

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

March 2014



Photo by Dave Saylor

www.nmccskiclub.org

Staying Fit through the Summer (& Winter)

Presenters: Club Members: Ray Berg, Bet Gendron, Randy Simons & Rob Suminsby

When: Thursday, March 13th at 7 p.m.

Where: Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd NE



Ray Berg, Bet Gendron and Rob Suminsby



Randy Simons

Several of our esteemed Club members will share tales and slides of their adventures in fascinating places, all within this past year.

Rob Suminsby will present on his climb of Mount Rainier last July.....a way to go play in snow! He did a number of local training hikes to prepare, which he'll talk about for those who want to stay on top of their game.

Bet and Steve Gendron will talk about a 9-day, 65-mile backpack in the Yellowstone backcountry with the Yellowstone Institute. This remote trip was in the Bechler region in the southwest corner of Yellowstone, involving 2 days around Shoshone Lake, the largest remote lake in the lower 48.

Randy Simons will show amazing slides of his canyoneering trip in Zion National Park, Utah. Ray Berg will talk about recent hearty hiking treks overseas and his most recent xc-ski trip to France.

Come and join us for the last meeting of this season and learn about some wonderful places you can go and enjoy, while staying fit! ■

Summer Ski Club Picnic

This year's picnic will again be at Wildlife West Nature Park in June. Watch for details!



Skiers Learn new Techniques

The beginner ski lesson was held on Saturday, February 8, at the Cienega/Sulphur area in the Sandia Mountains. Thanks to the instructors, John Thomas, Susan Corban and Gordon Eatman, 8 skiers learned new skills. ■



Skiers are ready to learn: Mary Donato, Michael Grady, Nancy Jenkins and Pat McDaniel.

Photo by Susan Corban

From the President

As I write this I am getting ready to go on another great adventure: a cross-country ski trip in France. So by the time you read this note, February will be winding down and we will soon be into March. That doesn't mean that the ski season has to be over, you just have to go a bit farther to find good skiing. That may be in northern New Mexico or it may be in Colorado. But there will still be snow if you are interested in finding some.



As the season starts to wind down for many of you, it is worth taking a look at where we are and what we have accomplished for the year. Every few years you have to do a bit of revitalizing of things to keep them vital and responsive. The Board has been attempting this by updating the way we work and communicate. We have added a number of things over the past couple of years: a Meetup group, a Facebook page, the ability to pay for things with a credit card, and others. We will continue to try to update these things in the future.

We are also attempting to refocus on our reason for existence: ski trips and outings. With the continuing drought and warm weather, we are having to go a little farther afield to find good ski snow. So we will be putting more effort on car trips to northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, where we should be able to find the kind of snow that makes our sport so much fun. If you have ideas for times, places, ways to organize activities, and ways to keep them affordable for our members, please bring them to the club.

In the meantime, we have another meeting coming up in March at which we will elect a slate of officers for next year and hear some presentations about how the ski season went and what will be happening over the summer. So come out and share your thoughts on the season and what is to come next year.

Ray Berg



**Thea Berg,
Greg Scudder
and Eric
Russell, Betty
Bear Hut,
1/29/14.**

**Photo by
Susan
Corban**

Proposed 2014-15 Slate of Officers & Board

Executive Board

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| President | Ray Berg |
| Vice President | Wayne Kirkby |
| Secretary | Marcia Congdon |
| Treasurer | Max Shepherd |

Board Chairs

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Long Bus Trips | Celeste Taylor-Ryman & Bill White |
| Day Tours | Guy Miller |
| Overnight Car Trips | Rob Suminsby |
| Hut Trips | Guy Miller |
| Newsletter | Carolyn Johnson |
| Instruction | Susan Corban |
| Membership | Bet Gendron |
| Meetup & Social Media | Dave Gabel |
| Programs | Sara Friederich |
| Refreshments | Marilynn Szydowski |
| Trails | Sam Beard |
| Website | Bill Savage |
| E-groups/Mailings | Bob Potter |

Members will vote on the above slate of officers and board chairs as well as the change in Club Bylaws below at the **March 13th** meeting — please plan to attend.

Change to the Bylaws

The following change to our Club Bylaws, which will add a new section 4.3M, will also be voted on at the March 13th meeting:

To establish and administer an effective relationship between the Club and Meetup and social media designated by the Board of Directors to be useful in furthering the purpose and programs of the Club.



Bill White, Crested Butte, 1/18/14

Photo by Chris Kramer

Snow at Betty Bear

By Susan Corban

The Betty Bear Hut group declared that this trip had the most snow and the best food. The hut-goers were Ray and Thea Berg, Marlene Brown, Karen Leach, Eric Russell, Greg Scudder, Alan Shapiro and myself. The big news on this trip was the record-breaking snowfall that occurred while we were at Betty Bear Hut. It seemed that every time someone went to the outhouse we shoveled away another foot.



The local newspaper said 26" fell in 24 hours, but the snow fell for 3 days, not just that 24 hours. When we got out, the snowplow driver told us there was probably 42" in the vicinity of the hut. Yes, that's three and a half feet of snow!



Greg Scudder on the top of Hagerman Pass.

Marlene Brown helps in the kitchen.

Marlene Brown, Thea Berg, Eric Russell and Greg Scudder ski out in the 42" of fresh powder.

Photos by Susan Corban & Karen Leach



Luckily, we skied to the hut on a gorgeous blue-bird day. The group followed a Forest Service road to the hut for the first 5 miles, then took a steep – and I mean steep – turn uphill for another 2 miles. Switchbacks didn't diminish this slope. Everyone got their exercise going up and we were all glad it would be downhill on the way out. Little did we know what our exit would entail.



While staying at Betty Bear we took day tours to Hagerman Pass along the Continental Divide (11,925'), located just above Skinner Hut, skied loops in meadows close to our hut and made some turns on nearby slopes.

The group had gourmet meals worthy of any fine dining establishment, a few good naps, and some

sittin' in front of the fire warming our toes. We saw tracks of snowshoe hares and, most likely, a bobcat. We saw gorgeous snow-covered peaks in the distance until the clouds descended. There were also some big flat white frozen spots -- lovely lakes in summer. In the Frying Pan Valley and adjacent drainages, there are numerous tunnels that supply water to Colorado cities. We skied over or adjacent to gauging stations and terminals for Hagerman and other tunnels.

To return to our cars we had to break trail through all that new snow. It was an epic exit. Everyone pitched in for the hard work of trail-breaking. Whoever had the hut reserved for the next night broke trail for a half mile or so from the parking lot, but must have turned around because it was too difficult and time-consuming to get to the hut before dark. We were very grateful that we didn't have to break that last half mile of trail.

When we got to the cars they were invisible, entirely buried in enormous piles of snow. Fortunately, the road was plowed. Exhausted from skiing out, we began to dig out the cars with our avalanche shovels. As luck would have it, a snowplow driver rescued us from this frozen pile-up. He removed most of the snow from in front of the vehicles. Oh, boy, were we ever happy to see that guy and his plow! Soon we were on our way. We wished we could have brought some of that surplus of white stuff home. ■



Catherine Waters skied to the Elkton Hut on a day tour on the Crested Butte bus trip, 1/19/14.

Photo by Barbara Coon

New Year's Eve Celebration

By Marilyn Szydlowski

There was anticipation and excitement in the air when I parked my car and started to unload my bags for the 2013 Silverton Bus Trip. I had taken the Durango-Silverton Train in the summer a few years ago and was anxious to see Silverton in the winter. As the bus crossed Molas Pass, the sunset was brilliant red against the snow-covered mountains. This was going to be a great weekend.

I was nursing a recent knee surgery and so it was snowshoeing for me. South Mineral Creek had a good amount of snow and it was coming down lightly as we started up the canyon. I trekked in for 2 hours and then turned around. Most of the folks made it to the campground at the end of the road and got back in time for the bus pickup.

The Hot Buttered Rum and Wassail from the Montanya distillery were just as smooth as the snow. There was a good selection of places to dine and the Grand Imperial Hotel, built 1882, was comfortable and historically interesting. The staff there had decorated for the Holidays and there was a band to dance to on New Year's Eve. But of course we had a pre-party with snacks and champagne on the third floor before going down to hear the band.

Silverton had plenty of places to ski in and around the town and many folks took advantage of the new snow and cold temps. Animas Creek Trail was accessible from the hotel and so was the Town Loop, which I ventured out on with Jackie Hertel, Ann White and Celeste Suminsky. It was indeed a great weekend and a fun place to welcome the New Year. ■



Memories of Silverton Ski

By Rebecca Helianthus

Some 40 years ago, not being too-too specific, Gary and I met our friends Jerry and Peggy who lived in Silverton, Co. She had been a French teacher at ENMU in Portales and he was a hard rock miner. In a little Volkswagen bug the four of us drove out to Molas Pass, parked on the south side of the road and I experienced my first cross country skiing. There was no pull-out parking so we stepped into thigh-high snow, beat it down and put on boots and skis. Our only instruction was "follow us". For me it was a glide into heaven. Without a lot of effort the four of us



spent the day skiing up and down the gentle hills of the pass. We were the only people there. Ours were the only tracks. So easy, push and glide, push and glide and now and then we purposefully fell into the snow to rest. Of course it was a brilliant sunny day.

The next day we followed an existing trail into South Mineral Creek going about as far as

where the canyon starts to become deep. Skiing back out, my friend cautioned us to be careful, we were skiing across the run-outs of previous avalanches. Gulp! What an adventure those two days were and I was smitten, determined to make cross country skiing part of my life.

Gary's parents gave us an anniversary present that year of \$200. They thought we needed furniture. We immediately went to Base Camp in Santa Fe and for \$200 bought two pair of Asnes skis, bamboo poles and shoes with three pin clamp bindings. There weren't many cross country skiers in Santa Fe those days. It was all downhill. We skied the Windsor trail, accompanied by the prerequisite black lab. We



Sybil Keyser, Rebecca Helianthus, Frances Robertson and Thea Berg enjoy a break while skiing in Silverton. Photo by Karen Leach



The group skis around Little Molas Lake.

Photo by Max Shepherd

Continued, page 5

Continued from page 5

continued skiing, now with our one-year-old daughter until moving to New York in 1981.

We returned to Albuquerque 5 years later. Cross country skiing gave way to years of weekend track and field and cross country running to support the first daughter, followed by and not overlapping, the second daughter's grade school through high school career in soccer and basketball.

Finally, after joining the NMCCS Club and some tutoring with Wayne Kirkby, I found myself back on Molas Pass. This time we skied on the north side of the highway. It looked as if a snowmobile dealership and campgrounds had taken over the gentle hills where I had first skied. Some of us skied with the group over, around, up and down. We skied on groomed trails and several times paused for the most polite snowmobilers to pass by us. Certainly different, it has been a long time, but that sensation of gliding endlessly through the virgin snow came back. ■

Meet Our Members & Discover their Favorite Places
By Max Shepherd



It does not take long once you begin to get to know members of the NMCCSC to realize what an extraordinary collection of individuals they are and what an unusually wide range of interests and talents they have beyond just cross country skiing. And while I expected most people who joined a cross country ski club to be fairly fit, to like to be out of doors, to take trips and maybe go to unusual or at least out of the way places, what I did not expect was to find out what truly intrepid travelers many of the members are. And that discovery has led to this, which I hope to be the first in a series of articles on travel suggestions from members of the NMCCSC. What I hope will make these articles different from lists of travel suggestions published in the New York Times Travel Section or other travel magazines is that they will be somewhat interactive in that you will be able to ask the members who have made the recommendations for more information about the trips suggested.

The first set of suggestions come from Bill Davey, not because his are any better than any others, although they may be more extensive, but because I shared a room with Bill at Silverton and got to hear many of his travel tales first. Bill has been a member of NMCCSC since the early 1980's.



Bill Davey with Treasurer Mountain in the background, Pagosa Springs.

Bill's travel suggestions include cross-country ski trips to Finland, Lake Louise and Alberta, Canada, and Yellowstone among others; and hiking/trekking trips on the "Grande Randonnée" in Europe, a trek around Mont Blanc, treks to Nepal, a trek to the Throne Room of the Mountain Gods" in Pakistan where the Baltoro and the Godwin-Austen glaciers join at the base of K-2, and treks through Turkey, Crete and New Zealand.

A full discussion of Bill's travel suggestions can be found on the NMCCSC website in the near future. ■



Thank YOU Celeste & Bill for a fabulous Bus Trip Season



Skiers in Crested Butte, 1/19/14.

Photo by Cathy Eickel

Crested Butte Nordic Ski Area

By Mary Kaye Gallagher

I just checked out the Donita's Cantina web cam in Crested Butte (<http://www.downtowncrestedbutte.com/downtown-crested-butte-web-cam/>) on Elk Avenue to see what was happening. There was a large icicle hanging in front of the camera lens blocking the view. It was obvious Crested Butte was getting new snow and lots of it. In fact, 24 inches of new, heavy snow fell by Friday, January 31st. And, the 28th Annual Alley Loop Marathon is scheduled for this Saturday, February 1st. The Annual Alley Loop is Crested Butte's biggest costume party on skis. The Crested Butte Nordic Center website www.cbnordic.org has loads of volunteer



Terri Elisberg and Mary Kay Gallagher

Photo by Cathy Eichel

opportunities for this event in addition to basic information about the Nordic ski area, which operates under a special use permit in the Gunnison National Forest. The Nordic Center is fully equipped for cross country ski gear rental, ski repairs, trail map advice and how to rent the huts located at Gothic which are managed by the Rocky Mountain Biological Lab.

Crested Butte Nordic Center has a convenient in-town shuttle service, and a skating rink and skateboard park. Skating at night is available, but a local source advised to bring a head lamp since the rink is not lit.

A small group of us skied many of the Westside Nordic trails starting at Upper Red Lady Trail to Mike's Mile returning to town with a stop at the Magic Meadows Yurt along the Inner Magic Meadows Trail. We continued on the east side of Peanut Lake back to town taking the shuttle back to Old Nordic Inn. The groomed trails were in excellent condition with a wide swath set for skating. The trails total 55 km, which

have a variety of difficulty levels for all skiers. The ski trails are well marked and easy to navigate with concurrent use of the trail map provided by the Center. Trail passes are required and are \$13 for seniors. We were able to get a good ski in before the bus trip back to Albuquerque.

It was a great way to end the weekend in Crested Butte. ■



Frisco 2012 By Anne Hickman

In spite of a forecast of cold, windy weather, seven intrepid skiers led by Lucy Miller skied a Class I trail called Mesa Cortina with an elevation gain of 500' and a distance of 1.3 miles one way. The trail started off innocently enough near a residential area, but quickly took us into a beautiful National Forest Wilderness. The name Cortina (curtains) seemed a little ominous, especially when we saw a sign warning of moose in the area.

After skiing about one-eighth of a mile the trail quickly became a challenge. The trail was not marked with blue diamonds, was pocked with holes from snowshoers and dogs, became increasingly slippery and was too narrow to snowplow. Two trees had fallen over the trail so a few skiers crawled under the trees rather than risk going over or around them. Finally, a few of us put on skins before reaching the summit. The snow was incredibly fast, but not icy; skins helped slow down our descent.

All the work was worth the tremendous view of Dillon Reservoir and Blue Valley spreading out in the distance. Oh yes, we weren't chased by any moose! ■



Cathy and Paul Eichel in Crested Butte, 1/19/14.

Thank YOU Volunteers!!

Thank you to our dedicated Board members who contribute many, many hours of service each month.

Thank you our dedicated Board members who are stepping down: Peggy Roberts, Treasurer; Karen Leach, Newsletter; John Thomas, Instruction; and Terri Elisberg, Programs.

Thank you to ALL of our newsletter story tellers and photographers – you are all so creative!

A special thanks to Lucy Miller for her excellent eye in proofing the newsletter.



Lucy Miller

| March 2014 | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|------|---------------------|------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat |
| | | | | | | 1 Leadville car trip |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Trail project | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Leadville car trip | 10 | 11 | 12 Trail project | 13 Club Meets | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 Trail project | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Trail project | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |



Above: Carolyn Johnson
Left: Norma Perez & Angela Welford



Leadville Car Trip
Colorado has tons of snow so join the last car trip of the season. Contact Guy Miller xcskiboy@aol.com for details.



Alan Shapiro and Chris Kramar, Crested Butte, 1/19/14



Tom Katonak, Crested Butte

Watch for details about next season's ski program and enjoy your off season activities!

2013-14 Officers and Board

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| President | Ray Berg | 366-8104 | rsberg01@comcast.net |
| Vice President | Wayne Kirkby | 898-1654 | ski1071607@aol.com |
| Secretary | Marcia Congdon | 265-4199 | mecongdon@juno.com |
| Treasurer | Peggy Roberts | 238-0726 | peggyroberts@msn.com |
| Hut Trips & Day Tours | Guy Miller | 306-2628 | xcskiboy@aol.com |
| Long Bus Trips | Celeste Taylor-Ryman Bill White | 366-4959 306-3120 | celestet86@gmail.com whitebillygoat@gmail.com |
| Overnight Car | Rob Suminsby | 369-5943 | robert.suminsby@gmail.com |
| Newsletter | Karen Leach | 281-9836 | karenleach7@msn.com |
| Instruction | John Thomas | 298-5234 | jt87111@comcast.net |
| Membership | Bet Gendron | 228-8025 | bettygendron@gmail.com |
| Programs | Terri Elisberg | 450-9961 | tpelisberg@gmail.com |
| Refreshments | Marilynn Szydlowski | 332-8018 | mjmazgaj52@aol.com |
| Trails | Sam Beard | 828-0673 | samgbeard@msn.com |
| Web Site | Bill Savage | 353-1089 | bsavage@aol.com |
| Email Group/Mailing | Bob Potter | 831-9779 | hvac87108356@yahoo.com |

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club
P.O. Box 51563
Albuquerque, NM 87181-1563



Linda Riddle and Sybil Keyser ski in Silverton on the New Year's car trip.