

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

March 2011

Photo by Dave Saylor

www.nmccskiclub.org

Broken Femur — what to do? By Sherry Fitzmaurice



As you all know, one of our members broke his femur at the Nordic center in Crested Butte. Whoever moved this skier knew what they were doing, and he also likely had a bit of luck on his side. This is a very unusual incident, but stuff happens. So it's great to gain knowledge.

Come to our **final presentation** of the season on **March 10 at 7 p.m.** at the Garden Center, 10120 Lomas, ABQ to hear Dave Fletcher, a Certified Red Cross Wilderness and Remote First Aid (WRFA) Instructor, discuss:

- Overview of Wilderness and Remote First Aid
- Most common WRFA illnesses and injuries
- WRFA kit considerations
- Overview of WRFA course and prerequisites

Courses offered: April 2, CPR/AED & April 9-10, WFRA. Learn more at the presentation. ■

Ski Club Summer Picnic

When: Saturday, June 4, 4 - 6 p.m.

Where: Wildlife West Nature Park, Edgewood

Watch for details in the May newsletter & e-groups.



Rob Richards and Pam Reynolds have fun at last year's Ski Club Summer Picnic at Wildlife West.

Photo by Dave Saylor

Where Should We Go? By Angela Welford

Many members, including several new members, had the opportunity to participate in our two bus trips this year. Randy and I survived our first year being at the helm, putting the trips together and seeing that all the arrangements went as planned (*or at least we made it look that way!*)



Carl Smith, Diane Owens, Angela Welford, Linda Standish, Mona Ghattas and Chris Standish in Crested Butte, 2/12/11.

In both Pagosa Springs and Crested Butte we were fortunate to have excellent skiing conditions and beautiful weather that made the trips especially enjoyable.

Now we launch into determining where to go next year. We took a survey of preferred destinations from participants on the bus trips, but we would love to hear from the rest of you — where would you like the Club to go for a bus trip?

We are limited in how far we can go by our contract with the bus company, but generally locations south of I-70 and within a 5-8 hour drive are possible considerations. Please send your ideas to Angela at awelford1017@gmail.com or Randy at randy_simons@msn.com. We need to hear from you soon as we will announce the 2012 trips in the May newsletter. Thanks! ■

From the President

It is hard to believe that we are hurtling toward the end of winter as we approach the last meeting of the season. This season has had its ups and downs, the



most notable being the La Nina weather pattern that presented a challenge to club members intending to indulge in extended local skiing. I am thankful for the storms that hit around Christmas, which enabled many of us to ski for many days on excellent snow.

Although we had a reduced amount of snow in the local area, Colorado

and the northern areas of New Mexico were receiving good amounts of snow. For me, the highlight of the season was the superlative snow conditions we experienced on the Pagosa Springs bus trip. The Club also offered an extremely popular bus trip to Crested Butte. And from reports I have heard, there was a lot of good snow for all to enjoy.

Another positive from this season is our leadership. I want to thank all the trip leaders who volunteered their time and leadership. I also want to thank the officers for their dedicated work in helping to put the season's activities together and keep them running smoothly. Sometimes our leaders are not noticed for what they do, but almost nothing would happen without the work of our many capable members.

I want to remind everyone to keep exercising in the off-season. Maintaining your ski season training program year-round would be ideal. If you wait until next winter to get in shape for skiing the chance of a training injury is greatly increased.

Lastly, I want to thank all our members for their participation and in helping make this season a success for the NMCCSC.

*I look forward to seeing you at our last meeting on **March 10th**, which will be back at the Garden Center, and at the summer picnic.*

Chris Kramar

Hut Trip Update By Guy Miller

As we slide toward the end of our always-too-brief ski season, we still have two hut trips waiting to happen. **Janet's Cabin** is set for March 7–12. This relatively easy trip currently has two vacancies.



Ben Eiseman Hut is set for March 28 – April 2. This semi-arduous, mega-tele trip has also seen a few cancellations. Three vacancies currently exist for qualified, experienced hut skiers.

Our Polar Star trip turned out to be quite an adventure, mainly in the fact that the trip happened at all. See Chris Kramar's much-

ballyhooed trip write-up for details on page 4.

Our lottery entry for 2012 has been submitted. Aiming exclusively for Fowler-Hilliard Hut, 52 date combinations were submitted, covering the period from late December to early March. We usually have an answer in time for our final Club meeting. I will be absent from that meeting (*off on a hut trip, what else!*), but I will leave word with a trusted ally to make an announcement. If that happens, signup will commence immediately. Bring your check books to the meeting.

A beginner hut trip is being seriously considered for 2012. Hut skier wannabees should think about that.

For further discussion about this topic, contact me at xcskiboy@aol.com or 294-7940. It's about the only subject in which I'm reasonably conversant!! ■

Proposed 2011-12 Slate of Officers/Board

Executive Board

President	Chris Kramar
Vice President	Wayne Kirkby
Secretary	Lucy Miller
Treasurer	Chris Standish

Board Chairs

Long Bus Trips	Angela Welford & Randy Simons
Day Tours	Guy Miller
Overnight & Hut Trips	Guy Miller
Newsletter	Karen Leach
Instruction	John Thomas
Membership Programs	Sherry Fitzmaurice
Mailing	Terri Elisberg
Refreshments	Ruth Bargman-Romero
	Bet Gendron & Marcia Congdon
Trails	Sam Beard
Website	David Wegner
E-groups	Ray Berg

Members will vote on the above slate of officers and board chairs at the **March 10th** meeting.

Full Moon Snowshoe By Ruth Bargman-Romero

Fifteen people were prepared to endure the night cold on Sandia Crest for a full moon snowshoe on February 17th. To our surprise, the day warmed up to 70 degrees in town. It was hard to believe that we would actually be in snow that same night.



The tram ride to the Crest was enhanced by a beautiful sunset. Upon our arrival at the top of the mountain the sky still held some sunlight. Everyone headed out to the trail.

As we progressed northward on the nature trail toward the Kiwanis Meadow, sunlight was waning in the sky but still reflecting on the snow. There were high, surface clouds through which the moon would intermittently appear. The effect of moonlight through the trees and bare aspens made for an almost surrealistic experience. Moon or no moon, the snow seemed to gather and reflect light.

We stopped occasionally to remove excess clothing, adjust snowshoes, and verify that everyone was doing well. To this point no head lamps were needed as we kept to the mountain rim trail. In the clear air, the twinkling of the city lights far below in the moon-lit valley was a sight to behold. As we made our way along the crusty trail we heard the wind howling through the trees above us, but the wind never seemed to flow upon us; it gushed high above our heads in the upper branches of the tall pines. This was the case until we reached the meadow.

The clouds had lessened and the full moon lighted the night. The trail opened up to a meadow that seemed to emit a light of its own rather than merely reflect a distant moon. It was pure pleasure to step from the crusty trail and kick through a field of shimmering, drifting powder. The wind here was low to the ground and icy cold. It added a welcomed exhilarating contrast to our earlier experience of only hearing the wind but not feeling its bite. The center of Kiwanis meadow was windswept to bare ground. Only the occasional bush or small tree retained an edging of snow. Moonlight soaking into brown

patches of earth provided a startling contrast to the all-white world we had been within just minutes ago.

It was time to head back. We had agreed on a 90-minute round trip ending at the restaurant. We took a route through thick trees heading back via the Gravel Pit Trail. It was pretty much the only part of the trip that required occasional use of head lamps. We ended our journey, as planned, in the warmth of a welcoming pub.

There were a few equipment problems during the course of the trip. Everyone teamed together to help out, no one got too cold for an evening trip and the overall camaraderie made for an enjoyable evening. ■

Our First Ski Club Trip By Mona and Luis Suarez

Mona: "What do you think – should we go on the trip tomorrow or not?" **Luis:** "Well, I don't know. I've never been on a pair of skis; all I know is what I read in the How to Ski book."

Mona: "Yeah, but this is a once in a lifetime opportunity!" **Luis:** "Well, O.K., let's go then!"



Ray Berg, Luis Suarez and Thea Berg on the Gothic trail.

Photo by Mona Suarez

And that's how our decision to join the ski trip with the NMCCSC was made! We packed and got ready for whatever surprises and challenges the trip would bring. The four days that followed were instructive, inspiring and incredible!

Day 1: The bus trip to Crested Butte was relaxed and scenic. It was great to just sit down and not to have to worry about driving. We arrived at the motel around dusk, went to Donita's restaurant with the group and started to get to know the very welcoming Club members. The food was good, and the company was enjoyable and they made us feel very welcome. That night we considered our options for the next day and decided to play it safe, take small steps and experience the town's Nordic area.

Day 2: After taking what we thought would be an easy "shortcut" from the Center up a very steep hill and through some rolling terrain (*on what turned out to be a blue trail*) we arrived at the main highway to access the green trails! By then we were exhausted (*Luis having become an expert in getting up from*

falling so many times) so we went back to the inn – tired but inspired.

Day 3: With the encouragement of many club members (who were not aware of our poor skills), we decided to try the Gothic trail tour. The first few minutes were challenging – but with the cajoling support and helpful techniques suggested by Bet, Thea, Ray, and others we did O.K. Ray was wise enough to delay the teaching of the “kick turn” – until after we had passed the point of no return! There were plenty of opportunities for practice: downhill snow plow, kick and glide, fall, uphill, and yes, fall again! The scenery was a winter wonderland and we felt very happy that we had taken on the challenge.

Day 4: We woke up surprisingly not sore and looked forward to a session with Guy on the Nordic trails. There Luis got his first class on some of the fundamentals and Mona practiced some of the skills for skiing along relatively steep (according to her) “downhills”.

We had an exhilarating skiing weekend, and are so grateful to all the friendly, helpful, and caring folks who helped to make our first ski trip so much fun! ■

The Trip that Almost Never Was

By Chris Kramar & Guy Miller

The trip to the Polar Star Inn hut, February 1-6, started out like any other hut trip. Guy Miller had a full roster of 17, all ready to enjoy some great Colorado hut skiing. A few weeks before the trip 5 people dropped. Then, days prior to the trip, news of an impending big winter storm began materializing and a few more people dropped. The morning that we were supposed to depart, word of sporadic I-25 closures and large amounts of snow falling in the Sandia region caused a few more to bail . . . and then there were four!



Chris Kramar stayed warm on the Polar Star Hut trip.
Photo by Guy Miller



Tom Russo is one of the hardy skiers!

The weather conditions that transpired were eerily reminiscent of those of last year’s Durango Hostel trip where several people bailed out for fear of the weather.

Susan Corban, Tom Russo and I met at Guy’s house

and after discussing the merits of continuing, decided to attempt to get out of town. After an hour, we eventually did. It soon became apparent that the brunt of the storm was hitting Albuquerque and we were pleased to find that I-25 steadily improved as we approached Santa Fe. The rest of the roads were icy and dicey in a few spots, but drivable. Tennessee Pass was snow-covered, but we safely drove it at a reduced speed. It appeared that the area of I-70 west of Vail Pass had



Susan Corban also braved the cold. She enjoyed the warm hut and telemark conditions.

Photos by Chris Kramar

received little snow, but the big story was the cold – lots of it.

We spent the night at the Silver Leaf hotel in Eagle, CO. When we awoke in the morning it was -18 degrees and just loading the car was difficult. All I could think of was how cold it would be at the trailhead, which was several thousand feet higher than town. The Weather Channel said the low in Leadville was -25 and the hut is 1,000 feet higher than that. The forecast for the next few days was for bitter cold, but with the saving grace of little wind and lots of sun.

For the ski in we were greeted with bitter cold but windless, sunny conditions. Using the toe and hand warmers that Guy had provided, we proceeded on an enjoyable 5- to 6-hour ski into the hut. The trail we took featured several areas of steep uphill with the rest being moderate or flat with excellent views of the

NY Mountains. The trail into the hut was tracked and the snow was light and powdery.

The hut is tucked into the trees, which mostly block what would be extensive views of the surrounding mountains. But, with the trees all frosted with snow, the view was still a beautiful sight to behold. The hut had 5 bedrooms, and a connected outhouse, but the living room was smaller than most huts. We had a hard time imagining what it would have been like if all 17 people had come! We were glad that we had a reduced number of participants, although we knew we were missing their company.

That night we enjoyed the beautiful sunset and the cold night sky was filled with stars. The next day we slept in and were not enthusiastic about venturing out into the cold. By 11 a.m. Guy and I went out for a ski and found it pleasant and warmer than the day before.

We skied toward an area called Fulford and discovered a small group of summer cabins. The snow at this lower elevation had formed a crust and the skiing was not optimal. We went back to enjoy a late lunch by the warmth of the cabin's roaring stove.

We learned that Susan and Tom had enjoyed a short ski around the hut and they found the snow to be excellent. Later in the day Guy and I did a short preliminary exploration of NY Mountain in preparation for the next day's skiing. We discovered great touring for all levels of ski ability. The snow around NY Mountain was light and powdery in most places.

That night we had a grand dinner prepared by this author, consisting of pasta with capers, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic and portabella mushrooms with Petit Sirah wine. Guy proclaimed this to be the best hut dinner he has ever had and the accolades were never ending!

The next day the group set out for NY Mountain. Cold was not an issue and we could enjoy the snow and scenery. Tom injured his leg skiing to the hut (*a nasty calf-muscle pull*) and returned to the hut to keep the fire stoked. The rest of us went on a tour to find the "Lost Glade" that Guy thought he had sighted the day before. What transpired was a trip through many glades and large open areas, punctuated by challenging treed areas.

Supreme powder conditions reigned throughout the tour. Even beginner telemarkers would have been

supported by this skier's nirvana. The only down side was the absence of so many of our friends whom we knew would have loved to have been here. They make one think that the new name for the Club should be the NM Cross Country Sissy Club!

We had such a good time skiing the powder that we ended up much farther and lower in altitude from



Chris Kramar arrives at Polar Star Hut.

Photo by Guy Miller

where we thought we would be and had to navigate over a few hours uphill and back to the hut. The roaring fire was very welcoming when we returned. For dinner we had a great meal of chicken fajitas. That night we invented a new drink: fine single malt scotch over pure Colorado snow! Susan declared that *snow + scotch = "snotch!"*

The next day Tom and Susan skied out due to Tom's leg injury. Guy and I did one more ski tour, looking for the "Lost Glade," before departing for civilization. Upon our arrival at the car a blizzard broke, making packing our stuff a challenge. As we drove back to Eagle the snow abated. Guy and I drove to Salida and spent the night. Then it was an easy drive home and we arrived in plenty of time to watch the Super Bowl.

The skiing around Polar Star was unexpectedly excellent and could accommodate skiers of different abilities. I highly recommend a repeat trip! ■

Weekend Trip to Chama

By Marcia Congdon

Twelve of us carpoled to Chama on February 4-6, for a fun weekend of skiing organized by John Thomas. We stayed at the Chama Trails Inn, which was charming with its crisp, white cotton quilts and comfortable furnishings. On both nights we ate at the High Country Restaurant and Saloon. The food was good and it was conveniently located across the street from the motel. For breakfasts we scattered to various places.



On Saturday we drove to Cumbres Pass in Colorado and skied on the left side of Highway 17, along Neff Mountain Road and various intersecting trails. We encountered snowmobilers twice, but the powdery snow was forgiving. We had a beautiful 10-mile ski mostly in the forest with some open and scenic areas. It began to gently snow about halfway through our tour, creating even more perfect conditions. It was a great experience.



Thanks to John Thomas for his leadership and planning the fun weekend car trip to Chama.



The group skis across the historic railroad trestle. Photo by Dana Price

That evening we gathered in Susan Harris, Dana Price and Liam Hurburt's (*Dana's 13-year old son*) large corner room for drinks and various yummy refreshments supplied by the group. We all sat by the fireplace while John Thomas entertained us with stories about his adventures on the Appalachian Trail and his volunteer work on the Continental Divide Trails. The others who went were Noel Barstow, Dave Gable, Bryon Garner, Carol Haller, Jean Hanson, and Karen and Chet Leach.



13-year old Liam Hurburt

On Sunday we headed a little farther up the road and skied on the right of Highway 17, along the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic

Railroad track toward Toltec Gorge. The sun was bright when we took off, but later it started to snow and became windy. Part of the group went farther up the trail to get in more miles and to investigate the valley. The slopes to the east gave some a chance to practice turns. Another good workout was had by all. It was a great trip! ■

My Return to Crested Butte By Anne Hickman

Crested Butte was a trip down memory lane for me. It was my first "long" trip with the Club several years ago when I was a new member trying to stand up on those long slats called cross country skis.



Because the temperature was in the single digit range on the first day of our most recent trip, a few of us decided to ski at the nearby Nordic track. It consists of over 90 km of all levels of beautifully groomed trails suited for track and skate skiing. Karen Kvam, Thea Berg and I skied together after checking in at the Nordic Center.

Thea negotiated a group rate. I'm now able to declare senior citizen status which meant I didn't have to pay -- I'm beginning to like this new status!

Since my first exposure to the Nordic area several years ago, it seemed that the hills had shrunk! I guess my ability is a good measuring stick of my increased experience and confidence. However, when the skate skiers whizzed by demonstrating their ability to seemingly float through the air, I suddenly felt like a beginner again!

Onward, the intrepid three of us skied enjoying the "robin-blue" sky, sunshine and invigorating air. We enjoyed just being there in a beautiful environment with no sounds or smells of snowmobiles or traffic.

Looking out on the town from an area called the Bench, we could see the straight, rolling trail that links the Bench to the Town Ranch Loop. It crosses the highway and consists of more groomed trails, including areas where no trail passes are required. Part of this area is free to skiers, but dogs must pay!

Crested Butte is such a lovely town. Nestled at 8,924 feet, surrounded by snow-capped mountains and beautiful vistas, it is called the last great Colorado ski town. Originally Ute Indian country, coal and silver mining settlers established the town. After those industries collapsed, all-season sports became a reason for town growth.

Our lovely motel, Old Town Inn, complete with a sweet resident dog, is located at the edge of town. It was staffed by friendly folks who provide a hearty Continental breakfast, homemade cookies and useful information. Crested Butte is a gem that must be visited again, in any season. ■

Thank you to our Leaders

A special **thank you** to our Bus Trip Chairs **Angela Welford** and **Randy Simons** for their first year as chairs. We all LOVED the special touches — hand warmers, cup holders, great beer, recycling and using paper cups, list of what to pack, evaluations forms, and so much more! It's tough to follow incredible past leaders — Thea and Ray Berg and Louise Broadbent — but they handled it all well!!



March 2011						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Janet's Hut		Club Meet		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	Apr 1	2
Ben Eiseman Hut						

Thanks also to our ski tour leaders in Crested Butte: Ray Berg, Noel Barstow, Alan Burns, Bill Davey, Gordon Eatman, Terri Elisberg, Sherry Fitzmaurice, Bob Long, John McCorkel, Guy Miller, Dave Saylor, Carl Smith, John Thomas and David Wegner.

Welcome New Members

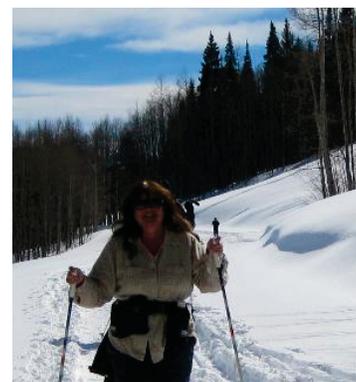
Rex Boyland
Kathleen Connors Dowdy
Cherie Gaston
James Markham

Post your Pictures

Put your pictures on our website — see instructions under Members area and click on "upload."

Thank you Volunteers!!

Thanks to our Board members **Bill Heitz**, **Day Trips Chair**, and **Gene Lisotto**, **Membership Chair**, for there 7 years of service. We appreciate their dedication, time and energy to the Club



Lucy Miller
Photo by Holly Noland

for so many years.

A special thank you to all of our newsletter story tellers and photographers — you all are so creative.

Thank you to Lucy Miller for her excellent eye in proof reading and giving ideas for the newsletters.



Terri Elisberg, Rich Rougeux, Alan Burns, Dave Gable, Carl Smith, Randy Simons, Noel Barstow and Wayne Kirkby enjoy the perfect day and trail to Gothic in Crested Butte, 213/11.

2010-11 Officers and Board

President	Chris Kramar	903-4071	ckkramar@yahoo.com
Vice President	Wayne Kirkby	898-1654	ski1071607@aol.com
Secretary	Lucy Miller	401-2440	lucycecelia@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chris Standish	400-7089	standish.chris@gmail.com
Day Tours	Bill Heitz	259-8745	bill_heitz@hotmail.com
Long Bus Trips	Angela Welford Randy Simons	281-1198 294-0192	awelford1017@gmail.com randy_simons@msn.com
Overnight Car/Hut Trips	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
Newsletter	Karen Leach	281-9836	karenleach7@msn.com
Instruction	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
Membership	Gene Lisotto	884-7331	gene_lisotto@msn.com
Programs	Sherry Fitzmaurice	798-4818	sherry.fitzmaurice@xilinx.com
Mailing	Ruth Bargman-Romero	842-9735	rebrome@sandia.gov
Refreshments	Terri Elisberg Bet Gendron	281-9192 299-6542	terri.elisberg@gmail.com bettygendron@gmail.com
Trails	Sam Beard	828-0673	samgbeard@msn.com
Web Site	David Wegner	344-8554	dave@naturesgrandeur.com
Email Group	Ray Berg	366-8104	rsberg01@comcast.net

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

P.O. Box 8425

Albuquerque, NM 87198-8425



David Wegner at Brush Creek in
Crested Butte.

Photo by Dave Gable