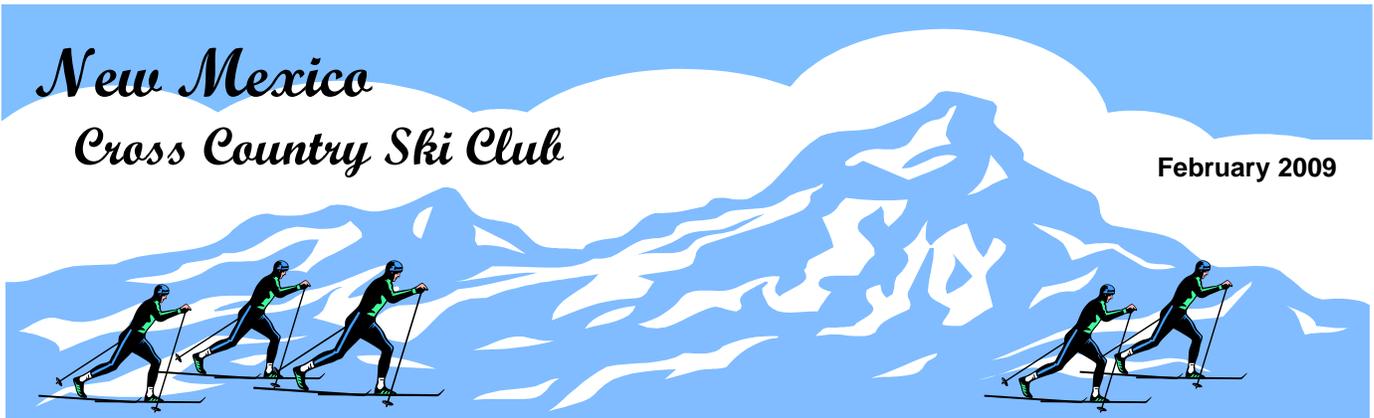


New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

February 2009



www.naturediscovery.org/nmccskiclub

February's Program — The Pursuit of an Endless Winter

Presenter: Tom Krajci

When: Thursday, February 12th, 7 p.m.

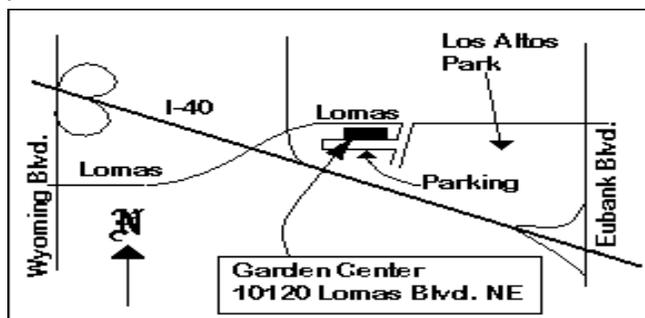
Most ski resorts close in April, but not for lack of snow. They close for economic reasons — not enough skier visits. But good snow conditions can be found in May and June.



Without lifts, what do you do? Look for high mountain passes that you can drive to.

Conditions are usually very different during spring skiing, and I don't only mean the need for lots of sun block. The snow pack goes through a daily thaw/freeze cycle. That's good for consolidation, and in many ways the avalanche hazard can get lower and much more predictable.

Join us in February to learn when and how to climb the slopes and how all levels of skiers can safely pursue the endless winter. ■



Mt. Taylor Day Tour

When: Sunday, February 8, at 8:30 a.m.

Leader: John Thomas

The Mt. Taylor tour will follow part of the Quadrathlon route and skiers will ski about 5 miles with an elevation gain of about 1,000 feet. The downhill could be icy. Skins are required for this Class II tour.

Call John Thomas at 298-5234 for questions, updates on snow conditions and the meeting location. The tour will leave Albuquerque at 8:30 a.m.

Bus Trip Update By Thea and Ray Berg

The first bus trip to Telluride is over and it was great! The snow was much better than we expected since they hadn't had snow for about a week. We were able to ski areas around Lizard Head Pass, Trout Lake, Priest Lakes, Alta Lakes (including the Galloping Goose downhill run), and a great new area called the Valley Floor. Read the tour reports in the newsletter for the details.

Continued on page 7



Marty Perez, Ann Schultz and Dennis Crowther in Telluride.

Photo by Lucy Miller

From the President

It has been a full 3 weeks since we had any worthwhile snow south of Espanola, and prospects don't look great for the near future. Those vacant seats on the bus trips to Lake City and Pagosa Springs are starting to look mighty good, and they are only a phone call away.



I commend to you the excellent piece on leadership by Frances Robertson on the following page. I would also like to share with you a related thought expressed in John Graham's Outdoor Leadership:

"Leaders can inspire, teach, entertain, and in many other ways shape the framework in which an adventure can unfold. However, group members must bear much of the responsibility for the quality of their own experience. Leaders offer opportunities, but then it is up to those they are leading to make of those opportunities what they will. The choice of having a fantastic experience instead of a disappointing failure is often a matter of perception, both at the moment it is occurring and in hindsight, but the choice is definitely there for each group member to make."

Wayne Kirkby

Observations from a Bus Trip Virgin

By Chris Standish

So the long anticipated trip to Telluride had finally arrived! We pulled into the Target parking lot right on time to find a large gathering of folks happily loading luggage and skis onto the beautiful black motor coach (*not just a bus we are told*). Once we stowed our gear and chose seats we got out to stand around in the sun — plenty of time to sit later. A number of club members approached us and made us feel welcome — probably trying to determine if we were some of the NMCCSC *Bus Trip Virgins (BTV)*!

As we began our journey to Telluride, organizers Ray and Thea Berg laid out the itinerary. Important stuff like pee breaks, food stops, and location of snacks and beverages on the coach, as well as advising us "not to use the on board toilet" since it's mostly for skiing jaunts.

THIS IS ALL SO COOL! We arrive at the hotel early (*yeah*) and are able to get to our rooms and crash. Ski plans and routes for the next day have been set. In the morning after a quick breakfast we all head our separate ways on various tours of different skill

levels. This continues for the next three days . . . the old body is no longer feeling "like a virgin!"

On the final morning we decide to follow "Bubbles" (*aka Sherry Fitzmaurice*) on an expedition to find the Mountain Village Golf Course.



Linda and Chris Standish

Photo by Angela Welford

Four of us, Sherry, David Barbour, Linda Standish (*my wife*) and I head down to the free gondola ride to the golf course. All of us succeed in getting on board except Sherry, as she was the last to jump on and didn't get much time to board. Well, her right foot really didn't make it in the six passenger car. No matter, a sensor detected the open door. A couple minutes later, a tech came by to get things going. The door popped open, and Sherry's hat fell out. Her long arm made a quick retrieval and off we go.

Arriving at the end of the line, we head off on a fairly icy multi-use trail. Unfortunately it crossed roads (*bare pavement*) several times, but it is sunny and warming up so all is well. Sherry leads on — risking life and limb showing us how NOT to approach and cross an icy bridge among other things. We finally find the access to the groomed trails and the golf course after consulting David's map.

Hooray! Now we are cruising on rolling terrain, crossing several down hill ski runs in the process and finally arriving at the 18th hole at the Peaks Resort. We're kind of tired, but Sherry cleverly points out a very skiable slope that has a gondola station at the bottom to bring us back toward home. Down we go on some of the best runs of the whole trip. At the bottom "Bubbles" (*named for Sherry's tank top, a bubble print, which was now her only layer*) negotiates free passage with the back country ski patrol guy. Back at the main downhill run area we run across more Club members and exuberantly (*but exhausted*) head back to the hotel for departure.

At this point it was good there wasn't a fourth day! We look forward to the next bus trip — no longer BTV's! ■

Serve as an Officer

The Club is seeking members who are interested in serving as an officer for 2009-10. Open positions will be Vice President, Treasurer and Program Chair. Contact Mike Martin at 286-8762 or mike_martin_csp@q.com.

Stepping Up and Stepping Out

By Frances Robertson

Leaders aren't always found at the front of the pack, although that's where most people look for them. Leaders are simply folks who "step up to the plate," and I don't mean the dinner plate. On the hut trip last winter to Francie's cabin, one leader took the role of making sure the fire was always burning. Several others took it upon themselves to split wood and carry snow to the stove to melt for water (*a heavy, unfun job*). Leaders do the job that the group needs; they don't expect gratitude (*but usually get more respect than they dreamed of*) and go on with life.



Leaders make things happen, make things work, solve problems. They prepare themselves for the unexpected. These are the folks carrying survival equipment; they can read a map and the acclivity of a slope. They have the right gear, a little more than they might need, just in case.

Look around. Who's doing what? Even at a dinner party or a ski club meeting, some folks are just plain leaders. They see what needs doing because they are "aware," and without being asked, do what needs to be done; they stack the chairs, clean up the refreshments, and carry the program gear. You know when you are with a leader because there's synergy; what seemed impossible is suddenly possible with a leader, whether it's getting to that distant hut or snowcamping, or making sure you're in the right canyon. Several leaders working together are unstoppable. Leaders come with fully charged batteries that spark others into action. The best definition of a leader I've ever heard is

"A leader takes us places (not necessarily geographical) that we would not go alone."

That simple statement pretty much sums it up. Leaders make it possible for us to exceed our personal limitations.

When it comes to leading a trip, a trip leader (*one who has obviously stepped up to the plate*) naturally depends on other leaders who are stepping behind him/her on this trip to help him/her spark and energize and set a positive tone for the trip and the participants. Leaders do that by modeling competence, authenticity, awareness of the environmental hazards and human hazards and by being "there," in the moment, fully conscious, ready

to respond. These people "track." They know what is going on, where the trail goes and why, where the landmarks are, how many ridges they've crossed, what direction they're traveling, how far they've come, who's behind/ahead, how much daylight is left, when they should turn around. Leaders "are" and we all rely on them. Followers should have some of these "tracking skills," but for the most part, followers can be pretty unconscious—they can zone out on important details that could save their lives. We can all be more like leaders by practicing being "aware."

Sometimes it's difficult to tell the difference between a hot shot and a leader. But the two are NOT synonymous. Granted, hotshots are always fit and physically competent, but they are not always leaders. Leaders sometimes don't even look like hotshots—that's because what motivates them is something other than ego. Leaders are real; on a ski trip they might fall, or reveal imperfection, make an error in judgment, but they are secure enough and humble enough to recognize their error or listen to someone in the group who has noticed the error. And, and this is a big AND—they are not afraid to admit a mistake. Hot shots never do that; it's always someone else's fault when bad things happen.

In my experience, the ski club has many leaders. People take chances, serve in new capacities, offer classes, lead trips, teach rescue practices, teach skills, introduce others to safe practices and proper gear, organize bus trips, hire bus drivers, organize and lead hut trips. Groups which attract leaders are blessed, since a goodly number of leaders can support a goodly number of followers. So with that in mind, is it any wonder the Ski Club is on the move and going places? ■

Welcome New Members

Cynthia Adams

Cindy Anderson

Warren Barta

Fennel Blythe

Tina Chan

Jeanette Duffy Ross

Peggy Firth

Dave Gabel

Betty Gendron

Champe Green

Natalie Heinstein

Robin & Steve Henry

Lori Hills

Barbara Hoehne

Hildy Hogate

Jimmy Holaway

Carolyn Johnson

Chris Kramar

Elaine McGivern

Peter Marks

James Miera

John & Judy Miller

Bill & Sammie Oaks

Cassie & Jon Otero

Janis Powell

Ray & Joan Regan

Hilida Ripley

Steve Scott

John Shaski

Marilynn Szydlowski

Celeste Taylor-Ryman

Ray Vandersall

Catherine Waters

Jacqueline Wright

Kent Zook

Telluride's Lizard Head Pass

By Mike Meier

Two groups led by Sherry Fitzmaurice and Randy Simon were bussed to the Lizard Head Pass under a clear, blue sky in subfreezing temperatures. The bus trip from Telluride to the pass covers one of the most beautiful stretches of highway that I know. Sunshine Mountain, Wilson Peak, and Sheep Mountain dominate the view along with the deep Wilson Creek canyon, and there is even a glimpse of Lizard Head Peak from this road. We viewed this spectacular scenery five times during the course of the trip.



After putting on our skis at the pass, we glided along a railroad grade down to an historic trestle that



Mike and Frances Meier at Trout Lake Trestle.

crosses Lake Fork Creek. The elevation change was ~600' down the gently sloping grade. The grade was well groomed, with a machined double track on one side and the rest of the trail groomed for skating. Telluride seems to have a strong ski-skating community. This impression was reinforced the next day at Priest Lakes, where a groomer was in continuous action all the time that we were there. Even though the trail was broad, snow conditions were very good, due to the low sun angle and shading forest, and in spite of the fact that there had probably been no new snow in the preceding week or so.

It took about an hour to get to the trestle, and, while some of the group returned to the bus, some of us chose to continue up a multi-use skier and snowshoe packed trail over Hidden Lakes Road (FR676). It was a steady uphill climb with several switchbacks. The conditions off-track were 6-8" of powder that was great for those of us in need of an occasional trail-breaking fix. Before our group separated, we agreed

to all turn around at noon, wherever we happened to be, in order to insure that we would make the 300 p.m. bus departure time. The fastest group, led by Randy, reached a trailhead marker for (*perhaps*) Lake Hope before turning back. If this trailhead identification is correct, then the ascent was ~1100' over 2.5 miles.

The descent was speedy, except when some of us (*Randy, Eric Boman, Frances Meier and I*) succumbed to the siren call of those wide open slopes connecting the last few switchbacks.

The vision was wide sweeping telemark turns through fluffy powder – the reality was hard crust over cement! It WAS speedy when we weren't recovering from out of control crashes. At the bottom, we were back at the trestle and thankful that the rest of the trip was on groomed trail, even if it was uphill.

All in all, it was a memorable trip with views and skiing conditions that make Colorado such a great winter destination. Abundant thanks to Sherry and Randy for making it happen. ■

It's Snowshoes for Us!

By Donna Lisotto

Telluride was so beautiful! Since we can no longer enjoy cross country skiing because of bad knees, we have been snowshoeing instead. We signed up for a tour at the Mountain Village. After two gondola rides and one chairlift ride, we put on our snowshoes. We had four people join our group along with a guide from Mountain Village.



Donna and Gene Lisotto

It was so much fun seeing all the beautiful sights. The guide was very knowledgeable, and it was a great trip. The tour lasted about two hours and everyone came back well informed and feeling great.

Snowshoeing is a great exercise and a good alternative for those that are no longer able to ski. ■

Try Telemarking . . . here's how . . . By Gordon Eatman

A lot has changed from 20+ years ago when some of the "later to become telemark instructors" would go up on light equipment and try turns at the top of Exhibition at Sandia alpine area. These days some of the equipment is as beefy as alpine gear and the technique has evolved much closer to alpine skiing.

As more and more "off piste" skiing has grown, telemark and alpine touring have become more popular. This of course represents the high performance end of telemark skiing as light gear can still perform well on less aggressive terrain.

First, telemark is a technique of turning by dropping one leg to form a wedge suitable for cross country skiing with the loose hill boot. The turn best suits powder as a lot of telemark skiers will alpine turn on the catwalks

(trails that link the different ski runs) and groomers (trails that are groomed) at downhill areas to save their quads for the teley turns in the powder.



Larry Larkin shows off his technique at Francie's hut 1/25/08.

Photo by Rich Besser

So basically telemarking is just a turn, suitable for free heel skiing, not a type of skiing in itself (*I'm sure some would differ*).

The technique has evolved from a wide wedge to a narrower wedge and a weighting and unweighting oneself while dropping one knee. A bit hard to imagine but the video recommended later will help. The big "bug-a boo" is learning to keep as much weight on the uphill ski as the downhill ski in a turn. This involves keeping the weight over the center of one's body. By weighting the uphill ski keeping the body weight over both skis, one is able to maintain stability and smooth transitions from one turn to the next.

In learning the turn different "hints" have been devised to help create this centered stance. "Big toe/little toe" refers to weighting the big toe of ones downhill ski and the little toe of one uphill ski. Initiating one's turn with the uphill ski is another. Also keeping the hands low and in front of one's body keeps one in the fall line and turning smoother. Actually there is little difference in telemark turns and alpine turns except the dropping of the leg in the

lower body. It has been stated that one could not tell if the skier was doing alpine or telemark turns if only looking at the expert skier's upper body.

A good video to see these concepts is telemark tips: <http://www.telemarktips.com/Lesson.htm>. One can easily start learning the technique on lighter gear and gentler slopes. It is not an easy technique to learn and lessons can help quite a bit for those inclined. However the rewards of getting the first powder turns by skinning up an alpine area before the area opens then telemarking down is pretty awesome. ■



A few spaces are left on Snow Mountain Ranch for next year 2/24 - 28/2010. Two year's ago: Katie Crawford, Margaret Weinrod, Yolanda and David Ploor, Karen Link and Susan Williams. Contact Sharon and Lester Byington at 275-5777 or lester@byington.org.

Photo by Sharon Byington

Lead a Tour

The following tips will assist leaders as they prepare for upcoming tours:

- Leaders should publicize tours to Club members via the newsletter or e-groups.
- Overnight tours must be approved by the Overnight/Hut Chair, Guy Miller.
- Day tours may be posted without pre-approval via e-groups.
- All tour postings must include:
 - Trip level of difficulty as defined under "Ski Tour Ratings" on this page.
 - Any expected variation to the rating;
 - Any special equipment or other requirements.
- All tours posted via e-group or the newsletter require the leader to obtain properly completed and signed *Release of Liability* forms from all participants. Then mail it to Bill Heitz, Day Tour Chair, 53 Valle Vista Road, Corrales, NM 87048.
- All leaders and participants are responsible to adhere to the *Leadership and Participant Guidelines* posted on the website.



= Monthly deadline for newsletter inclusion

February 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Uncle Bud's Hut						Red River
8 Mt. Taylor	9	10	11	12 Club Meets	13	14 Lake City
15 Lake City	16	17	18	19 1 st Aid	20 1 st Aid	21
22	23	24	25 Board Meets	26 *Beg Ski	27	28 Salida

March 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Section House Hut					Pagosa Spr	
8	9	10	11	12 Club Meets	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

*Beginning XC Ski class 2/26, 6:30 p.m. at REI

Families Enjoy the *Enchanted Forest* By Sharon Byington

Red River is a quaint little fun resort town filled with Texas down hill skiers. There are several places nearby with good back country skiing. But, *Enchanted Forest* just outside town is synonymous with prepared-area skiing in New Mexico. Children love *Enchanted Forest!*

John and Judy Miller, new Club members and founders of *Enchanted Forest*, were inducted into the New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame on November 1, 2008

at a huge banquet in Albuquerque. Sharon and Lester Byington attended the Gala. WOW!

Last week we took our grandchildren, Logan and Laci, to Red River for skiing and lessons. *Enchanted Forest* was phenomenal for both. If you haven't made arrangements for **Lucy Miller's trip on February 6-8** you'd better hurry. It's the greatest! ■



Laci Cameron at the intersection, Sharon Byington's granddaughter, loves their family skiing outings. Photo by Sharon Byington

Bear Creek Snowshoe By Marion Ball & Margaret Weinrod

For our final day (*Martin Luther King Day*), the two of us along with Ann Shultz went on a snowshoe adventure to Bear Creek Canyon trail. Shortly after 9 a.m., we walked from the hotel to the ski lift on San Juan Street and put on our snowshoes. We followed the river trail a short distance to the beginning of the Bear Creek trail. It was a fairly steep, steady climb on well-packed snow.



Shirley Kennedy and Margaret Weinrod snowshoeing on the Bear Creek Canyon trail at Telluride.

Photo by Lucy Miller

We met Lucy Miller's group snowplowing down the trail. After some conversation, we continued up the trail. The day was relatively warm, though the sun had not yet reached into the canyon. Shirley Kennedy and Pat Collins, also on snowshoes, joined us at a large sign with a map and pair of ski poles.

Continuing up the trail, Ann and Margaret began having trouble with their bindings and had to keep adjusting them. We took a few pictures when the sun peeked over the rim. It was amazingly beautiful and highly recommended, both for snowshoes and Class II skiers. Had it not been our 'short' day it would have been nice to have made it all the way to the falls, which we could hear in the distance. Making faster time on the return, we were back at the bottom a little after 11 a.m. *Viva snowshoeing!* ■

Hut Trip Update

By Guy Miller

Uncle Bud's to 10TH Mountain Hut

By the time this is read, our 5-nighter will either be underway nearly so. The trip is full. Wish us luck. Survivors will tell the tale at the February 12th Club meeting.



Noel Barstow, Sherry Fitzmaurice and Guy Miller relax at the Continental Divide beginners hut trip 3/08. Guy is planning another beginner hut trip for next year – contact him now if you are interested.

Photo by Vicki Moore

Section House 3-Nighter

Saturday, February 28 – Friday/Sat., March 4 or 5
(depending on travel conditions)

Please note that this timeframe conflicts with the Salida bus trip.

Section House is part of the Summit Huts system, but is administered by the 10th Mountain Hut Association. This Colorado Historic Site was, in the late 1800's, home to a railroad section supervisor and his family. Right next to it is Ken's Cabin, which also carries historic site credentials. This 3-person hut was a miner's shelter that was moved in the 1990's to its current location. These huts are unlike any to be found in the 10th Mountain or Summit Huts systems.

The huts sit astride scenic Boreas Pass outside of Breckenridge. There are three routes in to the hut, none of them particularly daunting. One of the routes could be considered suitable for strong beginners. A final route decision will be made closer to trip time, depending on snow conditions (the "easy route" has a lot of southern exposure and is not a good choice except when conditions are sublime).

As of press time, we have **one** vacancy for this trip and no waiting list. Total cost for the trip (exclusive of transportation to and from the trailhead, lodging, and food) is \$139.

For further information on these hut trips, or to discuss hut trips in general, contact me at 294-7940 or xcskiboy@aol.com. ■

Bus Trip Update (Continued from page 1)

The next trip is to **Lake City, Friday, 2/13 - Monday, 2/16**. This will be a bit of an adventure trip with skiing around Slumgullion Pass, Spring Creek Pass, Lake San Cristobal and perhaps a few others that we discover. There are still openings, but time is running out. Cost is \$330, including transportation, lodging and two dinners.

The third trip is to **Salida, Thursday, 2/26 – Sunday 3/1**. This trip is full, but at this time one ticket (for a female) is up for resale and we have no one on the waiting list.

Cost is \$215 and includes a Friday night pizza party and

continental breakfasts in the hotel. Skiing will be in the Monarch Pass area and its approaches. This will be our first trip to Salida in several years.

The fourth trip is to **Pagosa Springs, Friday 3/6 – Sunday 3/8**. This is a shorter trip, due to the shorter travel distance. Cost is \$185 and includes Saturday dinner. Skiing will be in the Wolf Creek Pass area and its approaches. There are still openings on this trip. This is a popular trip, especially with multiple visits to the famous hot springs!

If you are interested in any of these trips or have questions, contact Thea Berg as soon as possible at (505) 294-4112 or thea.berg@comcast.net. ■



Diane Cress and Ruth Bargman-Romero below Lizard Head Peak in Telluride.

Photo by Ray Berg



I-Ching Boman, John Samuli, Eric Boman and Dave Schultz investigate a historic cabin on the Priest Lake Nordic trail in Telluride.

Photo by Jackie Hertel

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club
P.O. Box 8425
Albuquerque, NM 87198-8425



John Stephens at Francie's Hut
1/25/08.

Photos Rich Besser

2008/09 Officers and Board

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Overnight Car/Hut Tours	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
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