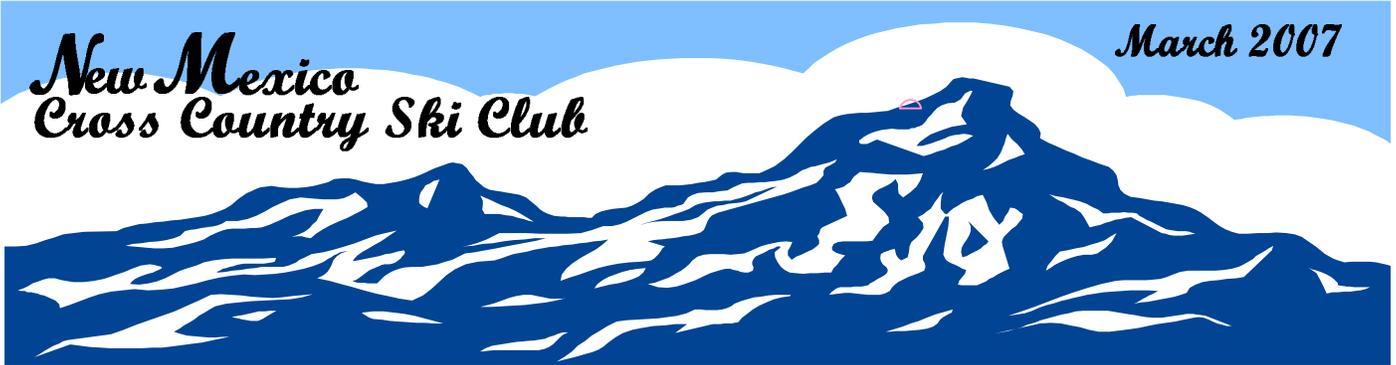


# New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

March 2007



[www.naturediscovery.org/nmccskiclub](http://www.naturediscovery.org/nmccskiclub)

## From the President:

The ski season is passing by quickly, but we're not done yet. Scruffy the weather dog has assured me that March has plenty of snow left to offer us and he is urging you to contact Bill Heitz and schedule some day trips in the Sandia and Jemez mountains. Executive Board Elections will be held at our March meeting so please come and vote. While we're not offering canned hams at the polling place, we are offering you cheese cake as our traditional March refreshment.

I'd like to thank every member of the NMCCSC for providing me with the opportunity to serve as President for the last 4 years. I have learned a lot and gotten to know many of you better as a result of this experience. Special thanks to the Executive Board whose hard work and innovation improves your club every year! See you on the trail...

...

*Mike*

## Avalanche School – Go !!!

*By Sherry Fitzmaurice*

Be prepared to be scared out of your wits, but, heck that's part of the fun! The class that started on Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> had a broad base of participants including those from Oklahoma (now why would somebody from a prairie state want to take an Avalanche class?) and others that typically don't consider that they are skiing unless they get to where they are going via helicopter (*and, ya gotta ask, what took them so long to get to this class?*). The instructors are tops in their field of science whether it be high altitude medicine, alpine terrain, and snow compilation. Most also sideline as guides, one is the mayor of Crested Butte, a number are PhDs or Drs, and all are clearly informative and have a ton of data to dump in a short period of time. So it really is a good idea to bring pen & paper. I took 14 pages of notes in about size 10 font.

**Another thing, equipment.** Thank you Guy for mentioning snowshoes would be a good thing. I also thank Donna Lisotto for lending me hers, and Gene for digging them out of the bus. During the first two field sessions (4 hours each) there is a whole lot of standing around, while we are working the transceivers, rescue scenarios, and snow pit digging. So snowshoes, and lots of warm clothes are de rigueur. The later part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> field session and all of the 3<sup>rd</sup> session (5-6 hours) is backcountry exploring to test your new found skills. This is when I truly recognized, I need new equipment. 90% of those with skis had the really fat babies: as in 134-100-125 cm width dimensions (for those of you who are metric challenged, the skis were about 5 – 6" wide), & plastic telemark boots. I could not keep up w/these powder travelers.

**An interesting note: the transceivers are generic battery specific.** In other words, do not put anything fancy in those babies, or they will not work properly. I have to retest mine, as it will send out a signal, but it will not search out a signal. Before I leave this subject, those of us on the bus trips working w/transceivers really ought to test both receptivity and distance capabilities.

### March 8 Meeting 7:30

Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd. NE

Business: Election of 2007/2008 Officers & Board

- Program: 1. NM Volunteers for the Outdoors  
and  
2. The Sport of 'Skijoring'  
(Dog Assisted Skiing)

Summer Picnic  
June 9 in the Jemez

Should we need to do a search, God forbid, we will know how large the grid should be. uh, duh!

For those going into the San Juan backcountry, the Avalanche Weather & Report number is 970-247-8187. Information gained here is just one of the useful data bits needed to determine your day and routes. Other data includes info garnered from terrain, wind, avalanche observations, snow pits, stability tests, and awareness of what is called "the human factor" (**which helps to explain why there are more victims of avalanches in mixed groups than there are in single sexed groups.** Sorry, did I frighten you?).

Until the next meeting or bus trip, think about avalanches, and avalanche preparedness. When you run into either Lowell, Jean, or myself; you can pump us full of questions. Not only will you benefit, but so will we, as this information will be drilled into our graying heads!

And, I leave you with these fun informative enlightening thoughts: Viagra & Cialis are great for altitude sickness as they are vasodilators. That makes the class a great place to be female: **it's the guys that are lined up during the bio breaks!**

**Day Trip: Virgin Canyon in the Jemez**

*By Louise Broadbent*

*Ruth Bargman-Romero and Terri Elisberg, Virgin Canyon*



*Photo by Louise*

On February 3, 23 skiers started out at FR 376 going south into Lake Fork Canyon. We traveled around 12 miles in glorious snow and sunshine. Thanks to David Floor for leading the Class I tour and giving some new members and opportunity to try some back country skiing at a slower pace.

**Day Trip – Mt Taylor**

*By John Thomas*

Carol Haller, Byron Garnet, Pam Reynolds and I ascended Mt. Taylor on January 28. We left the parking area at 10:30 am, had lunch about 400' below Mt Taylor and then made the summit by about 1:00 pm.

Pam and I removed our climbing skins and Telled down the slope, she rather elegantly and I in my own manner. The snow was quite good. Byron and Pam were less elegant and just ripped down the middle of the trail. Carol carefully skied down behind us. We all had a delightful time and Pam got her practice in for the Quadrathlon. I was pleased with myself that I made it to the base of Mt Taylor without using climbing skins.

Tom Broadbent and I repeated the assault on Mt. Taylor on Feb 18, the day after the 2007 Quadrathlon when conditions were, well, - just a little - hard packed..



*Photos by Carol Haller*



## Harry Gates Hut Trip

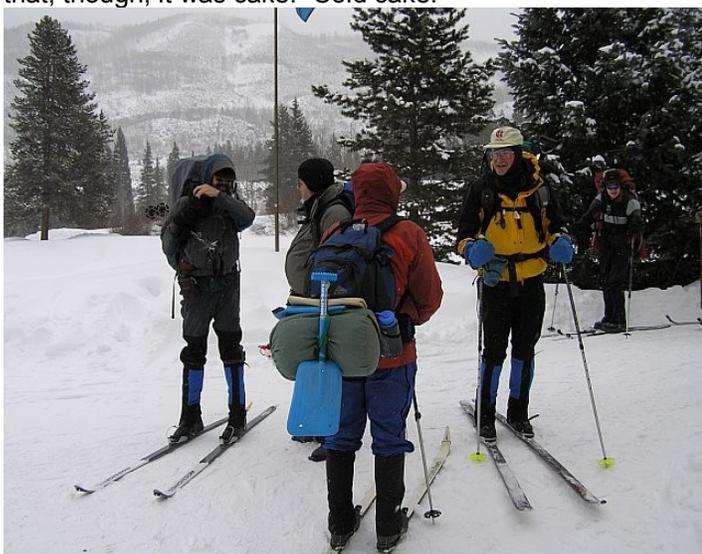
*By Guy Miller*



*Harry Gates Hut Photo by Eric Russell*

The final roster for the Harry Gates Hut trip totaled a lucky 13 skiers, including 3 hut cherries. This trip featured a new, interesting element, in that, instead of crashing at an el-cheapo motel the night before hitting the trail, we instead stayed at the very plush, yet entirely affordable, Diamond J Ranch, 26 miles east of Basalt, Colorado. Our deal included a sumptuous cowboy breakfast to get us started in the morning. We started skiing literally from the front entrance of the ranch.

Unfortunately, the trailhead was not where it was supposed to be, and we lost about an hour until our GPS capability led us to the correct path. After that, it was a piece of cake. Well, after we climbed a couple of hundred steep vertical feet, that is. Well, OK, so it was also cold. Very cold. OK, it was without a doubt the COLDEST hut trip I've ever experienced. Other than that, though, it was cake. Cold cake.



*5 Degrees Photo by Pam Reynolds*

We found the hut exactly where it was supposed to be, resting serenely atop a small knoll in the middle of a meadow. Nearby tall pines stood silent sentry duty beneath snow-covered Alpine peaks which hovered above the cabin, watching over those who sought shelter and comfort within. I had thought that this hut, which is the lowest in elevation of all of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division huts, would be lacking in scenic views, but this was not at all the case.

Our group enjoyed two full days of Nordic touring, although, due to the snow depth and lack of trails, we were unable to reach all of the destinations that we had sought. Disappointment was short-lived, as our convivial group enjoyed the overall hut experience, which was capped by killer dinners prepared by our three hut chefs Karen Leach, Phyllis Pryor, and Pam Reynolds.

In addition to our afore-mentioned culinary heroes, we were joined by hut cherries Chet Leach, Rob Richards, and Don Mullen. Eric Russell, no stranger to hut skiing, was, nevertheless, on his first trip with our Club. Steve Verchinski, on his second outing with our group, was joined by long time hut veterans Dave Saylor, John Stephens, Bill Davey, and Katie Crawford.

The ski out presented some difficulties in the last mile or so, due to the steepness and icy conditions. Given the good time had by all, however, I'm guessing that the memories of those last few hundred yards are fading quickly, and our hut skiers are already looking forward to the next trip!



*GPS  
Check to  
Find  
Harry  
Gates  
Hut*

*Photo by  
Eric*

## Hut Trip Outlook for 2008

By Guy Miller

Our Club's lottery entry for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division Hut Association drawing has been submitted, and receipt has been confirmed. Drawing will commence March 1. I put in 36 combinations of dates for Francie's Hut, which is located near Breckenridge. In the unlikely event that we don't get drawn for that, I put in another dozen entries for Section House, which is located in the same vicinity.

We have been to Francie's before, about four years ago. This Summit Hut Association facility holds 20 people, and features indoor composting toilets and a wonderful outdoor sauna. Although hut veterans greatly favor this particular hut, it is also suitable for **qualified** beginner hut skiers.

Hopefully we will know by the March general meeting if we have been drawn. Announcement will be made at that time. This trip should fill quickly.

I anticipate being drawn for Francie's, but I also would like to do Section House in the same season. Section House is a totally different experience. No sauna, no indoor toilet. It is a Colorado Historic Building site from the late 1880's. Completely restored in period fashion, it houses 12 in rustic, yet comfortable fashion. Comfortable, that is, if you enjoy huddling in a warm bed and sleeping to the sound of howling wind outside, and if you don't mind sharing space with ghosts. The building doubles as a railroad museum, with artifacts, photos, and displays from the railroad era for visitors to enjoy. This hut is also suitable for beginner hut skiers, so stay tuned.

To learn more about the Club hut experience, give me a call.



Phyllis in Kitchen, Harry Gates by Eric P



Harry Gates Crew Gearing Up Photo by Phyllis



Harry Gates Group Dinner Photo by Eric R



Smiling Rob at Harry Gates Photo by Pam R

**Leadville Bus Trip -- Turquoise Lake Loop**

*By Lester Byington*

Eleven skiers started off on Friday morning to attempt a complete loop around Turquoise Lake, just outside Leadville. The route is entirely on a road well-used by both skiers and snowmobiles, but it's 14 miles long! In sheer miles this is one of the longest tours ever for a regular posted Club trip. Adding to the difficulty, the timing of the bus pickups allowed only 6 hours for the tour. The road is in a beautiful, tree-covered area and is generally amenable to high-speed skiing, but this weekend the first (largely uphill) half was badly iced and not a lot of fun! These conditions were especially difficult for those on waxable skis, none of whom finished the entire route.

For the four who persevered, the second half (on the southern side of the lake) had somewhat better snow. The road had a couple confusing intersections, but mainly this was a race against the clock, to return in time for the bus. Lester Byington, Ruth Bergman-Romero, Diane Owens, and Dawn Brummel managed to finish about fifteen minutes before the deadline. The leader ate his words about this being so tough a trip that women and children shouldn't try it.



*Turquoise Lake Photo by Ruth Bergman-Romero*



*Lester Looking for the Lake Photo by Ruth*



*Above Turquoise Lake Photo by Ruth Bergman-Romero*



*Freeway Home Photo by Ruth*

***Great Job to Everybody for  
Articles & Pictures!!!***

## 2006/07 Officers and Board

<b>President</b>	<b>Mike Martin</b>	<b>286-8762</b>	<b>Pahasapapapa@aol.com</b>
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<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Karen Leach</b>	<b>281-9836</b>	<b>KarenLeach7@msn.com</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>David Floor</b>	<b>822-8650</b>	<b>dpl505@comcast.net</b>
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<b>Long Bus Trips</b>	<b>Louise Broadbent Ray &amp; Thea Berg</b>	<b>505-829-3840 294-4112</b>	<b>louise@valornet.com rsberg01@comcast.net</b>
<b>Overnight Car/Hut Trips</b>	<b>Guy Miller</b>	<b>294-7940</b>	<b>xcskiboy@aol.com</b>
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<b>Instruction</b>	<b>Guy Miller</b>	<b>294-7940</b>	<b>xcskiboy@aol.com</b>
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<b>Programs</b>	<b>Janie Gilmore-Daniels</b>	<b>259-0502</b>	<b>janiegil@aol.com</b>
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**Come Ski With Us!**

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