fine experience of winter in an otherwise lack snow year. And I'll never forget Roger's massive black Bernese Mountain dog dancing around in the snow joyfully covered in white.

**LYNN:** Roger and I decided to snowshoe to Bald Knob from White Grass Center on Saturday. During our ascent, we enjoyed the whole spectrum of weather from bright sunny, blue skies to blow-you-over wind and white-out conditions at the top. The snow was adequate on the way up. By the time we made our descent, the temperature had risen so that we were making mud tracks most of the way down. In spite of that, we had a wonderful weekend with great company and good food and spirits.

Kathy and Elliot decided to hike on Saturday through the blowing snow. We started out on the trail behind our cabin and ended up at the Canaan Valley Lodge where we found Alice and Caroline taking advantage of the hot tub. We got a ride back to the cabin with them! On Sunday, a beautiful clear day, we drove to Blackwater Falls State Park before heading home and walked to the Falls. The recent snow covered the foliage along the trail and ice cycles were hanging from the rocks...a beautiful site!

**DAVE and KEN:** On Saturday, we skied all day at Timberline in a blizzard, natural and man-made (i.e., snow blowers.) On Sunday, we skied the snow farm trails and sledding hill at White Grass. Those were the only trails that were opened. After we finished for the day, we briefly watched the Nordic races. The course was on the Snow Farm trails. Chip was one of the racers. Had a late lunch at the White Grass Cafe; Steve & Peggy just happened to wander in and joined us.



**On the trail, Bald Knob from White Grass, photo by David Payne**

**Skiing to an Adirondack “Great Camp”**

By Al Larsen

Snow—that rarest of commodities anywhere in the East this winter—could be found in a few pockets if one knew where to look. One spot we have found to be reliable over the years is at Garnet Hill Lodge on the Eastern side of the Adirondacks, about an hour northwest of Lake George Village. We have been going up there almost every winter for about 10 years, and have always found snow, ranging from decent to spectacular. No exception this year.

Garnet Hill is about an 8 hour drive from the DC area, more or less depending on weather and traffic. We usually drive to the town of Warrensburg and stay at one of several terrific B&Bs there, with a wonderful breakfast send off the next morning before we head to GH where we arrive by 10 AM or so, get our trail passes, and ski the 50+ km of trails until mid afternoon when our rooms are ready for check-in.

This year, we asked the GH ski shop chief Jay DeJesus about various off-site trails we had skied in years past. He suggested a new one for us, and it turned out to be a great suggestion and a terrific outing. It was one of the old Adirondack “Great Camps”, called Santanoni. It is about 45 minutes from GH, off SH28, on 28N, at the town of Newcomb. At a slightly higher elevation, it had a foot more snow this year than most of the surrounding area.

From the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century until about World War I, many wealthy and prominent families in the US purchased real estate in the Adirondacks and commissioned construction of multi-building estates in a rustic artistic style. Some 35 “Great Camps” as the largest of these complexes came to be known, still remain. One of the earliest, Camp Santanoni was regarded at the time of its completion as the grandest of all the Adirondack camps.

Santanoni is not a typical rich man’s hunting lodge. Robert Pruyn, the first owner who commissioned its construction, spent part of his childhood in Japan, when his father was appointed by President Lincoln to be minister to Japan. Pruyn engaged prominent architect Robert Robertson, who had designed many of the early New York City skyscrapers, to design his camp. It is modeled after traditional Japanese designs, and its lay-out is intended to suggest a bird in flight, facing the Western horizon.

So it was that in early February, Al and Anne Larsen, Ralph Heimlich, Jeffrey Anspacher, and Dave and Cathy Collins found the parking lot at the trail head several hundred yards off Rt. 28N. The air was an invigorating (that’s trip leader talk for darned cold) 10 degrees, but it was a sunny “blue bird” day. The round trip was about 10 miles, in and out on the carriage road for the camp. We were skiing on nice tracks set by previous visitors, on a very scenic route, surrounded by forest, with curves and rolling hills.

We started at the first of three distinct groups of buildings that comprised Santanoni—the Gate Lodge Complex. Less than half of the original Santanoni structures remain, but the entire camp retains the core of its original form and layout. After skiing a mile or so, we came upon a more open area, with the second group of buildings, the Farm Complex. This site had a massive set of barns, farm houses, workers’ cottages and various service buildings. It supplied the camp with meat and produce, while surplus products were sold locally and sent to the family’s home in Albany.

The camp passed from private ownership in the early 1970s when the Adirondack Chapter of the Nature Conservancy purchased it and offered it to the State of NY as a gift. Over the years, a partnership among Adirondack Architectural Heritage, the town of Newcomb, the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and others have ensured that the camp wouldn’t simply fall into ruin. Among other things, Santanoni has turned into a popular ski xc destination. In fact, as North Country Public Radio said in a February, 2012 story, “This winter, one of the best places in the North Country to ski has been the trail to Santanoni Great Camp in the Essex County town of Newcomb.”



Santanoni Farm photo by Al Larsen



Main building at Santanoni Camp photo by Al Larsen

As North Country Public Radio said in a February, 2012 story, “This winter, one of the best places in the North Country to ski has been the trail to Santanoni Great Camp in the Essex County town of Newcomb.”

Skiing past the Farm Complex, we caught occasional glimpses of the Adirondack High Peaks, until about 4.5 miles from the gate, we came to a low bridge across frozen water that creates a peninsula upon which is located the main Great Camp complex. The views across ice to the mountains were spectacular. Proceeding on less than half a mile we came to the Great Camp itself. While people may visit year round, the buildings typically are not open to the public during winter months. So, we stepped out of our skis and peeked

(Continued on page 5)

**Skiing to an Adirondack “Great Camp”(cont.)**

*(Continued from page 4)*

through all of the windows of the main complex, whose buildings are connected by covered decks and walkways, and whose interiors were massive logs and beams with rustic architecture. The complex was oriented to the nearby lake shore, with an open, majestic view of the High Peaks—a great place to spend some time, even on a cold but sunny day, contemplating the beauty and the history of this region, where mountains and water come together almost magically. While the buildings were locked, we simply pulled up a picnic table in a sunny nook in the lee of the lake wind, and had a “meal that couldn’t be beat” (to quote Arlo Guthrie).

On the way back out, we spent some time at the Farm Complex again for a bit of glade skiing. This Santanoni trail also offered access to adjacent state lands, with trails to various ponds, and multi-day loop outing possibilities. We chose the semi-weenie option of making it an in-and-out day outing, with a fireplace, dinner, and a warm bed back at Garnet Hill Lodge.



Lunch in a sunny nook at Santanoni Camp photo by Al Larsen

**Skiing Pagosa Springs, Colorado**

By Rob Swennes

As anyone who has skied out West knows, elevation is everything. I had backpacked in the Pagosa Springs area of southern Colorado three times in the past before discovering that it’s also a great place for Nordic skiing. The inherent beauty of the area in any season, plus the wonderful natural hot springs available to soothe the body after a hard day on the skis, made this an unparalleled location for Ski Touring Section members of the PATC to visit and enjoy.

Fifteen of us journeyed out to this area for a week’s skiing February 18 – 26. Most flew from BWI to Albuquerque. Barry Weston in Durham, N.C. flew out separately and met us in the Albuquerque airport. Rainer Kurzel and Renate Kloeppinger-Todd, who had recently retired from the D.C. area to a large parcel of land and home in Arizona, drove up to join us. We drove from New Mexico into southern Colorado based upon the recommendations of locals. Coming to Pagosa Springs from the north (Denver) means climbing up and across Wolf Creek pass north of town on U.S. Highway 160. Wolf Creek Pass’s elevation is a solid 10,000 feet, whereas that of Pagosa Springs was only somewhat above 7000 feet. Local skiers begin their ski season (both downhill and cross-country) at Wolf Creek Pass in mid-November. They possibly haven’t closed out this winter’s season yet when you read this!

Our drive from Albuquerque to southern Colorado was enjoyable. We passed through “Georgia O’Keeffe Country” north of Santa Fe. The late afternoon sun illuminated the many colors in the sandstone cliffs in stunning ways. Our residence for the week was the motel First Inn of Pagosa Springs. The rooms were basic but serviceable, and the motel had as amenities a fine sauna, a hot tub, and a ping-pong table. The breakfasts served were very basic, but everyone supplemented with their favorite breakfast goodies purchased in town.



We drove up into the pass on Sunday, our first full day there. Snow was predicted, and snow it did. It was only snowing lightly when our group began skiing down to the Alberta Lake area. After a while the conditions switched to

*(Continued on page 6)*

**Pagosa Springs (cont).**

*(Continued from page 5)*

heavy falling snow. That delighted us but made it difficult to determine which direction we were going. There were plenty of ups and downs to traverse, but by 2 p.m. I was beginning to worry about how difficult it would be to get our vehicles unburied and down the mountainside. Fortunately the downhill ski center's parking lot is largely flat, which was a real blessing for our three minivans plus Rainer and Renate's SUV. We made it down Highway 160 without incident and were amused to see that only some light snow was falling in the town.

The next day we decided to try one of the lesser known trail systems identified in the Pagosa Springs Cross Country Ski Trails brochure. The brochure identifies 14 separate spots to ski in and around the town, including, of course, the Wolf Creek Pass area we had enjoyed the day before. This time we tried the Coyote Hill Nordic Trails. There had been ski races there the morning before, but due to the new snow, all was pristine and white when we pulled into the parking lot—the first vehicles of the day. That day was bright and sunny, so sunglasses and sun block were in order. There were some lovely views of distant Colorado peaks as we skied. After most of us made it around the main trail loop, a group of us decided to go "off the reservation" and head over some largely buried barbed wire fences to explore further. However some people found that they sank too far into the deep, unbroken snow for comfort, so they returned to the regular trails. The others of us explored to our hearts content, marveling at how the texture and depth of the winter's snow varied from place to place. After eating a late lunch out on the trail, we eventually skied back to the Coyote Hill trails and explored the other loop options there before calling it a day. A dozen or two other skiers had skied at this location after our arrival that morning, so the trail snow was well used by the time we arrived back at our vehicles.



**On Sunday photo by Rob Swennes**



**Trail Lunch photo by Rob Swennes**

On Tuesday I recommended that we drive up Highway 160 again to the West Fork ski trails which are around the 9,000 ft. elevation point. I had camped in this area the previous July with my Scout troop and was interested to see how it looked in winter. Since the West Fork is an access point into the Weminuche Wilderness trail system, I recommended that people bring along snow shoes for some trekking on the hiking trails once we skied out to the final parking lot. Due to a navigation error on my part, we wound up skiing up a somewhat steep side trail that was scenic but had us worried about how the descent would be. However it was not that fast a ski down, and all enjoyed the diversion. We then skied up the main West Fork road, meeting Erma Cameron, Rainer, and Renate along the way where they had stopped to enjoy their lunch. Our larger group that day consisted of Barry Weston, Ellen Bauman, Rich Galloway, Joy Saari, Doug and Marcie Schubert, Ron and Jan Tucker, Carroll Ridenhour, Brian O'Konski, Philip Connor, and me. The ski in was about 6 km. When we reached the final parking lot, we ate the lunches we had brought with us and then carefully switched to snowshoes. "Carefully" since one can easily sink deeply into snow if not shifting with care from ski support to snowshoe support. We then trekked a couple of miles into the wilderness on some reasonably steep hiking trails—a good time to be on snowshoes rather than skis. Eventually people began dropping out and turning back for the lengthy trip back to our vehicles. The hard core members of the

group—Barry, Ellen, Rich & Joy (plus Brian and I pulling up a bit later) did snowshoe on to a nice meadow with surrounding aspen groves. It was late enough that we thought it the better part of wisdom to turn back there. The snow had become soft and somewhat sticky just after noon, but by several hours later it was frozen solid again. So our descent on skis (once we switched out of the snowshoes) was rather quick and breathtaking. We took some lovely pictures of the late afternoon sun on the cliff faces as we made our way back to the group at the vehicles.

Wednesday the group split into two. Barry and several others opted to ski out the East Fork trail off Highway 160 with the idea of going to see Silver Falls. The rest of us preferred to use the day to visit Mesa Verde National Park and spend some time in Durango, Colorado. A winter visit to Mesa Verde is a delight, in large measure because there are no crowds. The park ranger who gave us a guided tour was very

*(Continued on page 9)*

**MINUTES BECOME DAZE****Or Annual Meetings Only Seem to happen Once a Year for Some Reason**

The Ski Touring Section of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club held its annual business meeting, and end-of-ski-season social soiree on April 10, 2011, at the home of club member Catherine Payne.

Section Chairman Rob Swennes called the meeting to order (after confirming that was indeed food and drink awaiting in the kitchen). Rob asked all present to introduce themselves, and it turned out we had a nice mix of long-time members, new members, interested folks who had not yet joined, friends or spouses, and two people who had gotten lost but saw platters of food being carried into Catherine's house. Approval of Minutes The first order of business was an offer to have a dramatic reading of the Secretary's minutes from the previous year's annual meeting. But, as the minutes had been published in the Upslope, and also were available at this meeting in hard copy, the minutes were approved on motion by acclamation, without the reading.

**Treasurer's Report**

Brian O'Konski presented the Treasurer's report. The section continues to maintain a healthy positive balance in its account. The primary categories of expense are: the newsletter (production cost for the hard copy editions and postage); costs for volunteer work parties to help prepare and maintain areas where we have multiple club outings (e.g. at White Grass and Laurel Ridge); the Ski Fair; computer equipment and other administrative expenses; and trip expenses. The primary sources of revenue are membership fees and trip revenues. In theory, the trip expenses and the trip revenues should net to about zero. That is, some trips use the club account for lodging deposits or other expenses, but then the trip leader reimburses the account from the payments from those who go on the trip. That way, the leader doesn't have to front the deposit in September and carry it until the trip occurs in February. Not all trips are run through the club account. Sometimes a trip leader will price a trip based on having 10 participants, for example, and if 12 go, there may be an economy of scale that nets a few extra dollars that then may accrue to the club treasury. On the other hand, there may be a shortfall for some reason. That occurred this year on two trips, and the club absorbed the shortfall. One occurred when the club had to make a nonrefundable deposit in the fall, but too few signed up to have the trip go. The club covered the deposit. The second occurred when a trip had to be cancelled for lack of snow, and even though it was a "no go if no snow" trip, there was a partial non-refundable amount on the lodging deposit. With partial credit as deposits for next year on those trips, the net loss to the section this year was about \$400. For the future, leaders will clarify whether participants bear any cost responsibility if there is a trip that is to be cancelled if there is no snow. For example, the cost of the trip may be \$200 per person with 10 participants. But, if the leader has to make a nonrefundable deposit of \$100 for 5 rooms for those 10 people, and then the trip doesn't go, each of the 10 people would still owe \$10 (not the full \$200) if the trip has to be cancelled. The trip descriptions will make any such obligation clear ahead of time. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

**Membership Report**

Membership Coordinator Doug Lesar said the statistics he amassed (with the help of the Congressional Budget Office and the American Enterprise Institute) were surprising to him. He noted that he's been serving in his role for sometime, and thought he had charted an absolutely reliable correlation, proven by regression analysis and Monte Carlo simulations: when there is a good snow year, memberships go up and when there is a poor snow year, they drop off. But this past year gave lie to that seemingly established connection. Yet as Doug's highly anticipated annual metaphor had it for this year, "The air went out of the balloon". He concluded he needs to tweak his correlation model with an additional factor: It's not enough to look solely at the total amount of snow for the season, but rather the timing of it. This year, much of the great snow came late. Doug's new theory: "Snow in Canaan Valley while the birds are building nests does not swell the Section membership", because folks in the flatlands are already getting out the bicycles and kayaks.

Another contrarian membership observation: he found that the number of those requesting the paper publication of the Upslope (vice email version) has gone up. [Secretary's observation--after successfully moving a greater percent of members to the electronic version, to save costs and reduce environmental impact, we have to conclude that many of us (consult your mirrors) are moving into geezerhood and find it easier to read the print version. So, this year, rather than appealing to your cost consciousness, or environmental sensibility, I will appeal to your vanity, and say, if you don't consider yourself a gray panther quite yet, please tell Doug you'd like to get your newsletter electronically.] Doug noted that he sends reminders to current members whose memberships are about to expire. Jennifer Bine posited that one factor that may be holding back prospective new members is lack of information about where they can acquire cross country gear. She thought that an article in the Upslope telling people where to go might be helpful. [Secretary's observation: we have signed Jen up for the Dale Carnegie course, and will not be telling people where to go. But, we appreciate the enthusiasm.]

**Trip Coordinator's Report**

Rich Galloway, the past year's trip coordinator, could not make it to the meeting. Kathy Brumberger has agreed to take on the role for the coming year. Rob thanked Rich, and he and others presented the report on the trips from this past season. There were a few trip cancellations. We are asking potential trip leaders for next year to step forward and make their interest known to the Section officers, and to sign up to lead specific trips. If a person has a trip to suggest, please do that, or if you're willing to lead a trip to one of the venues we go to every year, such as Laurel Highlands or Blackwater Falls, make that known to Kathy. There was a question as to how early trips fill up, reaching the designated limitation on number of participants. Rob responded that it is very trip-specific. Mid Atlantic area trips tend not to fill up before, or maybe not even at, Ski Fair. Some "excursion trips" (those out of the region) may fill up as soon as announced by email. Some do not fill at all, or even get a sufficient number to allow the trip to go forward.

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Minutes (cont.)**

*(Continued from page 7)*

Peggy Alpert will be hosting the ski schedule planning meeting this summer (August 23).

**Old Business**

1. For "excursion trips" (outside mid-Atlantic) the PATC requires that participants be a PATC member (not just an STS member) and provide a PATC waiver (not just the STS waiver). Also, if the trip is outside the US, the participant must have trip insurance for injury and evacuation.

2. Single beds in rental lodging on trips. This issue arises primarily when the lodging for a trip is a house or condo (vice motel rooms). The Section policy is that to guarantee a single bed, a trip leader may charge a surcharge to a participant who wants that. Otherwise, the trip leader can assign two persons of the same sex to a single bed that is queen-sized or larger. In no case can a participant guarantee a whole room to himself or herself. Harvey Walden proposed that a trip leader build in the cost of having single beds, and average that cost to everyone on the trip, because on a trip he was on, some people did get single beds without paying a premium while some had to double up. Peggy Alpert noted that for trip leaders, it is difficult to deal with the odd number bed arrangements, and asked for some empathy for the trip leaders. Making it any harder is going to make it even more difficult to get leaders, and isn't fair to trip leaders trying to juggle things as best they can. The consensus was to leave the policy as it is, with the trip leader having discretionary authority to charge a premium ahead of time to guarantee a single bed, but not to guarantee a single room.

3. Cost obligations on cancelled trips. Rob reiterated the discussion in connection with the Treasurer's report, that some trips may have non-refundable commitments, such as lodging deposits even if the trip is designated as one that will be cancelled for insufficient snow. In that case, the trip leader will make clear in listing and advertising the trip what portion or amount will have to be paid by participants even if the trip is cancelled.

**Election of Officers**

Rob conducted the election of officers for the coming year. He explained that the elected offices are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. He announced that the past year's officers all were willing to serve again if re-elected, and that no one else had offered to run or nominated someone else for any of the offices prior to the meeting. He then requested nominations from the floor. There were none. The members then voted for the slate by acclamation:

Chair--Rob Swennes  
 Vice Chair--Jennifer Bine  
 Secretary--Al Larsen  
 Treasurer--Brian O'Konski

Next, Rob noted the Section leadership positions that are appointed rather than elected. The following were willing to serve, and appointed by Rob to these positions:

Trip Coordinator--Kathy Brumberger  
 Membership Coordinator--Doug Lesar  
 Upslope Editor--Mariamalia Araya  
 Newsletter Mailing Coordinator--Randy Kerr  
 Webmaster--Steve Brickel

Rob noted that Ralph Heimlich, our longtime editor of the Upslope was relinquishing that job after many years of turning out a great publication. The assembled multitude gave Ralph an enthusiastic ovation his work and devotion. Many promised to do a better job for the new editor of getting raw material (known in the trade as "copy" or "content") than we did for Ralph who often had to not only assemble the material but create it. Thanks Ralph.

**New Business**

Kathy Brumberger--she is soliciting trip leaders as well as ideas for trips. Discussion of a brochure for the STS that would serve as an overview introduction and information source for the Section's activities. Ralph and Peggy did one two years ago. It would be good to get something to PATC, which has been handing out outdated flyers. Discussion of a higher membership fee for those who want paper version of newsletter (to reflect the higher cost to club). Prevailing view was that it was too complicated to differentiate the dues structure. Instead, we should emphasize the advantage of getting information earlier via the electronic version, for example for signing up for trips.

Harvey asked if STS was considering becoming a separate entity rather than a section operating under the PATC. Rob responded that the officers had checked into the possibility, advantages and disadvantages of doing that, and had found a lot of complications in changing from the current arrangement. The officers do not intend to pursue the issue.

Delving into the nuances of organizational charts and the possible need for new rules and bylaws somehow dampened the enthusiasm for any more discussion (yeah, who knew), so Rob declared the meeting over and the socializing underway.

**Respectfully submitted,  
 Al Larsen, Secretary**



**Pagosa Springs (cont).**



**Miki photo by Rob Swennes**

*(Continued from page 6)*

knowledgeable about the pueblo-building Indians who built their habitations under the natural cliff overhangs in several of the canyons. After leaving the park, we stopped in Durango for a while in order to visit a historic hotel that had been recommended to us. We were told that it offered a good happy hour with live Western music. The report was correct on both counts. Our server at the bar was an attractive woman dressed in an old-style hostess costume with a prominent garter on her thigh and a bright blue costume complete with a feathered head piece. She had impressive long legs, and I joked to our group that she would probably make a great skate skier. When placing our orders with her later, we mentioned that we would likely ski at the Nordic center north of Durango the following day, and she said “See you there”.

And when we arrived at that Nordic center on Thursday morning, there she was as one of two women running the center. I asked her which was her primary job—tending bar at the historic hotel in Durango or helping to run the ski center. To which she replied, neither. Her main vocation is as an artist, and both the ski and bar jobs offer enjoyable ways to make ends meet so that she can pursue her artistic interests. (You can see her work at <http://www.mikiharderart.com/>.) Miki said it was lucky that we had chosen to ski at the center that day since the place would be closed to the public the following two days due to high school Nordic ski races. Though we had the center’s trails largely to ourselves until early afternoon, by late afternoon probably a hundred high school students and some families had shown up and were buzzing around us on the trails. By the time we left, it did seem as though a hive of brightly colored winter bees had taken over the center and its trails, some of which we had found fairly challenging.



**Colorado downhill skiing photo by Rob Swennes**

Friday was our last full day to ski. Barry, Ellen, Rich and Joy decided to try some skiing and snowshoeing in the backcountry further up into Wolf Creek Pass. Many of the rest of us decided to try the trek out to Silver Falls that the smaller group had visited two days before. It was a long ski out, and even when we reached the waterfall sign, it took us some time to clamber up to the point where we could see it. But it was worth the effort though by the time we all made it back to the vehicles, we were pretty beat.

Our time on skis or snowshoes had increased each day of the trip, beginning at about 4 hours of skiing at first and ending at 7.5 hours on the skis by Friday. For much of the group this was their only skiing opportunity this winter, so it took them some time to get their “ski legs” fully back.

Pagosa Springs had a surprisingly broad range of restaurants to enjoy our week there, but several of them were totally booked when we tried to visit them. One of these was the town microbrewery which was a nondescript place with a dirt parking lot off a side street. But its beer was great and we couldn’t even get a place in the parking lot by the end of the week.



**Pagosa Hot Springs photo by Rob Swennes**

The other real delight in the town was the natural thermal springs for which Pagosa Springs is famous. Pretty much everyone tried them at least one evening, but several of us went back repeatedly during the week, since the hot water loaded with a wide range of minerals endemic to that area are reputed to have great therapeutic value. We met a wide range of people at the hot springs, including some Navaho and Apache Indians who had been coming for generations. It is a world into itself—but a great compliment to a day of backcountry skiing in the Rocky Mountains.

One member of our group insisted that she wants to spend a week skiing in Pagosa Springs every winter. Well, I don’t know that we will be going back that often, but it does have an irresistible draw. One final point worth mentioning is that the town in a rather low key way does clearly provide a lot of support for cross-country skiing in the area. Though most of the off-road trails we visited were listed in the town’s Nordic ski brochure as being “groomed”, I thought “yeah, sure”. But in fact grooming machines came though on both the West Fork and East Fork trails while we were on them and improved the skiing conditions.

It was a week-long trip that the whole group thoroughly enjoyed.

**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

<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 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 |