

LARCH HILLS NORDIC CLUB

Newsletter December, 2011



President's News

If you know the tune of pack up your troubles, sing. "Pack up your troubles in an old fanny pack and Ski! Ski! Ski! Have wonderful holiday season. Think snow and ski to your heart's content. See you all on the trails.

Events:

December 28, 2011 - Lantern Ski - coordinator Louis Marc Simard

January 1, 2012 - Fun Race and BC Winter Games Trials

January 14, 2012 - Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet

February 18th and 19th, 2012 - BC Championships

General Meeting Tuesday, February 7th

7 pm Rec Centre

Annual General Meeting Tuesday, March 6th 7 pm

Both in the Rec Centre basement

Fun Day - TBA - Coordinator -

Other Lantern skis - TBA-coordinators????????????



Junior Race Team

The Junior Race Team's season is well underway, under the guidance of head coach Phil Wallensteen and his group of dedicated coaches. The 54 skiers, aged 8 to 18, are practicing at Larch Hills up to three times a week, perfecting their technique and improving their fitness. During the first weekend of December, the team spent 2 days at Silver Star at their annual Team Ski Camp, enjoying fabulous weather and skiing. The race season begins in earnest with NorAm races in Sovereign Lake on Dec. 10 and 11, and then BC Cup races begin in January, after our very own Larch Hills Fun Race on January 1. Add in Loppets, Team Scream Relay races in Revelstoke, Midget Championships—we can definitely say that the racers have lots of choices on where to try to ski their very best. For more info on the team, see the website at:

<http://www.skilarchhills.ca/racing.htm>

Visioning Meeting report

The first meeting of the Visioning committee was held on Dec. 5th with 12 interested club members in attendance. An up-date on climate trends and projections for the future was given by member Bill Grainger, Geomorphologist, and how climate change may affect our ski season in the future. It came as no surprise that our ski season is at risk of becoming shorter at the 1000 meter elevation where our Chalet and start area are currently located. Higher elevation is where the longer ski season and more consistent snow is to be found and will continue to be the trend into the future. With this information in mind our future planning should include this reality. The group had an open discussion and brought forward ideas for short term, midterm and long term goals. Some of the ideas were: future trail development should be at higher elevation, improve and expand Cec's cabin, early season access to the 1200 meter elevation via the 110 road which is from the TCH highway up to the north end of our trail system, expansion of the current Chalet. There is a significant increase in the summer use by horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking etc. so the year round use and appeal of the Larch Hills as a destination recreation area is growing. This aspect should also be considered in any decisions we make as our role is increasingly in the year round management of the area. These are just some of the thoughts and ideas that were raised. No decisions or priority was given to any of ideas put forward. We will be having a follow-up meeting to be announced at which time anyone else who may be interested is welcome to attend.

Valentine's Lantern Ski



Wednesday, December 28th

5:00 - 9:00 pm

Bring your left-over
Christmas baking to
share
Supper available to buy



Canine Trail Proposal Passes

The new canine trail will be opening soon with signs with rules and directions posted. The Canine Committee will come up with a way to offer feedback on the trail. The trail will not be open during Jackrabbits and other club events.

Tracks

Tracksetting for the LHNS is done by 14 volunteers, seven of whom have a regular day, so that they are on the Hill to check out conditions and see what can be done with one of our 2 machines, a 2002 PB 200, or a Scandic that pulls a Ginzugroomer. We are not a commercial operation so do not expect every trail to be groomed every day. For an indication of the grooming, check the daily Trail Report on the website and the Trails Done board near the Chalet. Usually we can cover about one-third of the hill each day, either focussing on the Central Trails or the North or South. We are always at the mercy of the weather, and wet, heavy snow can make it difficult to operate any of our machines. Some of our Tracksetters have up to 20 years of experience, so you can expect to see a professional job and we are justifiably proud of the volunteer crew that can have as many as 6 of them there for special events. They can also offer assistance to you with regard to safety on the Hill as one of them maintains the 4 Safety Toboggans that are located at key intersections and all Tracksetters as well as Pauline, our Caretaker, have keys to operate the machines. Give them a wave or flag them down and if they are able to stop they will. Another critical part of our operation is the mechanical maintenance of our machines which is overseen by Dave Brubaker. We also operate a training program for new

Tracksetters and Mechanics, so if you are interested, let us know.

Lantern Ski

Ski on 5K of lantern lit trails. Bring Christmas baking to share and your mugs for a hot beverage at the Chalet. A fun time for the entire family. The Larch Hill Junior Racers will be hosting a dinner of Hot dogs, Hamburgers and Chilli during the Lantern Ski. Funds will be used to send seven Racers to the Haywood Ski Nationals 2012 in the Quebec City region. Come out and support our Jr. Racers!!

VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED

**CONTACT Louis-Marc at
832-8670 or
louis-marc@telus.net**

Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet

Come one come all!!! The 28th Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet will be held on January 14th. We are the Heart Fund Loppet - help raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation while you ski. This event is for the whole family - there are distances to suit every skier. Come out and join the fun by skiing or volunteering. For skiers and volunteers alike post loppet events include: lunch on the hill, a ticket to the swimming pool, wine and cheese social, awards ceremony and a family dance (the dance is open to all ski club members) at the Salmon Arm Community Centre. Banquet tickets are separate and can be purchased with registration or at registration/ski packet pick-up at the Holiday Inn Express on Friday January 13th 2PM to 8PM. For more information or to volunteer contact: Pauline Waelti 250 833-0325 or www.SkiLarchHills.ca

Trails Committee Report

The Larch Hills Ski Trails and Snowshoe Trails are administered by a Joint Committee composed of members of the Larch Hills Nordic Society and Shuswap Outdoors. We are also members of the Shuswap Trail Alliance, who work with all summer and winter users to ensure that everyone has input into this valuable Community Resource. We also liaise with the BC Forest Service and BC Parks who provide us with the authority to manage our winter trail system and our lease on which are located our Chalet, parking lot and Tracksetter Buildings and caretaker facility. As part of our joint effort to protect wetlands 5 more Dave Brubaker gates were made and installed [this year](#). Groups of volunteers work though the year to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience for all. New this past year has been increased signage on many snowshoe trails as well as work to make them easier to use and turn them into walking trails in the off season. The Junior Racing Team will be hosting the BC Championships here in February 2012 so some changes have been made to provide safer racing trails. One note of caution is that there will be uphill traffic on Ermine Frolic Hill during training and race days so appropriate warning signs will be in place. As always you need to ski under control, so avoidance of hazards can happen. Another change this year is a Trial Canine Trail that will be in place on a section of Salmar, Marathon Loop and Sunshine. This will also require safety considerations as dog owners will be entering a downhill section of part of the Loppet Route and will need to walk their leashed dog to the Salmar trail where they can see and be seen. Enjoy our wonderful trail system, both groomed and back country!

Adult Ski Groups: Wenches and Geezers

The Thursday Geezers are a collection of mostly retired and mostly male residents of the Shuswap who enjoy each other in an active outdoor life - in particular XC Ski Light Touring and Mountain Bike Day Touring. We meet

regularly on Thursdays at 9:30 AM, at the Salmon Arm Rec Centre Parking Lot, to car pool or 10:00 at the LH Chalet. From there we leave to explore the biking, hiking and ski trails of the Shuswap region. Our outings are mostly 2 to 4 hours in duration. Our XC Skiing is a mix of off and on track skiing, primarily in the Larch Hills. While skinny skis will work, they will be harder to use off track and make taking turns breaking trail near impossible. Poles with larger baskets are also recommended as track poles do not provide lift in deep snow. While our trips may be vigorous, we are not training for a Loppet. Bring water, snacks, and appropriate extra clothing - gloves etc. as we frequently have long (cooling) downhill runs back to the LH Chalet. Occasionally we do day trips to more distant places (Revelstoke, Vernon, Kelowna etc.). If you are interested in joining us for a day or for a season meet us Thursday AM at the SA Rec Centre parking lot or at the Larch Hills Chalet. Check our website for more information at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/shuswapgeezers/home?pli=1>
or email Clint at clasmith24@gmail.com.

Wednesday Wenches is a group of gals that gather on Wednesday mornings to explore the hill. We try to ski as much off set track as possible. Log Roller, Pileated Promenade, the Great Circle, Raven's Ridge, Treebeard's, Greenway, to name a few. If this is of interest to you, contact Marcia at 250-832-3534 or email jbeckner@telus.net We meet at Field of Dreams at 9 am to car pool from town. Otherwise, 10 am at the chalet. Big basket poles are recommended for off set track. Guys are welcome. (Don't let the name Wenches scare you off!)



JACKRABBIT REPORT

There are 115 Jackrabbits registered this season for the eight sessions, which began on December 10th. The last Jackrabbit session will be held on February 25th. A huge thank you goes out to all of the group leaders for volunteering. Thanks to Marianne VanBuskirk for making sure there will be hot chocolate up there every Saturday morning, and, to all the parents for bringing your kids to the program every week.



Snowshoeing

The Larch Hills Snowshoe Trails are open, signed and ribboned to make following them easy. Our bogs - Bilbo's and Frodo's Bog are open. Although the snow is very thin at the Chalet elevation, there is lots of snow up higher. Bilbo's has lots; the Interpretive Trail is a great walk. Those venturing onto Frodo's Bog are requested to take loppers or clippers as there are a lot of small branches, that later in the season will be under the snow, but now grab at you. Also the steep hill on the west end of the Frodo's Bog has been cleared and modified to make the short climb less strenuous. Work parties have been held to level large obstacles and to make the surface reasonably level so they make good hiking trails in the summer and are easy to use in low snow conditions. The exception is the trail from Ermine Frolic to the South Hub which is still very rough until we get a lot more snow. There are 2 entrances from the Chalet area. If you go left across the Main Road, you can do a loop through Bilbo's bog, which is cross-able in winter, but not in summer. If you go right, you can get to south hub and Pentti's Shelter, where there are options for 3 loops then return to the chalet the way you came.

Snowshoers are asked to **avoid both groomed and non-groomed ski trails**. If you do need to use a groomed trail for any reason, please stay on the extreme outside right and watch for skiers.

CAUTION: Our snow shoe trails cross groomed trails at many points - frequently on or near hills - please watch for approaching skiers - who may be approaching fast, on any part of the trail, and on hills and possibly with little control. **Please do not snowshoe on the non-groomed ski trails.** Snowshoers are asked to join LHNS on Zone 4 or make a deposit in the donation box. Enjoy! Contact John Coffey for more information: 250-832-3228