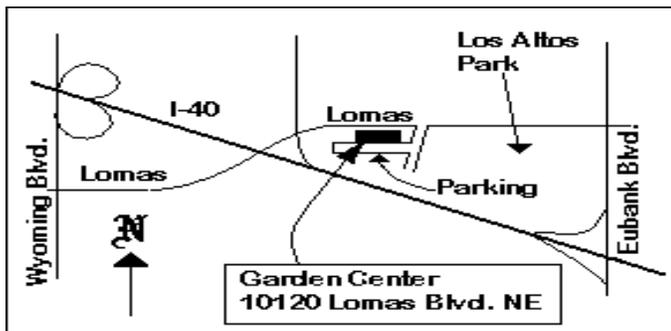




www.naturediscovery.org/nmccskiclub

Next Meeting: Thursday February 14, 7pm



Meeting Program

I. Tribute to Jack

Most, if not all of you, knew Jack Pardee, one of our oldest ski club members who passed away late last year at the age of 94. A brief tribute is planned for him at the February 14 ski club meeting. If any of you have something you would like to share about Jack, send it to me and I'll share it at the meeting. I can be reached at 298-3837 most evenings after 7:00 p.m or email at mchirigos@comcast.net.

Carla and Mickey Chirigos

II. Nepal Trek – *Take Your Valentine to the Movies!*

Last fall, ten ski club members (and two others) took a month-long trek through the snow covered Himalaya peaks in Nepal. Come to the *Valentine's Day* meeting/program on February 14 at 7 p.m. to hear about our experiences.

Chet Leach and Mike Martin will give a video and slide presentation of our Annapurna Circuit trek. Our group started the hike in rice fields and banana groves, went through pine forests with gigantic water falls to alpine pastures, over long river suspension bridges and finally onto high snow-bound passes. We crossed the Thorang La pass at 17,798 feet, hiked down the deepest valley in the world (Kali Gandaki gorge) and ascended up to the

Annapurna Base Camp surrounded by 22-24,000 foot peaks.

They will also show pictures of city tours in Bangkok, Kathmandu and the many small villages we passed through. Experience the diverse cultures of Nepal and see why the people were the highlight of the trip!



From the President

When I was in high school, I was deeply moved by John F. Kennedy's Profiles in Courage, which set forth brief portraits of American political leaders who defied public opinion to vote according to their consciences. On the bus trip to Frisco, the recent death of Sir Edmund Hillary often caused me to reflect on his heroic exploits in mountaineering. The concept of a peak experience has an awesome grip on our society. But, when the Frisco bus trip was over, I could not account for any peak experience which came my way during that weekend.

However, on further reflection, there were many things which happened on that trip which were highly meaningful in their own way. For example, there were profiles in cooperation, when despite the fact all were tired at 11:30 PM, an endless stream of Club members stretched from the bus to the condos carrying all the refreshments and other common property necessary for a successful event. By the time I reached the back of the bus, there was nothing left to carry. A profile in patience and perseverance was provided by Ray Berg in confronting the hide-and-go-seek the keys scenario forced upon us by the condo management. We also had a profile in spur-of-the-moment innovation, as Chet Leach left the bus and provided hand signals to the bus driver to enable him to back up the bus a considerable distance down a narrow road with an inadequate turn-around space. Then there were profiles in volunteerism, as we had more than enough volunteers to lead a large offering of ski tours.

By comparison to what most of us define as peak experiences, these happenings of the Frisco bus trip may be viewed as somewhat mundane. However, when they are all added together, they are the makings of a successful bus trip, hut trip, or day tour. Similarly, whenever we let go of our inner fears and ski farther than we thought we could, or master a steep downhill in spite of our misgivings at the top; those too are profiles in courage.

Wayne

From the Vice President

If you would like to become more active in the club, please contact me about the possibility of serving on the Board. It is a great way to get know all the other members as well as having an impact on the direction of the club. And remember, one of the rewards for your time and effort on the Board is exemption from the lottery system to get on bus trips.

Mike

REPORTS ON THE FRISCO BUS TRIP January 11 – 13, 2008

Class II: Gold Hill to Miners Peak to Peaks Trails Story and Photos by Mike Meier

A group lead by Ruth Bargman-Romero and Tom Broadbent was bussed to the Gold Hill trailhead, and we began our tour at about 10AM under a clear, blue sky in subfreezing temperatures. Gold Hill and Miners Creek trails are sections of the "Colorado Trail" system. Peaks Trail parallels the numbered peaks of the Tenmile Range and terminates about a mile from the Cross Creek Condos where we were staying.



Louise, Tom and SR9 at the Gold Hill Trailhead

Snow conditions were excellent – the trail was firmly packed by previous skiers, and bordered by ~6-8" of new, light, powder. A hiker, who turned out to be an employee of the local newspaper, preceded us up the trail. After he took a few photos of us, we flooded him with information which would have made a wonderful story. Sadly, close study of the Sunday and Monday papers revealed neither story or photo!!!



Colorado Powder on the Gold Hill Trail

Those of us who had skins put them on, and we all continued the ascent. Skins are not required for this trip, but those who did not have them began to huff and puff

mightily. Attempts to switchback across the steeper sections usually were fruitless, because the off-trail snow was deep and light, so skis and poles both sank to knee-high depths and were ineffective. The off-trail snow also made herringbone climbing difficult on the narrow packed trail. Apart from the several steep sections, the trail was superb, climbing steadily through dense forest with occasional views of nearby Breckenridge Ski area to the south. As we ascended, evidence of earlier travelers diminished, and eventually, the leaders broke trail through ~6-8" of new snow.



Lunch break, featuring Rich Besser's homemade toffee, shared generously by Louise.

After lunch, we continued to ascend on Peaks and Miners Creek Trail. Peaks Trail had seen more use, and was wider, making herringbone climbing a lot easier. After more climbing most turned around, partly due to fatigue and because the day had become overcast with falling temperatures. Three attempted to continue on up, but turned back after an attempt to cross a deep, snow-filled stream. Descending Peaks Trail was a lot of downhill kick and glide punctuated by some fast cruising through pine forest.

Near Rainbow Lake, we missed the Peaks Trail and took a connector to the Recreational Trail that borders the town. The Peaks Trail extension was (re)discovered by Marlene and Randy's Monday morning exploratory trip. (I guess that "exploratory" is the correct description if something is discovered, regardless of the intention of the explorers.) So the final section of the tour provided excellent views of a lot of Frisco real estate adjacent to the trail. Coverage was quite variable, from 4" powder, through choppy snowshoe tracks, to marginal snow coverage over recently plowed pavement. The hum of traffic on Main Street combined with the swish of skis on 1/8" of powder was punctuated with the rhythmic click of pole tips on the underlying pavement made for an interesting *quasi-urban trip!!!*

All in all, it was a memorable trip with snow conditions and terrain that remind us of why we come to Colorado. Abundant thanks to Ruth and Tom for making it happen.

Hunkidori Mine Trail, Frisco Trip -- Class II

By Angela Welford, Photos by Bill Heitz

On Sunday, Bill Heitz led a trip on the Hunkidori Mine Trail. The warm-up for this tour was the one mile ski up the snow packed road from the parking lot for the Peru Creek tour to the small town of Montezuma. From there, we skied up the well used (read: icy) road toward the ghost town Saints John.



The beginning of the trail skirted a meadow then headed into the woods, passing some small huts, which might have been mine shafts.

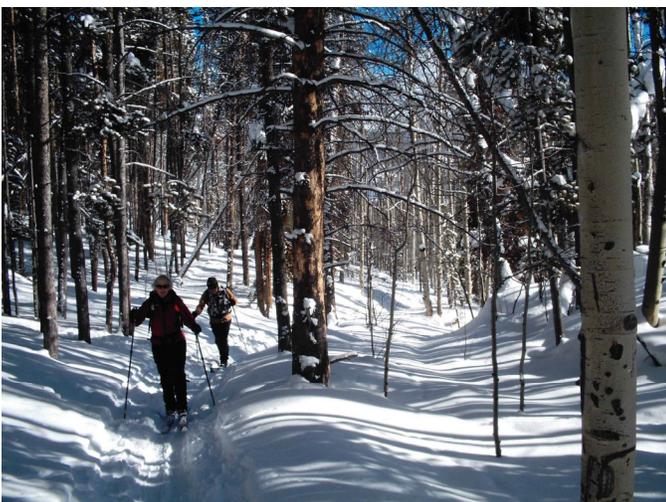


The trail followed the contour around to the north of Bear Mountain, starting at altitude 10,302', gaining a total of 978' and losing 258' along the 3.1 miles to the mine. Most of the gain (~600') was in the last half mile.



We broke trail all the way in 7-10" deep powder as the trail undulated up and down through the trees (noted as being 200 + year old Engelmann Spruce) with spectacular views to the snow covered peaks to the north. One downed tree tested our squat-and-ski skills, while another completely snow covered downed tree made for a fun jump in the descent. At the mine, we found an ancient truck and a small shack. The ski out on our tracks was delightful if not a bit cold, being in the shadow of the mountain for most of the time. At the junction with the road, having not seen anyone else on the trail to that point, we were buzzed by snowmobiles and greeted by streams of skiers, snow-shoers and dog-walkers. We informed those heading out along the same trail that it had been set courtesy of the New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club!

Lily Pad Lake Trip Report – Class II
 Story and Photos by Randy Simons



Marlene Brown led a trip to Lily Pad Lake in the Eagles Nest Wilderness just north of Frisco. About a dozen skiers started at the Meadow Creek trailhead with fresh powder and a trail that had already been broken. Taking the lake trail at the junction, we climbed through aspen glades and snow-covered fir trees. For lunch, we had a great view of frozen Dillon Reservoir far below. The tracks ended at the lake, but we found the continuation

of the trail by following voices of another group beyond the lake. We had an enjoyable (sometimes thrilling) downhill run along Salt Lick Gulch to the trailhead and shuttle stop, which, after two connections, got us back to the condos. We skied about five miles, climbing almost 1,000 feet to above 10,000.



North Tenmile Creek to Gore Range Trail -- Class II
 Story and Photos by Mike Meier



Getting started up North Tenmile Creek Trail.

A group led by Louise walked west from the condos along Main Street, then under the Interstate, and onto the North Tenmile Creek trailhead under a clear, blue sky in subfreezing temperatures. The club literature indicates that the trail is more than 5 miles long, but

National Geographic and TOPO show it ending in 3.5 miles, at its intersection with the Gore Range trail. The elevation gain from the trailhead to the Gore Range trail is about 900 ft.

Many users had packed the trail in the vicinity of the trailhead, but the cold had kept snow conditions nearly ideal. Those of us who had skins put them on at the trailhead, and we began the ascent. I had not used skins the day before on Gold Hill, and found they really did reduce the difficulty in climbing by a factor of 2 or 3.

When not climbing steeply, the grade was steady uphill through dense forest along the freely flowing creek. We passed a few snow-covered ponds, but there was no



One of the highly photogenic snow fields we crossed.

evidence of beavers. There were also traces of liquid water along the way, and some of us smelled (or imagined smelling) sulfur, making us wonder if there were hot springs in the vicinity. We were looking for potentially dangerous avalanche sites, and at one location skied across an open slope one-by-one. About one-half mile past the wilderness boundary, part of the group decided to turn around. All three used their skins during the descent because many sections of the trail were quite steep and narrow.

The trail became less packed as the rest of us continued up, and eventually we were breaking trail through 6-8" of powder. On the higher section of the trail, there were broad, treeless meadows with expanses of unbroken powder above and below us.

After arriving at the Gore Range trail, we took a lunch break before beginning our return. Sunny skies prevailed, and the experience of snow fields and the other scenery were enhanced by the relaxed downhill pace. The steep sections reappeared in the dense forest trail, and descending them was speedy, especially as we approached the trailhead where the snow was well packed. It was there that we began to encounter more humans and their dogs, having had almost no other contact on the higher sections of the trail. Back at the trailhead at about 2 p.m., the two members of the group who were "skinless" were more than ready for a shopping trip into town to remedy their condition before the next climb.



Bob, Mike, and Louise at the Gore Range Trail intersection

Many thanks to Louise for leading such a beautiful trip.

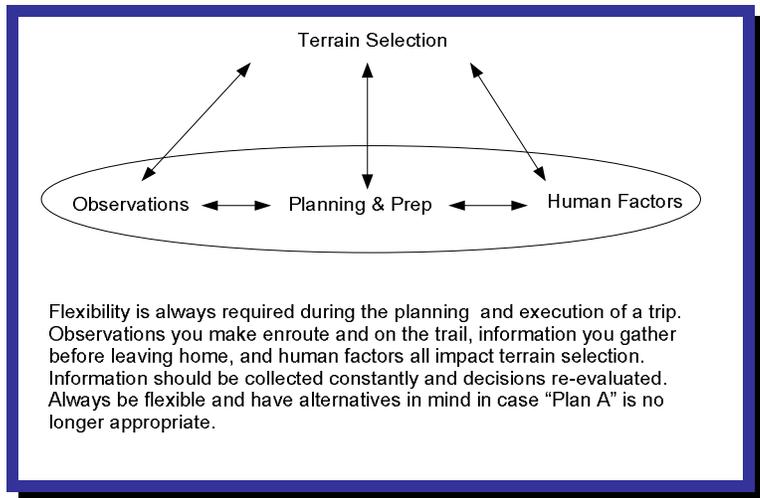
SILVERTON AVALANCHE SCHOOL

2008 is the second year the club has awarded scholarships for member training. For specific information on the program, see the Scholarship Policy posted on the Web. Five of us were able to attend the Silverton Avalanche School in January. The class was excellent and included snow boarders, snow shoers, snowmobilers, touring skiers, as well as skiers seeking the steep. The many instructors were a very impressive group of professionals and sport enthusiasts.



Field Session "Talking Snow", Photo by D Simmons

The following two tools/concepts from the school are simple. But taking a few minutes to think/discuss through them could save your life as you venture into the backcountry.



**Want to Know More?
Go to the School !!**

ALPTRUTH

An Acronym to Help Your Group Discuss All Relevant Factors in Making a Go/No-Go Route Decision. **Three "Yes" Answers Out of Seven is a No-Go Decision.** Ian Mccammon, a NOLS Instructor & researcher, developed this tool. He believes the information is usually available to make a correct decision, if people would only remember to consider it. 'Google' Ian McCammon if you want to learn more.

	Yes	or	No
A Avalanche Signs in the Last 48 Hours?			
L Loading by New Snow or Wind?			
P Are you in an Avalanche Path?			
T Terrain Trap - Are You In One?			
R Rating (High, Considerable, Extreme)?			
U Unstable Snow (Whumpfs or Cracking)?			
Th Thaw/Instability, Sudden Temperature Increases?			

Photos by Tom Cloudcroft-Krajci



Compression Test



Route Planning & Communication on Way Down



"All Work & No Play Would Have Made Tom...."

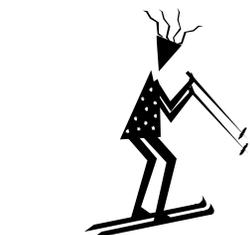
2007/08 Officers and Board

President	Wayne Kirkby	898-1654	ski1071607@aol.com
Vice President	Mike Martin	286-8762	Pahasapapapa@aol.com
Secretary	Karen Leach	281-9836	KarenLeach7@msn.com
Treasurer	Jim Iden	265-5021	jiden@unm.edu
Day Trips	Bill Heitz	898-3573	bill.heitz@att.net
Long Bus Trips	Ray & Thea Berg	294-4112	rsberg01@comcast.net
Overnight Car/Hut Trips	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
Newsletter	Diane Simmons	480-4919	diane@skykomishsoftware.com
Instruction	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aolcom
Membership	Gene Lisotto	884-7331	Gene_Lisotto@msn.com
Programs	Louise Broadbent	505-829-3840	louise@valornet.com
Mailing	Dawn Brummel	821-9187	dawnsbulldog@msn.com
Refreshments	Sara Friedrich Angela Welford	269-0870 281-1198	saradell@q.com jndaughter2@earthlink.net
Trails	Sam Beard	828-0673	samgbeard@msn.com
Web Site	Lester Byington	286-9100	lester@byington.org
Email Group	John Thomas	298-5234	jt87111@comcast.net

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

PO Box 8425

Albuquerque, NM 87198-8425



Come Ski With Us!