



THE PENNSYLVANIA NORDIC SKIER

Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers' Association

November, 2010

PACCSA and DCNR Secure \$125K Grant

Over the last four years Fay-Penn Economic Development Council, DNCR, and PACCSA have been working to acquire a grant for improvements at Laurel Ridge State Park Nordic ski area. The total of the grant is \$125k which includes volunteer work dollars for work done by the DNCR and PACCSA and \$4k match from PACCSA, to come from the web cam fund.

The grant includes:

- Fiber run to the concession guaranteeing more reliable WEB CAM pictures as well as a computer in the concession. This work was completed last fall.
- Parking lot expansion to add at least 20 new spaces in the main parking lot.
- Maintenance vehicle for the trails at Laurel Ridge- A Polaris Ranger will be purchased to help maintain the trails at Laurel Ridge early

next year. This will help us keep trails clear as well as trail improvements.

4. Extension of the Red Trail - This work is planned to begin during the offseason next year and be ready for winter of 2011-2012. The plan is to add 2k to the red trail with some hillier terrain as well as an easier way to get to the orange trail. We will have to see where the bids come in to see if we can do the whole 2k or adjust it some.

With regards to the parking lot expansion, Park Manager, Mike Mumau had this to add "The park staff will begin work on the parking lot expansion in November. We anticipate being able to add a minimum of 20 new spaces. This will certainly be more convenient for the skiers and centralize many of the services. The work should take

about 2-3 weeks to complete. " We will update on the progress of the parking expansion in the next newsletter as well as on the web site.

Later in the winter we will have more information on the trail expansion and the plan to organize volunteers to help build the trail. The trail will be built with volunteers as well as paid contractors. According to Mumau, The red trail expansion will be addressed during the spring/summer of 2011.

Thanks to all for supporting the WEB CAM fund which helped make the grant possible by providing the matching funds.

We also want to thank the Fay-Penn Economic Dev. Council (Mike Krajovic, Twila, Kendall, Ron Cole.) who sponsored and are managing the grant.

2011 Championship Races

PACCSA will hold its annual race on Sunday, February 6, 2011, at Laurel Ridge State Park. Featured will be a 6.5 km classic race, scheduled to start at 9 AM, followed by 6.5 km and 13 km freestyle races. We've simplified the course this year to make it easier for those who want to participate in both classic and freestyle events. There will also be age-appropriate

races for children. All the kids will receive an award, but the grown-ups will need to earn theirs!

To everyone's disappointment, last year's race had to be canceled at the last minute when a record-breaking storm dumped over 30 inches of snow on the mountain and surrounding areas, making travel impossible and burying the park-

ing lot. This year, we'd love to get the same amount of snow--just, please, Ullr, space it out over a few weeks, not all at once! Please be sure to check PACCSA's web site for the latest news on the race, especially in the days before February 5, since, as we discovered last year, southwestern Pennsylvania weather can be extremely unpredictable.

Where can I ski in PA?

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/recreation/crossski.aspx>

Free Ski Lessons

PACCSA will once again offer free ski lessons at Laurel Ridge on the following Sundays starting at 1pm:

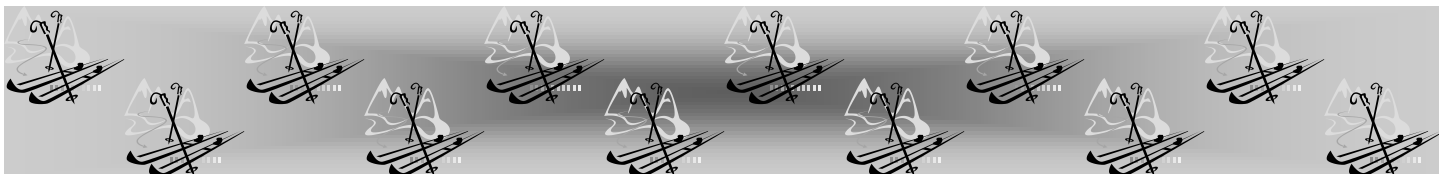
January 9
January 16
January 23
January 30
February 20

Those needing to rent skis should show up earlier to get fitted, buy trail pass, etc. Lessons take place in area right behind main concession. On a busy Sunday, there could be a limited number of skis/boots available to rent so it may be wise to rent earlier in the morning.

Many thanks to our volunteer instructors: Bob Dezort, Rick Garstka and Robert Kaschak.

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Yellowjackets 2011 Registration is Open!

Last year 20 kids joined the Yellowjackets team and skied almost every weekend in January and February 2010.

Yellowjackets had representatives at races in NY, OH, MI and of course PA. We enjoyed a very snowy ski camp on PA race weekend with Ohio Nordic's Hilltoppers, and an adventure day at Wilderness hosted by the Wildcats, and helped share our love of xc skiing with the Winterfest crowd at Ohiopyle.



Yellowjackets make us proud at the Rochester Youth Ski Festival, January, 2010

Thank you to everyone who donated gear to us to help subsidise these activities and our infrastructure overheads (coach training, first aid kits, safety equipment etc etc).

For 2011 we have two new coaches - David and Leah Klinke - and are able to expand our numbers. We welcome beginner skiers from 5 to 10 years old, and older children (11-13) who already have some experience on xc skis. The upcoming

season starts with an info session and dryland training in December - look for more details online at www.paccca.org/yellowjackets



Some happy skiers after the PA Jr. Nordic Races, February, 2010

What's New at the Ridge?

Mike Mumau manages Kooser, Laurel Hill and Laurel Ridge State Parks. We asked him for an update on the Ridge:

- **Red Trail Bypass** – Thanks to the efforts of volunteers from PACCSA we will have a new hill bypass in place on the first hill on the red trail. This new bypass will be easier to groom and ski. Once the bypass is functional and in use, we will retire the old bypass.
- **Dogs** – We are rolling out a pilot program for 2010/2011 regarding dogs. Dogs will be permitted on the orange trail only. I heard the concerns from skiers regarding dogs on trails and weighed that with the comments from skiers who ski with their dogs. I am hopeful this compromise can allow for both parties to enjoy some of the best Nordic skiing in Pennsylvania.
- **Volunteers** – I can't thank the volunteers from PACCSA enough for their help in maintaining and improving the Nordic skiing amenities at Laurel Ridge. From trail maintenance to trail building to wood splitting, all of the help is greatly appreciated. Your dedication to your sport is obvious. Volunteerism is more important than ever

given our budget situation. We do our best to offer a quality experience regardless of the budget. Your help and assistance allows us to not only maintain but improve.

- **Signage** – We are making a concerted effort to upgrade and add signage where appropriate. This will take the form of highway wayfinding signage that will direct people to the Ridge as well as new signage close to the Ridge that will direct people to the ski area. In addition, we have purchased a new bulletin board case that will allow space for PACCSA, Concessionaire and Park to post pertinent information on a variety of topics. Finally, we have added four "Caution Hill" signs to the red trail. Each sign has a number consecutively from 1 thru 4. The hope is that in the event of an incident or injured skier on the red trail, these signs may be able to direct a response more efficiently and expeditiously.



Webmaster and chainsaw expert, Bob Mazur and new PACCSA President, Bruce Cox at PACCSA trail clearing day in October, 2010

- **Overflow Lot** – We have decided to try an alternative to the overflow parking lot. A new connector trail from the Park Office has been cleared. This will

allow people to stop and pay their fee at the concession and then park and access the trails. It is a much shorter distance to access the trails. In addition, it

will minimize the amount of plowing necessary to provide access. Hopefully, the new parking lot expansion will solve many of the access issues.

Concession Contract – The new concession contract will go out for bid in December 2010.



Charlie's Forecast

Looking back on last year's forecast PACCSA weatherman, Charlie Becker, had this to say "Well, last year's forecast will certainly be a hard act to follow (yes, the blind squirrel found the nut or the nut found the squirrel, or..."

Well Charlie has put on his prognosticator's hat once more and has this to say about the upcoming ski season:

"This forecast remains your only hope for a clue on what we can expect for The Ridge this season. Bold assertions of "...more snow, less freezing rain, big storms, The Rockettes coming to town..." and a "...can't miss season..."

are just not appropriate for this year's forecast (except The Rockettes are due in again). Yes folks, a new season shall bring weather influenced by factors from the opposite end of the spectrum."

Sounds mysterious. Here are some key points:

- This winter will be influenced by La Nina (El Nino's fickle little sister)
- The Ridge will see snow...and rain, freezing rain, ice and sleet...oh my



PACCSA's very own weatherman, Charlie Becker says last year's forecast was like a blind squirrel finding a nut. Let's hope the squirrel is lucky again!

- The Christmas Holidays may be the best chance for consistent conditions...Christmas party at the Ridge?

- Will it rain, will it snow, will it stay or will it go shall be the question of the day for the Winter of 2010 – 2011, a stark contrast to last season.

You can see Charlie's full forecast by visiting <http://www.paccsa.org/beckweather>.

Meet a PACCSA Member: Denny McDonough

We asked longtime PACCSA member, Denny McDonough the following questions:

- How long have you been cross country skiing? "35 years"
- Where is your favorite place to ski? "Lake Placid, tied with Jackson Ski Touring Center in NH."
 - How many pairs of skis do you own? "8" (is that all?)

- What do you enjoy doing when you are not skiing? "Biking, roller skiing and lounging"
- What is one thing everyone might be surprised to know about you? "I'm 30 years old! He he!"

You can usually find Denny on the trails at Laurel Ridge or skating the Summit Road at Laurel Mountain off Route 30 just east of Ligonier.



Meet a PACCSA Member: Alice Cottone

Alice Cottone is a PACCSA board member. Here's how she answered our tough questions:

How long have you been cross country skiing and what got you started? "I have been x-c skiing since the early 80's. First time out was with girlfriends skiing on farmland in Meadville PA. I was hooked and bought a set of used skis then bought new. Purchased many pairs of skis back in the day from the little ski shop in Laughlontown PA."

Where is your favorite place to ski? "Banff National Park."

How many pairs of skis do you own? "I have 3 pair I use and hope to buy a new pair this year!"

What do you enjoy doing when you are not skiing? "I enjoy hiking, biking, flat water kayaking and traveling."



I always try to incorporate my painting into my outdoor activities."

What is one thing everyone might be surprised to know about you? "I am a borderline hoarder!!! hahaha-haha!!!!"

**Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers'
Association**

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Promoting the sport of cross country skiing
in Pennsylvania and its tri state area

*"Cross country skiing is
great if you live in a small
country." Steven Wright*

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2010-11 PACCSA Membership Form

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