



UPSLOPE



Newsletter of the NORDIC Ski Touring Section of PATC

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

April 2014

UpComing Attractions In Spring UPSLOPE

- YOUR Ski Trip Reports
- Après Ski Party

PATC-ST\$ Après Ski Party

The snow in the mountains is all gone, and Spring has sprung. That means it's time to wrap things up in our traditional STS way--with our annual apres ski gathering, or end-of-season party and meeting, on Sunday, May 18.

In what has become a favorite outing for many of us,



PATC Skiers at Jackson Hill Trail Section, BREIA (Tug Hill, NY area) photo by Peggy Alpert

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.



John, Steve and Marcie near Blackwater Lake photo by Dick Simmons



Bill and Randy on the Catamount Trail

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. After the meeting (about 5PM) we will have a "pot luck" dinner. 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: Peggy Alpert (H: 301-946-4497 mountainmama15@verizon.net)

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APRES SKI PARTY NOW ON

Sunday, May 18, 2014

Meeting at 4PM Potluck at 5PM

Please RSVP who??

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

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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The winter just concluded was a good one for cross-country skiing. Many of the Ski Touring Section’s trips both near and far worked out well, with skiable snow and plenty of camaraderie. Our season began with two work trips organized by Erma Cameron and Lynn Yates. The first freshened up some of the ski trails at Laurel Mountain, PA, while the second provided major trail assistance to Chip at the White Grass ski touring center in WV. Since those are major trail networks that we ski each winter, helping to get them into shape before the snow falls benefits us all. Thanks to Erma and Lynn and to all the volunteers who assisted. Consider participating next fall if that’s not already on your calendar.

Scheduled ski trips for the first half of January were cancelled due to lack of good snow. That’s always a risk for early in the season. The mid January ski trip up to the White Mountains in NH was a success, with 15 skiers participating. Most enjoyed one day of snowshoeing as well, which was a great deal of fun. Greg Westernik’s Learn to Ski trip up to Laurel Highlands the same weekend provided some on-ski instruction to four new skiers. Thanks to Greg and another instructor for helping to introduce more people to our sport.

The following weekend, January 24 -26, the Section hosted trips to Canaan Valley, WV and Laurel Highlands, with great skiing in both locations. At the end of January, Ralph Heimlich led a successful trip to Blackwater Falls, where the skiing was good on Friday and springtime-like skiing was the norm on Saturday with some of the younger folks stripping down to shorts and T-shirts in temperatures near 50 degrees. The following weekend in February the snow was patchy at the lower levels around White Grass but was reportedly wonderful higher up in the adjacent Dolly Sods Wilderness. The snow that weekend was rated as “great” in Laurel Highlands by STS skiers there.

Excellent snow conditions on the Section’s week plus trip out to the Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks in Wyoming! See the separate article in this issue. The availability and quality of snow began tailing off the second half of February and impacted our trips accordingly. The Section’s early March ski trip to Estonia suffered from a lack of snow throughout Europe this past winter, though the trip participants were able to substitute hiking and more enjoyment of Estonia’s history and culture on days when they didn’t ski.

I look forward to meeting many of you at the Section’s annual meeting and après-ski social on Sunday, May 18th at Catherine Payne’s lovely home. You are encouraged to participate in the annual meeting beginning at 4 p.m. to get some insight into how the Section functions and to offer your suggestions. I love pot luck events such as the après-ski social that follows the meeting (around 5 p.m.). Can’t wait to hear your stories of the winter season just past and the group’s ideas for Nordic ski trips for next winter!

Rob Swennes, Chair



Yellowstone and Grand Tetons 2014

By Rob Swennes

I'm sitting here in the comfort of my room at the Snow Lodge enjoying an afternoon rest after days of travel and skiing in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Outside my window it is white. Not snow-on-the-ground white, but white-out white. We have had snow fall every day of our trip, but today the snow gods seem to be making an effort to set a record. One to three inches of snow were predicted. Ha! I'd guess we will get four to six inches at least before the steady winds and snow ease off. Many of our group are out skiing in these brutal weather conditions on trails radiating out from Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park.

But to begin at the beginning . . . Fifteen members of the Ski Touring Section (STS) of PATC signed up for this lengthy trip out to two of the nation's premier national parks: Yellowstone and Grand Tetons. Most of the group flew from BWI to Salt Lake City on Saturday, February 8th. We are to return to BWI on Wednesday, February 19th. Thus, this was a 12-day trip for backcountry skiing and some snowshoeing in the northern Rockies.

We drove north from Salt Lake City to the town of West Yellowstone, appropriately located on the west side of the nation's first national park. Even before we reached Idaho Falls, the rain we encountered on landing had changed to snow. The snow continued steadily as we drove on to West Yellowstone (elev. 6,666 ft.), arriving at 11:30 p.m. The snow plows were out in large numbers, which was a comforting sight.

Sunday morning, after a good breakfast at the Kelly Inn, the skiers chose to either ski at the Rendezvous Ski Touring Center in West Yellowstone or ski on the Riverside Trail that begins at the east end of town on the edge of the national park. The trail follows the northern bank of the Madison River which flows from Yellowstone. A solitary trumpeter swan in the river flapped its wings and laboriously lifted in flight as we passed. Several other small winter animals and birds were spotted during the day. Upon our return to town, we skied to a nearby grocery to

pick up provisions for future days' treks. Skiing around town is easy since the streets are not plowed clean. The town depends heavily on the many snowmobile enthusiasts who flock to the town each winter. They drive their vehicles along trails and roads within the adjacent Gallatin National Forest. A select minority are able to go on guided snowmobile tours within Yellowstone National Park, though the machines they use must be the quieter and less polluting four-stroke engines rather than the normal two-stroke ones. And the number of snowmobilers permitted each day within the park has been significantly reduced by the National Park Service over the last 20 years.

[Editor's Note: Rules governing the final Winter Use Plan for Yellowstone were published October 23, 2013. See <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parkmgmt/currentmgmt.htm>]

Over half the group decided to undertake a major full-day trek on Monday. It was a ski and snow shoe ascent of the Daley Creek Trail off of U.S. Highway 191 up to the Sky Rim Trail at the northwest corner of the national park. Those who had not brought snowshoes with them had to rent them Sunday afternoon in order to permit a dawn departure the next morning. That day's skiing and snowshoeing effort lasted ten and a half hours, with the group members returning to their cars at 6:30 in the evening.



Doug Lesar at the beginning of the Riverside Trail photo by Rob Swennes

The Daley Creek Trail in winter is a challenge to follow since the normally obvious summertime trail is buried under several feet of snow. The orange metal trail markers on the trees are old, few and far between, and most of the occasional trails barely visible in the snow are the surviving traces of animals passing, not people. Barry Weston, a PATC member from Durham, NC led the group in its efforts to trace its way up to a specific spot in the Yellowstone wilderness about 6 miles in from the highway. The group cross-country skied about two-thirds of the way. Once that point was reached by mid-afternoon, the group switched from skis to snowshoes that they had carried attached to their backpacks. Each person had to be careful not to step onto the bare snow since that would result in sinking in up to hip depth, even with snow shoes. The skis were left standing vertically in the snow, to be recovered on the return leg of the trip.

The tantalizing edge of the Sky Rim Trail was visible before us during most of the trek into the park. It is, appropriately, where the hillside rim meets the sky. Once we reached the beginning of that ridge trail, we snow shod up to the first high point on the trail. From there we could gaze up to 40 miles away in every direction. While the route up to the trail was steep, the back side of that ridgeline trail dropped almost vertically several hundred feet into the Gallatin National Forest. We had to tread carefully along the trail and stay away from the edge of any overlook point since one could not tell from above whether the edge was underpinned by rock or a



STS snow shoers (and Jack Kangas on skis) on the Sky Rim Trail high above Yellowstone by Rob Swennes

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Yellowstone and Grand Tetons (cont.)

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deceptive snow overhang that could break loose in an instant.

We had only a few minutes to enjoy the view before beginning our long trek down to our vehicles. One member of the crew, Jack Kangas, had decided to try to do the full ascent to the Sky Rim Trail using only his backcountry skis. On the steeper sections of the trail he used climbing skins attached to the bottom of his skis. On the descent he simply removed the skins and skied back down from the crest, exhibiting a higher level of skiing skill than most the crew could claim.

Tuesday the STS crew shifted from West Yellowstone to Jackson Hole, Wyoming (elev. 6,209 ft.). Our drive took us past Harriman State Park, in Idaho, and many stopped for an hour or two to ski on the backcountry trails in that snowy park. Trumpeter swans and other migrating or local winter birds often gather on the lake at Harriman.

The customary route from West Yellowstone to Jackson Hole involves crossing Teton Pass, just west of Jackson, Wyoming. This is a high pass with frequent falling snow in the colder months. Two of our four vehicles successfully transited via the pass. The other two encountered heavy snowfall as they approached the pass and had to reach Jackson by use of lower elevation roads that added about 80 miles to their trip.

It snowed heavily Tuesday night, and by Wednesday morning, not only was Teton Pass closed but also the north/south highway that connects the town of Jackson to Flagg Ranch, the transition point for those with reservations at the Snow Lodge in Yellowstone. Though the STS group had planned to ski northward that day in Grand Tetons National Park to Jenny Lake, local road closures due to the heavy snow made that impossible. On the advice of Park Service personnel, we instead drove carefully over the snow-covered Moose-Wilson Road to Teton Village and to a plowed-out parking area further along the road. The snow was falling heavily, and we carefully positioned our vehicles facing outward to make our later departure easier. The group broke into several smaller crews for skiing purposes but agreed to meet back at the cars by a set hour. The largest crew skied into the Laurance Rockefeller Preserve that was added to the park after that benefactor's death. They skied up in the falling snow to the edge of Phelps Lake, which is at the base of the Teton range of mountains. But the snowfall was too heavy to permit any good photography. The skiing back down the hillside was a delight, given the deep, light fallen snow. That evening, like everyone in the town of Jackson, we enjoyed a fine meal at a local restaurant.

Thursday morning we resolved again to ski to Jenny Lake in the park and back. Though the road heading toward the lake from Moose Junction had reopened after plowing, there was a constant, heavy wind in the valley that made skiing in the open a challenge. To avoid the wind, the group opted instead to ski to Taggart Lake through the woods. The group ultimately broke in two and tried different approaches to the lake. Ultimately one disappointed crew met a local skier who offered to lead the skiers to the edge of the lake, which was only a 10 minute ski away. They later learned that their guide was a woman who lived near Baltimore and flew out regularly to Jackson Hole to enjoy the backcountry skiing. Steady snow fell all of Thursday afternoon.

Friday the STS group traveled to the Snow Lodge adjacent to Old Faithful. The first leg of this trip involved driving from Jackson north through the Grand Tetons NP to Flagg Ranch at the north edge of the park. Though some snow fell during the drive, the roadway was clear enough for general travel. At Flagg Ranch the skiers transferred to new-generation bombardier vehicles that each winter carry guests to the Snow Lodge from several directions. These vehicles are tracked like tanks at the rear and have two skis at the front. The roads in Yellowstone are not plowed clean in the wintertime, and the bombardier vehicles and snowmobiles are the only motorized vehicles allowed in the park during the colder months.



Jack Kangas, Barry Weston, Diane Weil and Doug Lesar near the edge of Taggart Lake by Rob Swennes

The new bombardiers can take up to 10 passengers each, plus their luggage, which is stowed under a heavy tarp on top of the vehicle. The 40-mile trip takes about 3 hours. Several stops are made along the way to permit passengers to see and experience special aspects of the park. Driving a ski-and-tracked vehicle on these snow-covered roads is tricky, and our vehicle skidded off the roadway due to loose snow about 10 miles short of Old Faithful. Fortunately the bombardier vehicles travel in loose convoys, with each being about 10 minutes apart. Our situation was radioed to the bombardiers behind us, and soon a cluster of half a dozen yellow bombardiers was gathered around us. Ultimately three of the tracked vehicles using tow straps were able to pull our yellow bombardier from the loose snow. No injuries were suffered, and the vehicle drivers showed great skill and positive attitudes in resolving this transit problem.

The Snow Lodge is an anomaly in the cold and forbidding landscape that is Yellowstone in winter. This most recently built of the several lodges that surround Old Faithful geyser is the only lodge open deep in the park during the winter. In the summertime thousands of people visit Old Faithful each day by car and bus. In the winter this influx of people is reduced to a small trickle, and most of these are those who make a day trip into the park by snowmobile. The Snow Lodge can accommodate only 250 - 300

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Yellowstone and Grand Teton (cont.)

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guests per night, but those who can overnight enjoy a first-class experience. Reservations to stay at the Snow Lodge must be made many months in advance. Due to its high elevation (7,362 ft.), the terrain surrounding Old Faithful enjoys excellent snow conditions throughout the winter, though winds and frigid temperatures can make skiing or snowshoeing challenging.

On Saturday our ski group undertook one of the most beautiful ski treks in the Old Faithful area. We purchased a one-way ride on a bombardier out to the Fairy Falls Trail turnoff. From there we began skiing westward. We crossed the Firehole River and saw in the distance on the right the many thermal features that characterize this area of the park, known as Fountain Flats. At the 1.3 mile point we turned left into the stands of lodgepole pine that are reforesting an area of the park denuded by the 1988 Yellowstone fire. Fairy Falls cannot be missed. It drops from a high abutment point to the left and in wintertime is an enchanting mix of ice and water. On the date of our visit the water cascading from the top was encased in an ice "pipe" that extended several feet over the abyss. From time to time small snowballs would spontaneously descend down an almost vertical wall of snow near the waterfall. In their descent many of them would gather enough snow to become wheels in shape before they reached a resting place. From Fairy Falls we skied further on to a series of smaller geysers, one of which was Imperial Geyser. These are well off the beaten path and thus seen at any time only by a miniscule percent of Yellowstone visitors.



Yellowstone Park support personnel planning the recovery of our stranded bombardier photo by Rob Swennes

The most challenging aspect of a trek to Fairy Falls is that you are responsible for getting yourself all the way back to the Snow Lodge. This makes the journey at least 11 miles overall. Rather than following the road the whole way back, one can divert onto the Biscuit Basin Trail, which passes several well known thermal pools and geysers in the area. It was snowing heavily and windy as well on this part of our return.



Skiers enjoying the magical grandeur of Fairy Falls photo by Rob Swennes

Sunday the group broke into several smaller crews to explore various trails in the area. Some took the Black Sands Basin Trail to explore additional thermal geysers and pools in the area, though the steady winds and heavy snowfall made photography difficult. A few others trekked through the tempest to a small canyon to view Mystic Falls, another classic Yellowstone ski touring destination reached shortly before the storm abated.

At times it proved difficult to find any trace of ski tracks you had set only half an hour before. Efforts to see a clear eruption of the Old Faithful Geyser proved equally frustrating since the weather would be clear on occasion and then be white-out conditions five minutes later.

On Monday the group again broke into separate crews to enjoy a variety of skiing options. Some of us did a several-mile trek to the Lone Star Geyser which stands by itself in the wilderness. It has built a large, thick cone over the centuries and fairly regularly spits out liquid and steam. Later that afternoon two of us opted to do some snowshoeing in the area. The route we chose had cross-country ski and snowshoe trails crisscrossing on the climb up the hillside and back down again. Since no one had been snowshoeing in

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Are You Already Part of YAHOO GROUPS?

If you haven't joined Yahoo Groups, make sure to do it.

Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PATC-STS/>

Ask to join the group. You will get a confirmation message in your email.

FACEBOOK: Please sign on to the STS Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ski-Touring-Section-Potomac-Appalachian-Trail-Club/226549600733615> and "Like" us. You can easily locate it by putting the phrase "Ski Touring Section" into the search box at the top of the Facebook page. "Likes" are critical for getting status on Facebook and thus for helping others find us when they want information on Nordic skiing.

Blackwater Falls Cabin Trip, February 6-9

By Kathy Brumberger

We were hopeful that Mother Nature would provide us with enough snow for our weekend and there was some snow, but not quite enough. However, 8 of us made the best of the weekend just the same. We skied for a few hours on Friday morning around Blackwater Falls State park. Some of us skied near the cabin and others went down to the area by the lake and ventured out on trails. However, with only a few inches of wet snow the going was rough and sticky! After lunch at the cabin, we walked down to Blackwater Falls where the spray from the falls turned the trees and rocks into a winter wonderland.

We had a wonderful pot luck dinner on Friday night. On Saturday we decided to go to White Grass and determine the conditions there. Ralph F. decided he would ski there. He made it up to the top of Bald Knob where the skiing was great. However getting up to that point and down...not much fun. The rest of us took a hike from White Grass to Timberland and back where we met Ralph and headed for the cabin.

The group decided on burritos at Hellbenders in Davis for dinner Saturday night along with appetizers, salad, and pie from the previous night. Most everyone started home on Sunday morning. Some took another hike to the Falls and John T. ventured in the area to take fabulous photos.



Caption photo by John Tichnor



Caption photo by John Tichnor



Caption photo by John Tichnor

A Canaan Valley Cabin Trip



Doug Lesar led a successful cabin trip to Canaan Valley, as evidenced by this picture (and the one on the back cover) taken by Large Marjory??who is this?

Just goes to show that what you experienced depended on the weekend you went.

A Cross-Country Ski along the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, February 17, 2014

By Paul Fofonoff

Over several years, around 1996-2000, I'd hiked about 106 miles of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, from Washington DC to Dam no.5, west of Williamsport MD, near Hagerstown. I wanted a winter adventure on President's Day, but was reluctant to take the 3-4 hour drive to New Germany State Park, with a nice, developed X-C ski area. So I decided to do an unexplored section of the canal, from Dam No, 5 to (hopefully) Fort Frederick and back, a round trip of about 13 miles.

Unfortunately, my camera battery ran out, so you'll miss pictures of Four Locks and more river scenery. I made it as far as Mile 111, and skied about 11 miles, finishing just before sunset. The snow was icy and sometimes difficult, but the towpath is nearly level. I saw quite a few deer, a flock of Wild Turkeys, a Common Raven, and a flock of Common Mergansers. Overall, it was quite an adventure.



Stonewall Jackson tried twice to blow up the dam, which provided water to run the canal, which brought coal and grain to Washington *photo by Paul Fofonoff*



Lockhouse at Lock 46. Lock-keepers lived in these houses, and had to be ready, at any time of day to fill or drain the locks for passing barges. The barges were pulled by mules. *photo by Paul Fofonoff*



Lock 45, with stone foundations of a vanished wooden bridge over the canal *photo by Paul Fofonoff*

Bridges

by Greg Rudl

What did NJ Governor Chris Christie say to the pesky reporter asking about whether he would run for president in 2016: "I'll close that bridge when I come to it."

Luckily there weren't any closed bridges on the way to Laurel Ridge for our club ski trip February 8-9, just the King's and Barronvale covered bridges just off Rt. 653. You know the old saying—"stop and see the bridges" — well, that's a given when your traveling companion's favorite movie is "The Bridges of Madison County." I'd driven by those bridges several times and never stopped, but was glad when Maryanne suggested we do.

Talking of bridges, Laurel Ridge State Park, or those Pennsylvanian Nordics, need to build one over Rt. 653 so skiers can get to the orange loop faster. Its phenomenal and I believe it's new for this year. The first half takes you out on a service road and the second half winds you back home through the woods. With this expanded orange loop, LRSP now has 30 kilometers of groomed trail.

The STS-approved Econo Lodge was more than ample, despite rambunctious kids a floor above. I suggest you take the 10 percent off coupon from the front desk and walk on over to the Pine Grill. Maryanne had the swordfish and I had the pork chops (scrumptious!).

Another successful STS ski trip in the books (even though it was just two of us) — a chance to build bridges with friends and new acquaintances in the beautiful snowy outdoors. And by the way, try not to get Laurel Ridge confused with Laurel Hill or Laurel Mountain, which are all in the Laurel Highlands.

Memories of SNOWMAGEDDON 2010

Snowmageddon 2010



Greg Westernick: On the fourth anniversary of the two Nor'easter snow storms to hit the DELMARVA area during 2/4-5 and 2/9-10/2010, STSers fondly recall the historic snowfall totals we enjoyed. Most notable for each of these twin storms was the widespread 20 to 35 in (50 to 90 cm) of snow dropped across southern Pennsylvania, the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., Maryland, Delaware, and southern New Jersey, bringing Interstate Highway travel to a halt.

Before the second storm hit, I lead a group of more than a dozen hardy STSers (including stalwarts such as John Tichenor, Bozena Sarnecka, Lucretia Darling and Adir Avonovich) on a formal STS weekend ski trip in the Laurel Highlands that few of us will ever forget. Greeting us after our arrival at the Econolodge in Somers-

set, PA (formerly the Super 8), the PA Turnpike was immediately closed for the next 36 hours after arrival. On Saturday, a few adventurers among us were able to dig out and drive down to Laurel Ridge STC in Adir's car for some groomed skiing. The rest of us spent the weekend doing untracked skiing around the vacant lots, local cemetery and side streets of this section of downtown Somerset. We walked to our eateries, skied out the door of the lodge blazing trails in snow depths exceeding more than two feet with 15 -25 mph winds. Given such snow depths, no steep slope was beyond anyone's reach. Alas, we had to leave on Sunday afternoon. Upon arrival back in the DC area, we found a wasteland of abandoned cars to navigate around like a pinball game, boilerplate ice patches on the interstate, plenty of snow shoveling awaiting for us to get into our cars and homes....and more weeks of local skiing to enjoy for our future pleasure.

Harrison Snow: Thanks for the great story Greg - here's mine: A week or so after the second big snowfall I drove up to Shenandoah Park. Because Skyline Drive was closed, I took a back road on the western side of the park that ended at one of the fire roads. I skied into the park up the fire road to Skyline Drive and then, after a couple of miles, headed north on the AT. I took a blue-blazed side trail from the AT to one of the PATC cabins and spent two cold nights at the cabin, and two glorious days skiing the trails to various overlooks and mountain top views. To gather wood (lots of deadfall from ice) or fetch water from the spring, I had to don my skis because the snow was too deep to wade through. Just getting to the nearby latrine was an exercise in post-holing. If I had had the key to another couple of PATC cabins in the park it would have been tempting to do an American style *haut route*. If we have another big snow in the park again, I would certainly want to go back, but to another cabin. No matter how much wood I burned in the iron stove, the cabin refused to warm up. The place was rumored to be haunted and the first night there did have an eerie feel to it. I woke in the middle of that night with sound of a bell ringing close by with no hint of where it was coming from. I didn't see another person or any other tracks but mine the entire time in the park. The solitude, sunshine and the deep snow made for a sweet trip.

Alan Landay: My main memory is carrying my skis across the street from my house, putting them on, and skiing the Matthew Henson Trail. It doesn't get more convenient than that! I even DVR'ed the Olympic XC ski races while I was skiing; then watched them skiing when I got back. It was great.

Doug Lesar: My main memory of Snowmageddon 2010 was telly skiing at White Grass in the aftermath. I could ski steeps and tight tree glades with no fear, as the snow was so deep! Many slopes may not be as skiable by me-of-little-talent in my remaining lifetime (e.g. Flat Rock Bowl and the north-side pipeline plunge off Baldy, normally too rocky for much of anything). Those were FINE days.

Yellowstone and Grand Teton (cont.)

(Continued from page 5)

the area for some time, that trail was faint to see. At one point I saw a hole in the deep snow about six feet to my right. Curious, I stepped over to explore it — and immediately sank into the snow up to hip depth even though wearing snow shoes! Nothing like stepping off the beaten path in Yellowstone to learn how deep the surrounding snow really is.

Many took a shuttle ride to the continental divide trailhead for a tour to that high point followed by a long and scenic return trip on Spring Creek trail/ The last STSer to traverse this route that day (Doug) had to extricate himself from a "sinkhole" that opened up beneath his skis at an exceptionally boulder spot hard by the steep creek bank. Never a dull moment in the activity of ski touring.

On the bombardier ride back out of Yellowstone the next morning, many in the group were pensive, thinking over the many wondrous sites seen on the trip. Yellowstone National Park has always been a world apart from the bustling complexity and artificiality of modern society. In wintertime, that sense of difference is even greater. We left these awesome national parks in the West with a sense of having been regrounded in the real world, and with a desire to return once again someday to the wellsprings of life to be found within Yellowstone.



The lonesome Lone Star geyser in Yellowstone *photo by Rob Swennes*



David Adams, Barbara Nash, Diane Weil, Agata Marriott (party hidden), Izabella Zandberg, Jack Kangas, Rob Swennes and Brian O'Konski snuggled tight in their returning bombardier *photo by Rob Swennes*

PATC-Ski Touring Section
c/o Doug Lesar
2507 Campbell Place



Snowy Canaan Valley photo by Margery Perko

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 |