



THE PENNSYLVANIA NORDIC SKIER

The Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers' Association

December 2013

Volunteer Opportunities

Facebook and www.paccca.org

Our Facebook page and website are the best places to go for the most up to date information on what is going on and ways you can help!

Help the Nordic Ski Patrol!

If you plan to spend time this winter enjoying the ski trails at Laurel Mountain/Forbes/Laurel Summit area please know that help is needed at the Warming Hut. This wonderful building is staffed most weekends, weather permitting, from 9am until 5pm in January, February and March. The Patrol is looking for people willing to help others, the area, and can commit to 2-5 hours each month. The time you donate can be spent in and around the Warming Hut during the busiest times of the day, or on the trails.

A volunteer meeting was held on **Saturday December 14** in the Warming Hut (on Summit Road off Route 30 between Laughlintown and Jennerstown) to hear about their DCNR Winter Volunteer program. Please contact Ann at annski@verizon.net or 814-746-2932 if you are interested.

Groom Trails!

The Laurel Mountain team is looking for volunteer groomers to help groom approximately 5K of trail on the weekends. Training will be provided. The goal is to have teams of groomers so no one is on their own. E-mail president@paacsa.org for more information.

Serve on the Board!

We are always looking for dedicated, enthusiastic board members. Contact any current board member for more information.

Everyone's A Winner

By Mike Blessington

A raw, misty October 14th found Bruce Cox, President of PACCSA, overseeing the construction of our storage building at Laurel Mountain State Park. This building marks the completion of our project to establish grooming at Laurel Mountain. The steel building will be used to house PACCSA'S grooming snowmobile and equipment, and serve as a base for your expanded ski area.

The Laurel Mountain State Park cross country ski area is an example of what happens when a dedicated team of volunteers from PACCSA, cooperation from DCNR and funding from foundations, coupled with member support comes together.

This upcoming ski season presents several challenges, and provides you with an opportunity to more fully participate. PACCSA wants to upgrade one of the web cams and purchase additional grooming equipment and accessories to make the trails more enjoyable.

This will require approximately \$3,500.00. As you renew your membership consider making a donation toward these expenses. A special incentive program for those who donate is in the works, details to be released shortly on the PACCSA web site. Working together we have built the very best ski club in the area, be sure to invite your friends to join. Please check our web site, www.paccca.org frequently for the release of the 2014 incentive plan.

The early call from the Old Farmers Almanac is for a cold, snowy winter. Let's hope it happens so we can enjoy the season. See you on the trails.

PA CHAMPIONSHIP RACE AT WILDERNESS LODGE

SAT. FEBRUARY 1,
2013.

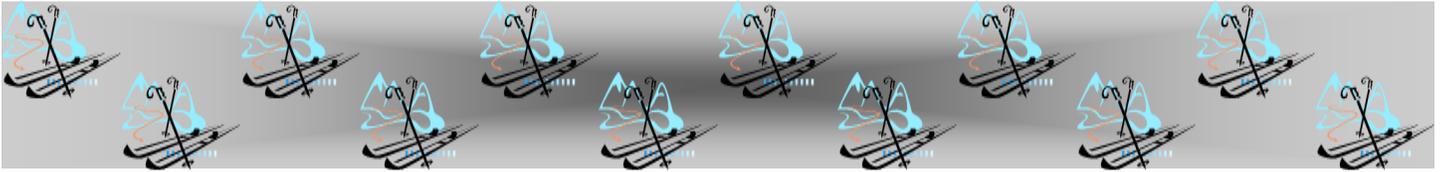
There will be no
alternate date.

More info inside.
Keep an eye on the
website and
paccca.org

Yellowjackets
registration is
open. Go to the
website for more
information.

PACCSA will again offer free ski lessons this year. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact
Sally Smales at
secretary@paccca.org.

The Webcams Are Live!
Check them out at
www.paccca.org



A Letter from the President

Welcome back! I hope you had a good summer and are anxious to get back skiing. The fall season always gets me excited about skiing because I know it's just around the corner. We are fortunate to live in an area that has all four seasons. Global climate change has created some havoc some places but it could work to our advantage this year and provide lots of snow. If it's as good as last season, I'll be happy.

PACCSA has been busy this summer and many volunteers have come out for our workdays and DCNR workdays. Thank you for being involved more than just a card carrying member. Speaking of membership, we will again keep our dues at a minimum with the idea that most members contribute more than just the basic fees.

The PACCSA newsletter started long before the Internet. Our website(paccca.org), Facebook page and even Twitter have become the most effective way to keep our members up to date. More than half of our members opt to receive the newsletter via e-mail. As a result of all these wonderful, low cost technologies, we will likely discontinue the paper newsletter in the near future. We plan to continue developing our online presence as more new and scary ways to communicate emerge. We will, from time to time send out postcards or brochures for members to share and promote our growing organization or to just keep you involved.

So, keep checking our website, Facebook and Twitter for updates on what's happening with PACCSA, events, and of course our webcams.



See you on the trails,

Bruce Cox, PACCSA President
president@paccca.org

Featured Ski Area: Oil Creek State Park

Oil Creek State Park, located in Oil City, PA has 11 miles of groomed and tracked ski trails and there is a variety in 4 loops and connector trails. The trails are groomed for diagonal/classical skiing only and dogs aren't permitted on the groomed trails. The bicycle trail is open for skating and dogs but isn't groomed.

Sun Valley Nordic (check us out on Facebook) is the concession for xc skiing and the cost is \$5 for a day pass and \$40 for a season pass.

A map ski conditions and more information on upcoming events can be found here <http://www.friendsocsp.org/>



Rollerskiing with Parachutes

By Naomi Jarvis

During the summer my son and I visited our relatives in the UK. With skiing always on my mind, in a quiet moment I searched online for rollerski shop, and – surprise! – found rollerski.co.uk, offering classes and gear rental, with the nearest course scheduled for the following weekend. Naturally we leapt at this, and registered for a full day course – skate in the morning, classic in the afternoon. It took place at Dorney Lake, near London, the site of the 2012 Olympic rowing events, which has a wide and nicely paved path all around the lake, bordered by neatly mown grass. One of the coaches arrived in the company van (see photo) which was crammed full with rollerski equipment, neatly organized into compartments completely filling the back of the van. The only thing we had to bring with us was gloves.

Once it had been established that we had our own rollerskis at home, we were put into the advanced group. We saw the beginner group getting started with balance exercises on the grass, which we thought was a good idea. There were almost a dozen people in each group; the participants had come from as far away as the South coast, Cambridge and the Midlands... and us, from PA, of course. Most belonged to the London rollerski club, they train on rollerskis all year round, with a busy race calendar, and make trips abroad for real skiing, eg the Engadin marathon.



Our instructor was a lively Russian who had grown up on skis, skiing to elementary school in winter. She led us through a variety of balance drills, then some work on strength and technique, first on skate, and later on classic skis. Similar exercises are to be found in DVDs published by our very own CXC, but nothing beats working through them in a group with a coach shouting correction and encouragement. Scooting (one ski on and one ski off) was familiar to us but scooting with a hop, where the wheels have to leave the ground, was more challenging. We also played a game of tag, skied forwards a short distance with our eyes closed, skied backwards with our eyes open, had relay races and chariot races (pulling a partner along with ones ski poles – we won that one) and even parachute races. The parachutes have a strap which fastens around the skier's waist; the wind was blowing along the path, so we skied downwind with the parachute bundled up under one arm, and then turned around, released the parachute and skied into the wind with the added resistance of the chute slowing us down. The path was flat but towing the parachute felt just like skiing uphill. Towing two parachutes was a real workout, interesting to try for a short time. I didn't dare to try three parachutes – the wind was brisk and skating backwards into a lake wasn't on my agenda.

We enjoyed the day, the group environment was a welcome change for us, the balance drills were helpful, the coach gave us some good ideas to work on, and it was fun. The next day we could hardly move. Thoroughly recommended - if you visit the UK, or need a parachute, look them up!

PA Championship Race

Colder temperatures and snow are what every skier hopes for, and now that we're about to get both--mid-December warm-up notwithstanding--it's time to plan for this season's Pennsylvania Nordic Championship. This year PACCSA is trying something new: we're holding The Race at Wilderness Lodge in Wattsburg, PA. Wilderness bills itself as Pennsylvania's first ski touring center, and with typically ample snowfall managed by new state-of-the-art grooming equipment it's the ideal place for staging our race. So mark your calendar and join us on Saturday, February 1 beginning at 10am, for a fun day of nordic ski racing. There will be a 5.5 km classic race, 8.5 km and 17 km skate races, and three events for children. And if you haven't left everything out on the trail, you can stay and ski until closing. What better way to top off the winter?

Winter Outlook for The Ridge 2013/2014

Well, just about everyone is forecasting a bitterly cold and snowy winter for our region. With opinions waffling between a weak El Nino and weak La Nina, the NWS's models have taken the middle ground predicting ENSO Neutral conditions, also known as La Nada. Let's say that happens so what does it mean for The Ridge? As usual, I'm all you got, so let's start with a historical look at snow on The Ridge.

Last year was neutral and we saw 190" but in 01-02 The Ridge was blanketed by a paltry 45". In 2003-2004 a neutral winter produced 175" but in 05-06 The Ridge only saw 90". See, they don't call it "neutral" for nothing - its right in the middle of a "sure bet" and "no way"! So, the average snowfall over the past 15 years for ENSO Neutral winters is 125" (compared to 178" for El Nino winters and 105" for La Nina winters) but averages are just averages. With that much of a divergence in snowfall (La Nada's have been the most inconsistent); there must be some other factor (or factors) which influence the totals. It just could be the NAO or North Atlantic Oscillation. The ENSO and NAO are known as *teleconnections* in the world of meteorology. These so-called teleconnections influence jet stream patterns which in turn influence temperature and storm tracks. In 01-02 the NAO was positive for the months of November, January and February with December weakly negative. Last year, the NAO for the same months was strongly negative. A negative NAO is associated with below normal temps and increased storm activity along the eastern coast. Forecasters are envisioning a negative NAO for this winter.

So, like one fellow PACCSA member snidely remarked after one of my past attempts at debugging the mystery of weather patterns on The Ridge, "So, no kidding, it's going to snow this year"!! Yes it will, indeed.

See you on The Ridge,
Charlie



The Farmer's Almanac's AWESOME Prediction

"Start stocking up on heavy coats, flannel and thermal underwear. We may have mostly lucked out for the past two years, but now the venerable Farmers' Almanac is predicting a cold, frosty, wet winter for most of the United States. Even worse, the annual publication says this year's Super Bowl may take place during a particularly bad February week. "Worse? Bad? Who wrote this? Sounds to us like the perfect forecast for skiers. Dear Mother Nature, bring it.

Graphic and quote reprinted from Mother Nature Network, www.mnn.com

PACCSA Needs Your Help!

PACCSA needs your help! We're trying to raise \$3000 to replace our ageing fleet of webcams and pay for their associated internet service.

Everyone who joins PACCSA or renews their membership between September 1st and December 31st, 2013 will be entered into a drawing for a dinner for two at the Slopeside Dining Room, courtesy of 7Springs Mountain Resort. Please renew your membership today and be sure to ask your friends to join. The winner of the drawing will be announced the first week of January, along with details of a special incentive for all members.



You can join or renew via our website using PayPal or by completing and sending the form in this newsletter. Please provide an up to date e-mail address with your membership. We won't e-mail you often, but it is the best way to keep our membership current and informed.

PACCSA Membership Card

Please cut out this card and present it to receive discounts

The person(s) named on the opposite of this card are members of PACCSA and entitled to its membership benefits.



Thank you in advance for your continued support of PACCSA. Your generous donations have given PACCSA the tools necessary to enhance the cross-country skiing experience throughout our region.

As a PACCSA member, make sure you are taking advantage of the benefits available to you. Members receive nice discounts on daily trail fees at the top touring centers in the region: White Grass (\$5) and Wilderness Lodge (20%) and also discounted entry fees to the PA Nordic Championship races.

Members receive a 10% discount at Cycle Sport & Ski, located at 863 Georges Station Road, behind Valozzi's Restaurant on Route 30, about two miles from Twin Lakes Park. They can be reached at 724-834-6801. Make sure you show them your card! Their hours are listed below.

If you are familiar with an establishment that might be willing to offer a discount to our members, please let us know. You can e-mail newsletter@paccca.org.

Work Day Pics

Check out these great pics from the Laurel Mountain work day on September 28 sponsored by the Laurel Mountain Volunteer Group. Skiers, hikers, bikers and equestrians and snowmobilers all came together to work on the multi use trails.





Pennsylvania Cross Country Skiers Association

PACCSA
309 W. Marion St
Munhall, PA 15120

Find us on



Search PACCSA



@PACCSA

Member Name(s):

Snow provokes responses that reach right back to childhood.

Andy Goldsworthy

PACCSA Board of Directors

- Bruce Cox, President
president@paccca.org
- Dave Jenkins, VP and Race Director
racedirector@paccca.org
- Rick Garstka, Treasurer
treasurer@paccca.org
- Sally Smales, Secretary
secretary@paccca.org
- Sheila Confer, Newsletter Editor
newsletter@paccca.org
- Naomi Jarvis, Yellowjackets
- Brian Joly
- Bob Mazur, Volunteer Coordinator
- James South, Legal Advisor

General comments and inquiries can be sent to: board@paccca.org or submitted via our website.

PACCSA Membership Form

You can also renew your membership using PayPal! Visit www.paccca.org

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Date _____

Membership Information

_____ Single \$6/yr _____ Family \$9/yr _____ New _____ Renewal

Name(s) for family membership _____

Please indicate if you are interested in volunteering in any of the following areas:

- Trail Maintenance
- Race Organization
- Serving on the board

How would you like to receive your newsletter? E-mail (PDF) Regular mail

What type(s) of skiing do you do? Backcountry Touring Classic Skating

Make checks payable to PACCSA

Mail to PACCSA ♦ 309 W. Marion St. ♦ Munhall, PA 15120