



President's Message

It is great to have a November start to the Larch Hills ski season this year. There have been a number of days during which skiers have taken advantage of good ski conditions on the trails. Any Society members that have been up to the hill have discovered that the chalet relocation did take place and the building does now, indeed, 'greet' everyone upon arrival to the parking lot.

The 'move' took place with relative ease and minor incident. It was interesting to watch the chalet roll along Salmar Trail and maneuver into its new home. After the building was settled in place, a south facing deck was constructed along the side—an asset which will provide a welcoming resting place to enjoy on a sunny day.

The entire project took considerable organization and work. An extra show of thanks has to be extended to our volunteers, in particular, Don Huntington, Jim Beckner and Dave Maxwell and his deck building crew. Many hours were spent on this project for the benefit of us all.

I do feel the Chalet will now be appreciated and used more often by all members and guests to the Larch Hills. The Loppet Committee is also excited about the potential improvements to the start/finish area for their up coming event January 20th/07.



The November LHNS general meeting featured a very interesting presentation from Bill Grainger on global warming and possible implications for cross-country skiing at the elevation level of the Larch Hills. It was informative and thought provoking. Certainly all in attendance were thinking about long range planning. I mention this as a lead-in to my promotion for our next meeting: December 12th /06 at 7:00 P.M., in room #1 of the Community Center. All Society members are welcome. Please come with your thoughts and ideas as to what you would like to see happening in our cross-country ski area.

Sincerely,

Chris Letham

Santa Cruise December 17

The Larch Hills Nordic Society is pleased to announce its 11th SANTA CRUISE to be held Sunday, December 17, 2006 starting at 1:00 PM with registration beginning at 11:30 am. This will be a low-key fun event with free technique which allows skiers to skate or diagonal stride, or switch from one to the other. Distances will be approximately 10 km for 18 and over, 5 km for ages 14 to 17, 3 km for 10 to 13, and 2 km for 7 to 9 and 1 km for 6 and under.

People who wish to ski shorter distances are welcome to do so. Due to changes with the Chalet, there will be a new exciting finish! Entry fee is a money donation to the Shuswap Food Bank or Second Harvest or a donated item for the Auction. Auction starts about 2:15 PM. Pay by cheque and you get a receipt.

There will be draw prizes and food. Highlight of the event is an auction of donated items from local businesses and individuals. If you have any unique items for the auction, bring them along. Pete, the Squeezer will be in action. Come, have fun, get ready for Christmas turkey, and help out the Food Banks! Santa will be skiing to get in shape for Christmas Eve. He even may bring his special sled as he did last year.

Routes for this year as follows: 6 & under go through Short Cut, 7 to 9 go through Jackrabbit Lane and down Ermine Frolic Hill, 10 to 13 will go across the Bog, turn right and go down Ermine Frolic Hill, 14 to 17 will go across the Bog, turn left and then go down Ermine Frolic Hill, and those over 18 will cross the Bog, go around Ermine Frolic Loop, go to the South Hub, then through East Dales, up Heartbreak Hill, across the Bog and down the Main Road to the new finish line by the Chalet. Come and enjoy yourselves!

Tracksetting in the Larch Hills

Thanks to the early snow and the great turn out at the Take back the Hills, as well as the dedicated cat work by Larry Scott, we have had a good start on Tracksetting. The keen skiers have already been out for a month as the first ones were seen on November 4th. We celebrated the first anniversary of the PB 200 on Nov. 25th and over the past year have put on 275 hours. The tiller was rebuilt under warranty at the end of last year due to a hidden broken weld which allowed too much flex. We have also taken off the middle tracksetter until January due to the additional strain on the tool bar at the back. It will go back on as we prepare for the Loppet.

The mechanics from Oak Creek have been up to check over the machine and as always, Dave Brubaker, our tracksetter mechanic, is taking good care of it. I keep looking for Dave's bed up in the new machine shed as he

Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet January 20

Mark January 20/07 on your calendar. That is the date of the 22nd annual Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet at Larch Hills. Your loppet committee has already begun preparations for the big event. We always need volunteers: timers, marshals, snowmobile operators, food servers, etc. etc. If you can help, please call Pauline at 833-0325.

We are also the 'Heart Fund' Loppet. Raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon. There are great incentive prizes and a competition for the most funds raised by a four-person team.

You can pick up a registration form at Skookum, the SASCU Community Centre, Wearabouts, John's Ski Shack, in the Chalet at Larch Hills, or on-line at www.skilarchhills.ca and follow the links for the loppet.

Plan to be part of the action by skiing in the event or by volunteering. It is a great celebration of our favorite winter pastime. Hope to see you there.

Mentors Wanted for Learning Skiers

The Adult Learn to Ski Program is looking for members who would act as mentors to adults who are interested in the learn to ski program. Mentors would be contacted after requests have been sorted for times and category as explained below. You may not be needed but we would like to have a list to assist potential members.

The request are as follows:

1. I have not skied before and would like to learn.
2. I have not skied for a number of years and would like a refresher session
3. I am competent but would like to have a tour of the trails with a knowledgeable member
4. I would like to have a companion with whom to ski.

Please contact Phil 832 9517 pwright@jetstream.net and identify which of the categories you are interested in assisting.

is there so often! We have had numerous generous donations of tools and equipment to round out our ability to care for the machinery, but if you are looking for a home for something no longer in use, contact one of the Tracksetters: Don, Dave B., Bruce, Ron, Verne, Brian, Dave W. or me. Also, if you are interested in tracksetting, contact them for more information and go along for a ride.

(Continued on Page 3)

(Tracksetting - Continued from page 2)

Some of the things we look for in our volunteers is a passion for the Larch Hills, a love of skiing, an interest in mechanics, flexibility, in being retired, and the ability to devote at least one day a week to working in the Larch Hills. Some of that can be play, as with this new machine, you have the time to immediately ski your own tracks. That's the very best way to learn! We also look for people that can help with the snowmobile work.

Each day we try to ensure there are sufficient groomed areas to balance the number of skiers and the amount of fuel expended. If you have suggestions, please feel free to make them. Tracksetting is usually underway by 9:00 am unless there are equipment problems. If you wish a copy of the daily trail report, please contact bcarson@sunwave.net as that has the latest information on tracksetting.

Challenge Group News

Lake O'Hara a small glacial fed lake in the heart of the Rockies surrounded by a horseshoe of mountains that rise from the lake 4, 5, 6 thousand feet straight up. Some are covered with glaciers all year round; some are so steep the snow never sticks very long. An area so beautiful and breath taking that the Beautiful BC Magazine featured it on their cover page last month. This was the destination for the 2005/06 Challenge Group's year-end challenge.

The group of six teenager and parents had been skiing together for three years showing a fair bit of experience, they have skied well together, enjoying the steep and enjoying the powder, it was time for a long weekend challenge.

Through Brian Samson membership in the Alpine club of Canada we were able to make use of the alpine club cabin. A gem it its own rite. A tight log cabin, heated by a rock fire place, with propane stoves and enough pots, pans, plates, cups and corkscrews to accommodate the 20 plus people it can sleep on foam mattress lined bunk beds.

We skied the 12 km's in from the highway on Friday morning of the April 1st weekend. An up hill grind similar to Sky trail that Brian promised would level out just ahead, it would, but only to climb again, and again. Climbing up to the lake through the heel of the horseshoe of mountains onto the cabin in the meadow above the lake.

The energy and noise level of six teenagers in a small log cabin can be too much for some people especially if you have had the peace and quiet of an alpine cabin to yourself for a day. The other people slowly warmed up to the infectious energy and happiness of the group in part because of their willingness to haul the water. keep the firebox full and the cabin tidy.

Saturday morning [April 1} found the girls skis hidden in abandoned snow caves, the boys poles sticking out of the snow on top of the cabins roof. The more gullible of the



group found themselves looking for the fridge out back of the cabin where the brick of ice cream specially brought in for the evening meal was hidden. The day was spent skiing in the fresh snow that fell through the night. Brilliant white untracked snow, blue as blue sky a perfect day. We climbed the hill behind the cabin towards McArthur pass, staying to the trees because the avalanche rating was extreme. The ski distances were short but the beauty of the mountain more then made up for this.

The afternoon was spent sitting on our firewood lawn chairs drinking an afternoon coffee watching and predicting where the next avalanche was going to come down the mountain slopes surrounding Lake O'Hara, as the sun slowly moved around the horseshoe. Spectacular, such awesome power.

This was a fitting close to a great ski season. This is what the challenge group is all about skiing with friends and their families, skiing in places where you haven't before and having fun all the way. A new season is about to start and we are looking for new members to join us and keep a Larch Hills tradition going. We have two more girls, Helen and Carleen joining us this year and will welcome all comers. Call Lorne Hunter at 250-546-6158

Junior Race Team News

The Larch Hills Nordics Jr. Race Team continues to develop about 30 young racers from Atoms to Jr. Boys/Girls race divisions. Starting with mountain hikes in late summer and dry land training in the fall, athletes prepare for a busy race season. On snow training started at Sovereign and has now moved to our own Larch Hills.

Jr. Racers attend 2-3 practices per week, depending on their age. Midget, Juvenile and Jr. Boys/Girls also have the option of individualized daily training programs. Strength training, nutrition workshops, stretching and flexibility and team building are all components of their training.

The Jr. Race Team has more than 20 race events scheduled this season and will travel locally and provincially to attend and compete as a team.

Rosslund, 100 Mile House and Smithers constitute our furthest drives this year.

Our fall Parents Meeting was held on Nov. 23 and was well attended. Coach Phil Wallenstein recently attended a waxing workshop and will be sharing his knowledge at a waxing clinic for team parents and older racers on Dec 11.

Four Jr. Race Team members joined the company of fellow LHNS Racers Alysson Marshall and Jesse Heckrodt at the recent Haywood/ Canada Cup Event at Sovereign Lakes on Nov. 25/26. Spencer Jackson, Adriene Underhill, Ari Bruns and Jake Kitchen had their first experience at a NORAM event in Classic Sprints and the Pursuit (Classic and Skate). What an inspiring weekend racing next to athletes from all over Canada and the USA. Well done!

Look for all the Jr. Racers this winter as they sport their new team jackets (and matching jerseys) as they gather in preparation around the team waxing tent at events all over our beautiful province. The team will also be actively volunteering at the Lantern Ski Event Dec.30 at Larch Hills. Our new page on the LHNS Web site will help to keep you updated on our accomplishments and team development.



Good work to the 20 families in our club that are involved in the Jr. Race Team Program! If you would like to support the LHNS Jr. Race Team please purchase Askew's vouchers from Ellen (832-6178)

Spencer Jackson
Brought home 2 bronze medals for Larch Hills in the 500m classic sprint & 3km continuous pursuit at the recent Haywood Norams at Sovereign Lake. Spencer is sponsored by John's Ski Shack.

LARCH HILLS NORDIC SOCIETY

2006-2007 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

- Turkey Glide - Canceled
- Society meeting - Dec.12
- Santa Cruise - Dec.17
- Ski League start date?
- Moonlight Lantern Ski – Dec.30

January 2007

- Larch Hills Fun Race – Jan 6
- Reino Keski-Salmi Loppet – Jan. 20

- Society meeting – Jan.23
- Elementary School Loppet – Jan.26

February

- Mid season newsletter first week of February
- Dynamic Duo Race- Feb 11

March

- Larch Hills Wind-up Fun Day – Date to be set
- Society AGM - Mar.6