

President's Update

In our December newsletter, I mentioned that there would be an attempt to get guidance from our members with regards to major decisions affecting the future of our Society. At the November and January meetings, we started the process with the discussion topics: "*What do you like best about the Larch Hills experience?*" and "*Our skiing experience at Larch Hills can best be maintained or enhanced by...*"

With our secretary, Clint Smith's, capable guidance there was free and open exchange of ideas. Only a few individuals had to duck the flying (soft) roll of toilet paper for getting caught using "killer phrases" or for not keeping their minds completely open. From these sessions, a feeling as to what is important to the members in attendance started to emerge.

To carry the process further, a facilitated workshop to help us form a vision and long-range plan for our Society has been planned for Thursday, February 24th. I would really like to encourage all members to mark that date on their calendars and make an effort to attend. The meeting will definitely not be intimidating. On the contrary, it should be a "fun" experience if the previous brainstorming sessions are any indication! We need some new faces with fresh brain power to share ideas regarding Society direction.

The outcome of our facilitated workshop will be important at our Annual General Meeting on March 8, 2005. Decisions regarding construction of a new tracksetter storage shed will have to be made. The location could have far reaching implications for the LHNS.

If, for some unfathomable reason you are unable to attend, feel free to call me to discuss the direction *you* would like to see our Society grow towards. Make sure your thoughts and feelings are taken into consideration. See you

Thursday, February 24th 2005 at 7pm

Room #1 at the Salmon Arm Community Centre!

Chris Letham
832-8676

1st Un-Loppet A Big Success

The Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet committee would like to thank all those volunteers that helped put on the non race Loppet. It was a wonderfully festive event. Your enthusiasm and hospitality made all the difference between a bust and a success.

Since the Loppet we have had long discussions about refunds or a credit and have decided that in order to keep hosting the Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet in the tradition we have for 21 years that no refunds or credit will be given. We hope everyone will understand.

Sincerely,
The RKS Loppet Organizing Committee

HELP WANTED

SKI SWAP CO-ORDINATOR(S): to organize our yearly event. An efficient system and roster of experienced helpers in place. Mentoring available.
Call: Roger at 832-2702

SNOWMOBILE DRIVERS: to be 'on call' for Loppet assistance, first aid response, etc. Instruction and familiarization with club machine available.
Call: Blaine 833-4008

COACHING CO-ORDINATOR: to arrange training session for coaches and liaise with Jack Rabbit Co-ordinator.
Call: Eileen 832-7167

LOPPET CO-CHIEF OF RACE: to help oversee the race portion of Loppet.
Call: Stan 832-6548

LOPPET SPONSOR CO-ORDINATOR: to liaise with major Loppet sponsors. Mentoring available.
Call: Marcia 832-3534

BANNER PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR: to liaise with local sponsors for Loppet.
Call: Blaine 833-4008

LOPPET HEART & STROKE LIAISON: to liaise with Loppet affiliate. Mentoring available.
Call: Marcia 832-3534

January 25, 2005

Dear Larch Hills Nordic Society,
Thank you very much for organizing the school district Loppet. I really enjoyed it.
The fruit loop canon was one of the highlights as well as the non-competitive and positive attitude.
I hope you organize it again next year. Thank you very much.
Yours truly,
Bradley Milgram of Hillcrest

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The Return of the School Loppet
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The Junior Loppet 'happened' at Larch Hills this year after many years hiatus. The day proved to be a 'frolicking' success with many smiling faces, good tracks and warm weather. There was an abundance of supporting adult club members staged as pirates cheering skiers on and serving food making this a fun event. The cookie medals for each skier at the finish line, and the incredible draw prizes saluted the efforts of all the skier participants. The skiers who placed were also specially acknowledged at the event and in the local papers, and awarded for their feat.

Top favorites for attire went to the flamboyant Tom Peasgood, complete with parrot. And a remarkable pair of pants rumoured to have once belonged to Marcia Beckner. Just a rumour!

The Return of the School Loppet



Thank you to all of the volunteers, sponsors, and committee members who contributed their talents and time to this event. The following two comments from two of our pirates say it all!

Shiver me ski poles! It's a fair wind that blows when such a raucous band of volunteers can have so much fun helping out with an event. Dressed in their very best finery, the support crew for this year's School Loppet had to be one of the merriest north of the Caribbean. Just to capture the spirit, and coax others to join us in the fun next year, here's a thought from one of the buccaneer hoard:

*"The Larch Hills School Loppet on Jan 21st was a lot of fun! Outstanding weather combined with the festive atmosphere created by all the volunteers dressing as pirates made it a great day for all the kids! The cookie medals were a big hit with everyone. The hi-light of the day was the group of volunteer pirates who skied across the finish line with Melissa while the waiting crowd cheered her on! **(Bottom picture)** Can't wait till next year!" That from Captain Oldsnow Graywax (a.k.a. Steve Fabro).*

Jackrabbits:

Larch Hills and the jackrabbit program was off to a great start.....the early snow made for some excellent skiing. Little Jack bunnies are everywhere, some as young as 3 years, leaving their tracks in the snow ! Playing fun games and singing songs to keep their rhythm and balance in line !

We have Polar Cubs, Nuthatches, Moose, Deer, Kangaroos, and Alligators, Hare, Eagles and Grizzlies - doing the side-step, herringbone, double poling, and free skating. They are all making great progress.

We've had a very successful season with 125 children signed up for this season. This is a parent run program. Parents are needed to be leaders, helpers, hot chocolate makers, keeping the chalet warm, media coverage, typing, photocopying, etc., etc. Parents who volunteer their time are what keep the program on track.

Many, many thank yous to everyone who has volunteered and supported their children through this awesome, outdoor, snowy, fun filled activity.

Our last scheduled session is February 12th. Meet you at the chalet for the party at 12 noon !

Anne Nakagawa, coordinator

As a club, we encourage fun on skis while offering quality instruction programs to our community youth. To support a standard of qualified instruction the LHNS sponsors parent leaders to obtain coaching qualifications. If you are thinking of becoming a leader next year, or if you are already a Rabbit Leader, we urge you to take the Cross Country BC Introductory Community Coaching Course (ICC) which is being held in Vernon on Feb 26 (evening) and Feb 27 (all day). The LHNS pays the tuition for all Rabbit Leader's coaching courses. Call Eileen for details.

Also, if you are thinking of coaching next year, please give Anne, the Rabbit Coordinator, a phone call as early notice assists with planning and organization. Our program is a success because of parent commitment, enthusiasm and energy.

Thank you. Eileen 832-7167 and Anne 852-8625

THIS JUST IN ! JackRabbits Wrap with a 2010 Twist!

The Larch Hills JackRabbit Cross Country Ski program is arguably the largest group of budding outdoor winter athletes in the Shuswap! With over 125 kids registered this winter, we're delighted to see another season of great skiing celebrated at noon on Saturday, February 12th with the usual fanfare of encouragement, hot chocolate and kudos for getting out and playing in the good frozen white stuff.

But this year there's a bonus at our closing festivities. It turns out our noon wrap-up coincides with the start of the Spirit of BC week flag raising and countdown to the Winter Olympics in 2010. So we've managed to score as the official proclamation site for the Shuswap!

10:30 - 11:50: Our final cross-country JackRabbit ski classes for the season. Plenty of room out there for everyone to come out and ski the trails.

11:50 - Noon: Hot Chocolate and Apple Cider at the Chalet

Noon- 12:15: Congratulations to all the skiers, introduce the 2010 countdown, a few words from local leaders, then raise the Spirit of BC flag!

12:15 - 12:30: JackRabbit Medallions (the giant cookie medals) are awarded to all the skiers, along with Spirit of BC pins and tattoos, and ski badges.

Be sure to invite folks to join us and cheer on our skiers. . .

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION RECEIPTS

Thank you to everyone who has signed-up or renewed their membership for this ski season. We have more members registered than ever before.

We include a receipt with newsletters that are mailed. To keep costs low, receipts are not mailed to members who read their newsletters on the Larch Hills website.

If you want a receipt for membership fees and donations, please contact the membership secretary, Christine Hutchins 832-7242 or by email pnychutch@jetstream.net.

Larch Hills Ski Tournament

Larch Hills Nordic Society will be hosting a Youth/Family Ski Tournament on Saturday March 5. This event will be a combination of sprints, relays and fun activities for the whole family to participate in. Cross Country Canada is providing each youth racer with a "Kid Friendly" T shirt.

Participants will be grouped into teams with various skiing ability and ages on each team. Teams will compete for a Team Aggregate Award. There will also be a variety of prizes for everything from good technique to who can build the best snowman on skis. This event is an excellent opportunity for young skiers to compete in a friendly environment. The Larch Hills Nordic Society Junior Racers will be out in full force to help skiers with technique and encourage skiers new to competition.

Race Registration: 9:00 – 10:00 A.M.

Events: 10:00 – 2:00 P.M.

Cost: Free

For more information: Phil Wallenstein 832-5125 or Donna Flatman 832-1362

HIPAS Raffle Winners

The draw for the HIPAS raffle was held January 18th in the Community Centre. The lucky winners were:

Jackie Jones: Nordic seasons ski pass at Silver Star Mountain Resort

Hermann Bruns: Guided tour of the Larch Hills (rentals for 6)

Tom Brighthouse: Ski rental package for 4

Carl Wylie: Stained glass creation by Eleanor Marshall

Gullan Hansen: Stained glass creation by Eleanor Marshall

Frank Schneider: Ski waxing form made by Luke Heckrodt

Many thanks to our sponsors: Silver Star, Johns Ski Shack, Skookum Cycle and Sport, Wickett Business Services, and to the many generous ski club members, families and friends who supported our high performance athletes by purchasing (and selling) raffle tickets

Tracksetter Replacement Fundraising

We are now in year two of a major fundraising campaign to replace our twenty year old Pisten Bulley.

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of our many members (this year's donors are listed later in the newsletter) as well as several significant community contributions, we are exceeding all expectations and are truly well on our way. Indeed, we anticipate being at the \$80,000 mark by the end of this ski season.

We are also waiting for feedback on several major grant applications. By next year, we may well be skiing on tracks set with new equipment operated by smiling tracksetters.

One fun way to support the fundraising is to attend the Dinner and Auction on March 5th. Hope to see you there.

LHNS Season Finale Pot Luck and Auction - March 5

Last March the hall was packed, the food was scrumptious and the auction brought in \$5,000.

Saturday, March 5th is not far off. Our season windup this year promises to be a fun evening for all members of the family. We'll be meeting at the United Church Hall at the bottom of Okanagan Avenue.

Pot Luck Dinner: We'll be eating at about 5:30 and we all know that Larch Hills potlucks feature some of the best dishes in the Shuswap. Our Junior Racer parents will be organizing this part of the evening.

The Auction: There will actually be two auctions. Tables for the Silent Auction will be set up for viewing and bidding between 5:00 and 7:00. The Live Auction will start at 7:00. Once again we are fortunate to have Bruce Bolton donating his services so it should be a lot of fun. With such a multi-talented and diverse membership we'll have a lot of high value items and services on 'the block'.

Please think of what you might be willing to contribute to the auction table.

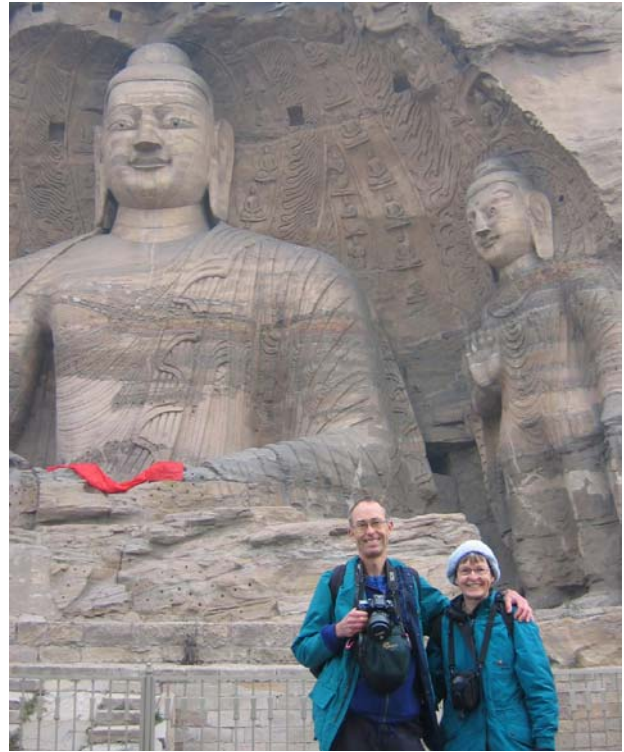
Several of the many possibilities mentioned to date include:

- guiding a hike
- hosting a dinner
- teaching a skill or sharing a hobby
- doing some house or garden work
- donating a handicraft, etc. etc....

Please let George (832 9335) or Pat (832 7242) know what you are donating a week or so in advance. We'll then try to distribute a partial list of what will be available prior to the event.

Drop off your donations (or intentions) between 3:30 and 6:00 on Friday, March 4th at the United Church.

We really hope many of our members will be able to make it to either all or part of the evening - and it's okay to enjoy the auction without contributing or even buying anything. Just come along, and even better, bring a friend!



TRAVELS IN CHINA

A Larch Hills Track Setter Fundraiser

Friday, February 18, at 7:30,

Room 1, Salmon Arm Community Centre.

Ian and Wendy Clay will present slide highlights of their recent travels in China. The show will include: the Yangtze River, Shanghai, Xi'an and the Terracotta Warriors, and the Great Wall.

Admission by donation (\$5.00 suggested) - all proceeds go to our Tracksetter replacement fund. Refreshments will be provided.

Come and spend the evening and get an overview of the beauty, history, culture and rapidly changing society that make China so fascinating., and support our progress towards a new tracksetter.

RCMP MUSICAL RIDE

You might wonder what horses in the summertime have to do with the Larch Hills and Skiing. Good question.

On August 5th the Salmon Arm Centennial Committee and the Fall Fair Society will be co-sponsoring the RCMP Musical Ride in Salmon Arm and they would like the Larch Hills to join them as a partnering group to provide thirty or so volunteers for ticket collection and marshalling. This will be a tremendous opportunity to present a positive face in the community while raising some money for our tracksetter (not to mention the opportunity for our volunteers to get up close and personal with thirty-six big black horses).

What we need is a commitment by one or two members to coordinate the volunteers and be a liaison with the organizing group. If you could help out please call Pat at 832 7242.

On January 22, 2005 I left my skis outside the Chalet.
Did anyone pick them up?

If so please call Rod Chorneyko at 804-2621

Visit to Kelowna Nordics, Jan. 0/05, by Blaine Carson

Several people enjoyed the hospitality of this Club hosted by their President Ross Sutcliffe and a number of Directors. They ski near McCullough Lake 40 minutes up highway 33, just past the Big White road. Don Huntington and Bruce Motherwell had visited them in the Fall and felt it would be good to have a winter visit.

I was particularly interested in their 1984, PB 170 and I was fortunate to talk to one of their experienced operators, as well as their mechanic. They have 8600 hours on their machine, about 1000 more than ours, which is a 1986 PB 130. They put on 52 K to do 50 K of trail while we put on 80+ K to do 45 K of trail. Their machine is wide enough to do one pass with classic on each side and skating in the middle. Their actual comb width is 15' and ours is 10'. They have had mechanical problems, as we have, and it has cost them about \$40 000 in repairs in recent years, similar to what we have spent. All of their repairs are done by a paid mechanic from Penticton, whereas we do a number ourselves through volunteer labour. They are in the process of replacing this machine with a 1999 PB 200 with 6000 hours that will cost them \$108 000. They pay their Tracksetter and he puts in a 40 hour week, tracksetting every day, but Tuesdays and Thursdays. Everything else is done by volunteers.

After inspecting the machine and storage shed we sat in their Main Lodge and had lunch while we asked them about the operation of their Club. They have about 430 members and an operating budget of around

\$85 000. Family memberships are \$140 until Oct. 31 and then \$160 which includes 2 free instruction lessons for new members. Single adult memberships are \$70/80. The daily trail fee is \$9.00 or \$20.00 for a family, which is noted on a sign as "Your Fair Share". When the signage was changed, donations went from \$3000 to \$12 000 and are now \$15 000. All members wear a plasticized membership tag with their name on it, but there is no one standing at the donation box. They also have donation boxes asking for a lesser amount out on their Canine trails and Snowshoe trails. Additional income of about \$20 000 is received through the Gaming Commission as the Club helps operate 3 Bingos a year.

Their Lodge has two parts, old and new, with lots of light from windows, tables, a central stove with a pot of hot water on it and cups for people to make chocolate, coffee or tea, and leave a donation. Toilets are outhouses like ours. They also have 3 other heated cabins, one out 3 K, the other out 5 K and one snowshoe shelter. We saw the 3 K one on our trail tour. It was built last year after they received a \$16 000 grant from the Gaming Commission. They supplied the other \$16 000 and it was constructed by a contractor. The stove was on and there were about 6 people inside including children. They also had a double snow shoe trail leading to it.

I noted more older skiers than we have, perhaps because they have more gentle trails, 26% green, 37% blue and 37% advanced. They also have a car pooling arrangement

with people able to meet on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday at the Recreation Centre. As Ross said, it enables people to more easily find skiing partners and is a great introduction for people new to the area. They have a free map and information sheet which is paid for by 4 business card ads at \$200 each. They print 3000 a year.

In addition to the 50 K mentioned above, they have 28 K of single track groomed by snowmobiles, 14 K of untracked trails and 42 K of snowshoe trails. They have a well attended snow-hare group for people to get lessons at a cost of \$10 for 2 hours. In addition they have free guided snowshoe trips and a ski host program. They have a Club mascot, Family Fun Day, Moonlight Ski, Tour-de-Nordic, Black Beauty Time Trials, final bonfire and hot dog roast. Cutting new trails has been easier for them as most of their area has not been logged and the vegetation is not as dense.

Organization is different than ours in that they have 20 some Directors as well as a President, Treasurer and Secretary. Each Director has a particular task to do for the Club and they are confirmed in their position at an election at the Annual General Meeting if they have been appointed during the year. The Executive which includes the Directors has 3 regular meetings during the year.

They get reports from their neighbor on precipitation and temperature which they use on their web page and snow phone. More information is available from:

www.kelownanordic.com

List of donors to the tracksetter fund

from December 1, 2004 to February 5, 2005

Sue Ackerman
Ed Angrignon
Ron and Karen Beals
Barbara Beazley and Verne
Gummeson
Alice Broeder
Steve Clark
Steve and Teresa Connor
Paul Corrie and Rose Malischewski
Keith and Noelle Cox
Rod and Shannon Densmore
John and Cherilyn Drew
Bill and Lorraine Ellens
Nancy Foster and Nick Postma
Ronald and Judith Goldman
Shelley Green
Jennifer and Leanne Gullins
Roy and Sharon Hancliff
Tom Hansen
Tanya and Chris Harrington
Bill Haviland

Maurice Hesketh
Lynne and Dan Holmes
Bob and Mary Howard
John and Barbara Howard
George and Mavis Jackson
Rob and Liz Johnston
Marv and Rae Jury
W R Kernaghan
Greg and Margaret Kitchen
Ivan Koch and Janice Wagner
Katherine and Ashley Ladyman
Carole Lee and Conrad Wilkins
Kevin and Cheryl Lee
Eileen MacDonald
Jean MacLennan and Dave Wood
Eleanor and Tom Marshall
Tricia Martin and Barry Bergh
Gwen and Dave Martinuk
Walter Massey
Tanya and Grant McCallum
Sandra McDonald

Phil and Kathy McIntyre-Paul
Barb McKinnon and Tim Robinson
Beth Mix
Ron Neden
Robert and Cheri North
Bill Pearce
Yolanda Pluska
Nadine and John Quilty
Norbert Rabe
Willem Roell
Nancy and Mike Scott
Joan Sholinder
Shuswap Optometric Centre
Brian and Eva Smith
Larry Strutynski
Nancy Tamblyn
Wayne Trethewey
Phil Wallenstein and Dana Fenwick
Peter and Joyce Wessel
Ernie and Cindy Whitehead
John and Leslie Wilson



Every winter as I ski along the trails at Larch Hills, I can't help but think to myself: THANK YOU. Why are our trails so great!? A few club gremlins work silently during the shoulder-season preparing our playground for us. And, I am told, they have fun doing it.

Larch Hills Nordic Society has an Adopt-a-Trail program, where club members and club families assign themselves as volunteers to snip and prune along their assigned trail. This program offers an opportunity for children to get involved with being a community volunteer, and it instills some ownership and pride in our trails. Not all of the trails are yet assigned, so we have one for you if you are so inclined. Please call Gullan Hansen at 832-2988, and in her ever helpful way, she will help you pick a trail.

Also, in the fall of each year, Gullan Hansen and Blaine Carson organize a 'Take Back the Hills' day where club members meet at the hill and spend a day of camaraderie snipping and pruning, and then they descend the hill to feast at a potluck.

If you haven't ever wandered on the Larch Hills trails before the snow flies, you really should. Though I know the trails intimately when I ski on them, I have a difficult time orientating myself while walking on dirt up there. And the bogs are magic!

*Eileen MacDonald, Vice President
Larch Hills Nordic Society*

Gullan's List of Adopted Larch Hills Ski Trails & Trails needing Adoption

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL ADOPTED BY
Stig's Loop	Ken Angle
Ermine Frolic	Jim & Marcia Beckner
Frodo's Bog	Blaine & Judy Carson
Cottonwood Cutoff	Dave & Terry Wallenstein & family
Hot Shot	John & Joyce Henderson
Jay Walk	Doug & Hanna McKay
Gullan's Gulley	Gullan Hansen
Plantation Place	Peter & Pauline Molnar
East Dales	Hermann & Louise Bruns
Alder Lane	Mick & Sue Ford
Bruin's Ramble	Pat & Christine Hutchins
Larch Lake Loop	George & Jeanetta Zorn
Larch Hills Road	
Baby Moonwalk	
Willow Switch	
Mom's Trail	
Reino's Run	
Sky Trail	
Bilbo's Bog	
Panorama	
Chalet Loop	
Camel's Hump	
Jackrabbit Lane	
Medford Road	
Woodlot Ramble	
Skyview	
Credit Union Express (Roller Coaster)	
Marathon Loop	
Heartbreak Hill	
Sunshine	

Thanks to everyone who has worked on the Ski Trails in preparation for the Ski Season

