



# UPSLOPE

**Newsletter of the NORDIC Ski Touring  
Section of PATC**



Visit Us On the WEB at <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/>

December 2019

**UpComing Attractions In Winter  
UPSLOPE**

- The rest of the 2019-20 Schedule
- YOUR ski stories

## PATC-ST\$ Web Photo Contest

In order to liven up the appearance of the PATC-ST\$ web page (<http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/>), we got the bright idea of putting forth a "dirty dozen" photos from past trips and letting the STS members vote on them. The highest rated picture will grace the web page for a while, the runner-up will be on the Groups i.o page, and the bronze medalist will grace the Nordic Group Meetup page. Voting ends February 1.

The "dirty dozen" are shown below. You can vote on your preferences by going [here](#). Remember to vote for all 12 since they will be ranked by the sum of their scores (lowest numbers win).



**PATC-ST\$ Skiers at Pagosa Springs, CO**



**Narnia**



**PATC-ST\$ Skiers at Breckenridge, CO**



**PATC-ST\$ Skiers in Summit County, CO**



**Sugar Coated at White Grass, WV**



**PATC-ST\$ Skiers in Quebec**

*(Continued on page 4)*

Inside this issue: (blue links are live)	
<a href="#">Your STS Officer Contacts</a>	2
<a href="#">From the Slopes</a>	2
<a href="#">2019-20 Weather Company Forecast</a>	3
<a href="#">Work Trip Scheduled</a>	4
<a href="#">Sugar Loaf, Maine Skiing</a>	5
<a href="#">2019-20 Ski Trip Schedule Canaan Valley News</a>	6
<a href="#">Trip Descriptions</a>	7-9
<a href="#">White Grass Work Trip Photo Context (cont).</a>	9
<a href="#">Ski Dance</a>	10
<a href="#">Early Snow in the Cascades</a>	11

### Notes from the ARMCHAIR XCO SKIER:

- \* White Grass's parking lot now has Verizon and ATT cell reception. ATT has worked for years.
  - \* Laurel Ridge and Laurel Mountain get ATT and Verizon fine on the ridge tops.
  - \* There is a public parking lot across the street from the Fire Department in Davis, WV, and toward Siriann's Cafe. A little hard to see at night. It was the old grocery store lot.
  - \* White grass overflow parking can be very muddy. Car pooling helps as does good snow clearance. But, last year good tire treads did not help. I had to coast through the mud and turn once on the gravel road. Park so you go downhill in the afternoon melt if you are not in the parking lots.
- Editor's note: Every once in a while some old geezer sends me these notes, so I'll pass them on.

**ST\$ Officers**

**FROM THE \$LOPES – Chair Notes**

**Chair**

Rob Swennes  
 H: 703-532-6101  
[robertswennes@hotmail.com](mailto:robertswennes@hotmail.com)

**Vice-Chair**

Steve Jarvis  
 H: 703-941-3352  
[jarsnv7@msn.com](mailto:jarsnv7@msn.com)

**Secretary**

Laurie Welch  
 H: 301-565-4399  
[laurawelch123@gmail.com](mailto:laurawelch123@gmail.com)

**Treasurer**

Brian O'Konski  
 H: 202-362-2982  
[brian1642@gmail.com](mailto:brian1642@gmail.com)

**Trip Coordinators**

Jan and Ron Tucker  
 H: 301-392-9630  
[jandrucker@verizon.net](mailto:jandrucker@verizon.net)

**Webmaster**

**VACANT**  
 Contact John Tichenor  
 H:  
[johnjohn5670@yahoo.com](mailto:johnjohn5670@yahoo.com)

**Membership Coordinator**

Douglas Lesar  
 H: 301-520-9516 (cell)  
[dlesar@comcast.net](mailto:dlesar@comcast.net)

**UPSLOPE Editor**

Ralph Heimlich  
 H: 240-472-8825 (cell)  
[heimlichfamily@comcast.net](mailto:heimlichfamily@comcast.net)

**UPSLOPE**

**Mailing Coordinator**

Dick Simmons  
 H: 410-409-5552 (cell)  
[dsimmons72@msn.com](mailto:dsimmons72@msn.com)

Climate change affects various groups and geographic areas in different ways. As cross-country skiers, we experience it up close and personal. It's not just some abstraction or virtual reality on a screen. Being in a biting, wind-driven snowstorm on skis is life; it's not a virtual reality. I can recall many times out in such conditions with others in the Ski Touring Section and suddenly the thought pops into my head: This is Real. This is Life. I am Alive! And I wonder why it is that the other 99 percent of my life suddenly feels so muted, so homogenized, so scripted.



Part of the excitement of the coming winter season is the anticipation of new moments just like that. PATC-STs offers many opportunities to get out and experience real life in the snow, and there are still many slots available on our trips (see p. 6 and the details on pp. 7-9). It doesn't matter whether you encounter them when skiing or snowshoeing in Canaan Valley in West Virginia or in the Laurel Highlands of southern Pennsylvania or on one of the Section's more exotic excursion ski trips out West, up North, or even overseas. I am Alive! No wonder when we describe our winter's recent ski trips at the Section's early spring Après Ski social, our faces radiate with that knowledge.

Back to nonlinear weather. Some members of the Section last fall were worried that their skiing days were over due to climate change. Boy, was that wrong. While some of the mid-Atlantic trips cancelled due to lack of snow, those of us who skied in New Hampshire in January and later in Quebec in February enjoyed wonderful snow conditions!

Here are three photos from New Hampshire this past January. Mount Washington; Bela Mariassy and Ann Hitchcock on the trail; a heavy snowfall at our lodging. How much you ski depends in part on the weather but even more so on the decisions you make to join particular trips.

Don't miss out on "real life"! Contact the leader of your favorite trip and get out in the snow!

In Snow,  
 Rob Swennes, Chair



## Weather Company Predicts Colder, Wetter East and North



According to the Weather Company's [long-range forecast](#), a warmer than usual winter will hit much of the southern and western United States, but the northern and eastern U.S. will be shivering.

Additionally, NOAA's winter outlook indicates that parts of the flood-weary Northern Plains and Midwest, extending into parts of the Mid-Atlantic, might see a wetter than average December through February.

Based on The Weather Company's outlook, temperatures in parts of the North and East are projected to be near or below average. The northern Rockies, Northern Plains, Midwest and East can expect near or slightly below average temperatures for the December-to-February period as a whole.

[Dr. Todd Crawford](#), chief meteorologist at The Weather Company, noted several factors that were considered in this winter outlook:

- \* **Water temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean and their influence on the atmosphere.** Expected conditions there this winter suggest a respite from the bitter cold in December before colder than average conditions return in January and February, especially in the Northern Plains and Great Lakes.
- \* **"The blob" of warmer than average temperatures in the northeastern Pacific Ocean**, which favors a steady stream of cold air into Canada and parts of the northern U.S., particularly in January and February, and correlates with warmer winters in the western U.S. and Alaska.
- \* **Solar activity linked to the sun's regular 11-year cycle will likely bottom out in 2020.** The resulting effects on the upper atmosphere increase the odds of a blocking pattern, suggesting colder winters in the East and warmer ones in the West.
- \* **A lack of Arctic sea ice**, which is one factor favoring warmer temperatures in the East.
- \* **Computer forecast models that have trended notably colder than previous runs in the eastern U.S.**, increasing the confidence of a colder than average winter for the northern and eastern states.

Additionally, NOAA's winter outlook indicates that parts of the flood-weary Northern Plains and Midwest might see a wetter than average December through February.

The East and Gulf coasts are predicted to have near or slightly below average temperatures in **December**. Colder than average temperatures will return to the upper Midwest and Great Lakes while expanding into parts of far northern New England in **January**. **February** may have the coldest temperatures of the winter across parts of the North.

Below average temperatures are likely from the northern Rockies into the Northern Plains, upper Midwest and northern Great Lakes. The most anomalous cold is expected across North Dakota, northern Minnesota, far northwestern Wisconsin and the far western Peninsula of Michigan.

NOAA released its [winter outlook](#) in mid-October and highlighted an area from the northern Rockies and Northern Plains into parts of the Midwest, mid-Atlantic and Northeast as having an above average chance of receiving more precipitation than usual this winter.

The climatologist detail forecast is at [https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long\\_range/fxus07.html](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/fxus07.html) And the 90-day long range forecast is at [https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long\\_range/seasonal.php?lead=1](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1)

It all spells SNOW for us in the Northeast this Winter, so get out and ski it!



### Notes from the ARMCHAIR XCO SKIER:

Check your snow shoe stretchy straps for dry rot BEFORE you head out on the trail. My MSR never used straps (new 9 years ago) looked good but crumbled upon being stretched. My non-stretch straps on my wooden snow shoes are still good after 40 some years. White Grass, REI, and other online retailers sell replacements, but not out on the trail;->

**Webmaster Needed**



The position of Webmaster for the PATC-STC is currently vacant. If you have web skills and would like to help out the club with a couple of hours every few weeks, we NEED YOU!! Duties include keeping the website up to date with schedule changes and altering the look and feel as needed to present our best face to the world. See our website at <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/>

To volunteer, contact John Tichenor at H: [johnjohn5670@yahoo.com](mailto:johnjohn5670@yahoo.com)

**STC Membership Renewals Due!!**

Yet another membership renewal period is in effect for the Ski Touring Section of PATC. Memberships expiring in 2019 must be renewed before 1 January 2020 for membership to continue into the upcoming ski season. **The countdown is on!** Remember that your modest dues are used to stoke a revolving club account that finances advance payments for trip and excursion lodging. Think of it as an investment in future fun.

If you receive UPSLOPE electronically, look on the email subject line for your expiration date. For those receiving UPSLOPE by U.S. mail, examine the UPSLOPE mailing label. If you see 2019-12, your membership expires on the last day of 2019.

For a membership renewal form with my address and dues amounts, visit <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/> and press the FORMS & DOCS link on the top bar of the club's home page. You will find the downloadable and edit-ready MEMBERSHIP PDF file there.

Happy Fall to y'all and hope that the winter is wintry ...Doug Lesar, STC recordskeeper / duesmeister

**PATC-STC Transition from Yahoo Groups to groups.io**



**ATTENTION** all current PATC-STC Yahoo group subscribers: PATC-STC has utilized **Yahoo groups** as an information exchange platform for many years. It has generally served the purpose well; however, Yahoo groups functionality deteriorated in the last two years after withdrawal of Yahoo tech support. Yahoo's recent decision to further downgrade group functionality has driven PATC-STC leadership to consider club communication and messaging alternatives. A decision has been made to transition to the **groups.io** platform. Consult <https://groups.io> for product features. We believe this will be an improved messaging tool for the club.

transferred from Yahoo groups to groups.io in

December. Unless you indicated a preference to be dropped completely, you were

STC is now firmly ensconced in **groups.io** vestiges of the STC Yahoo group at the end of December. If you do wish to download for retention. If you do should have been transferred into new fold-section of STC **groups.io**. Five folders **ex-groups** and were transitioned to **groups.io**, through 2011.

and the old **Yahoo group** is needed no more. STC plans to permanently delete all of December. The one and only one reason you might care is if you have photos there NOTHING, they ers in the photos listed in **Yahoo** dated 2009

If you have questions about Groups.io or how to log on, contact Doug Lesar.

Groups.io is an additional way to communicate within PATC-STC, in addition to our website (<http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/>) and the Nordic Skiers of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Meetup (see <https://www.meetup.com/Nordic-Skiers-of-the-Potomac-Appalachian-Trail-Club/>).



## Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing in Great Northern Maine



**Sugarloaf rental house**

of rental car costs in Maine.

**Itinerary:** Assemble in late morning Thursday March 4, at Portland (Maine) International Jetport (PWM). (There's a nonstop flight from BWI that arrives at around 10:30 AM.) Rent cars and drive to grocery store to buy food and have lunch, then on road (about 3 hour drive to cabin). Skiing all day Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Plans are to ski or snowshoe the [Maine Hut Trail to Stratton Brook Hut](#), some skiing on the [Narrow Gauge Pathway](#), skiing at the [Sugarloaf Outdoor Center Nordic trails](#), or a day in the [Rangeley Lake area trails](#), possibly a snowshoe hike along the shore of Cupsuptic Lake. Another option is the Flyrod Crosby Trail <https://highpeaksalliance.org/fly-rod-crosby-trail/the-recreational-trail/>.

You depart the Cabin on Monday morning March 9. If you leave by 9, there is time for a short shopping trip to LL Bean in Freeport and possible lobster lunch, yet still be back to airport in time for late afternoon flight back to Baltimore/Washington area. (We did this last year, even though we had to drive halfway back to Portland in a snowstorm).



Maine lobster dinner at the house *photo by Jane Wholey*

Once again, PATC-STS goes WAAAY north to find snow in March in the wilds of Maine. Joe Bachman is leading a group to a rental house right on the slopes of Sugarloaf Mountain, in Maine's Carrabassett Valley ski area. The house sleeps up to 16 people and has plenty of space to hang out après ski! There is still space available, but get your forms and check into Joe NOW! Couples are particularly sought.

### Trip Details

**Cost:** \$385 for STS members, \$395 for non members. All participants must be members of PATC. Cost includes lodging and in house meals (based on previous years' menus, they are sumptuous!).

Participants are responsible for transportation to Portland, Maine (or they can drive to the cabin directly), and their share



Joe and Ralph on Maine Hut Trails *photo by Ralph Heimlich*



At Sugarloaf Outdoor Center Trails *photo by Al Larsen*

**2019-20 Ski Trips**

Below is the 2019-20 STS schedule of trips. There are still trips with openings, but you need to send your application and waiver (see <http://www.patc.us/chapters/ski/forms/STS%20Ski%20Trip%20Application%20And%20Liability%20Waiver%20Forms.pdf>) and your CHECK. Remember, you aren't "SIGNED UP" until PAID UP!

Date	Place	Leader
Dec 28-Jan 1	Tug Hill Area, NY.	Peggy Alpert
Jan 3-5	Laurel Highlands, PA <b>7 spaces vacant</b>	Valerie Matthews
Jan 10-12	Laurel Highlands, PA	Greg Westernik
Jan 16-20 MLK	White Mountains, NH. NO Cancel.	Robert Swennes
Jan 17-20 MLK	Canaan Valley Ski/Snowshoe/Hike, WV. NO Cancel <b>Space for 1 couple</b>	Bert Finkelstein
Jan 23-26 (Thu-Sun)	Canaan SP Cabin, WV. NO Cancel <b>Full, Wait-list available</b>	Douglas Lesar
Jan 24-26	Laurel Highlands Learn-To-XC-Ski, PA	Greg Westernik
Jan 24-26	Laurel Highlands, Comfort Inn, PA <b>9 spaces vacant</b>	Valerie Matthews
Jan 31-Feb 2	Blackwater Fall SP Lodge, WV. <b>Spaces available for male and female skiers</b>	Brian O'Konski
Feb 7-9	Laurel Highlands, PA <b>5 spaces available</b>	Steve Jarvis
Feb 14-17 Pres Weekend	Canaan Valley Ski/Snowshoe/Hike, WV. NO Cancel <b>Space for 5 singles, 1 couple and 4 singles, or 2 couples and 3 singles</b>	Bert Finkelstein
Feb 14-17 Pres Weekend	Blackwater Falls Deluxe Cabin. NO Cancel	Lee Greathouse
Feb 14-17 Pres Weekend	Ski Dance, Camp Sequanota, Laurel Highlands, PA. Beginner Skiers. NO Cancel <b>Need volunteer ski instructors</b>	Eliot Applestein and Bob Mathis For more info <a href="http://www.skidance.com">www.skidance.com</a>
Feb 20-26 (Thu-Wed)	Bend/Sisters Area, OR. Rental Home. NO Cancel <b>Trip is full</b>	Ralph Heimlich
Feb 21-23	Laurel Highlands, PA	Greg Westernik
Mar 5-9	Maine Cabin. Ski/Snowshoe/hike. NO Cancel. <b>Spaces available, especially couples</b>	Joe Bachman
March 29 (Tentative)	Après Ski Party and Annual Meeting	Catherine Payne

**Canaan Valley News**



Many of you know that the Timberline ski resort declared bankruptcy last year. Timberline was recently sold to Perfect North at auction and snow resort activity could resume in the 2020-21 season. On Wednesday, November 20, 2019, West Virginia's Timberline Resort entered a new era as it was purchased at auction by Perfect North Slopes. The family-owned Perfect North Slopes is a ski area in Indiana that has been in operation for over 40 years. Mid-Atlantic skiers and boarders greeted the purchase with enthusiasm, as it offers hope that the bankrupt Timberline will rise again and become a revitalized ski resort.

Timberline's 4000+ foot summit is the highest in the region. Elevation and natural snowfall compensated for old equipment and poor management. Ironically, Timberline is now more accessible than ever to Washington, D.C. Four-lane US 48 (Corridor H) is only 15 miles away. Timberline faced old equipment and poor management, a challenging battle in an industry that is consolidating. Becoming part of a larger company's consolidation may help. See

<https://www.yurasko.net/wfy/2019/11/timberline-saved-west-virginia-ski-area-purchased-may-return-for-2020-2021-season.html>

## Trip Descriptions

### PATC/STS 2019-20 trip schedule

People not STS members, add \$10 per trip.

Note: STS membership is only \$9 per year!

(\*) indicates trips requiring PATC membership

**Dates—Dec. 28, 2019- Jan. 1, 2020 (4 nights, Sunday-Wednesday) Cancels if no snow**

**Trip —Tug Hill Region, New York**

**Lodging—**The Lodge at Headwaters, Booneville, NY. Includes breakfast, micro wave and refrig in each rm., 5 miles from BREIA trails, 22 miles to Oseco

**Description—** Skiing and snowshoeing the BREIA Trails (free) in Booneville, at Osecola ski touring center, Winona State Forest and Barnes Corners in the Pulaski area. Enjoy a New Year's Eve pot luck party. Transportation by carpooling arranged by participants, based on roster info. Roster will be emailed to all participants once info is received.

**Leader—Peggy Alpert , 301-946-4497, [efinich93@gmail.com](mailto:efinich93@gmail.com)**

**Cost—**\$280 –double occupancy. Assuming a minimum of 10 people. Lodging and food as indicated above. Other meals, trail fees, personal indulgences, extra.

**Dates—Jan 3-5, 2020 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands, Somerset, PA**

**Lodging—**Comfort Inn, Somerset, PA 12 participants max

**Description—** Lots of opportunities for skiers. Groomed ski trails at Laurel Ridge State Park, Laurel Mountain State Park, and Kooser State Park. Rentals available at Laurel Ridge State Park and a shop outside Somerset. At least three backcountry areas with very well-marked trails in Forbes State Forest. <https://www.paccsa.org/lmwebcam> , <https://www.paccsa.org/lrwebcam>

**Leader—Valerie Matthews, [valerie-matthews@verizon.net](mailto:valerie-matthews@verizon.net) , 301-580-8634**

**Cost—**\$130 per person, double occupancy. Covers only lodging, double occupancy and free hot breakfast.

**Dates—Jan 10-12, 2020 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands, PA Area Cross Country Ski Weekend**

**Lodging—Econo Lodge**, downtown Somerset PA

**Description—** Join fellow Nordic skiers gliding at usual and less-traveled favorites in the Highlands of SW PA (e.g., Laurel Mtn, Laurel Ridge, Roaring Run, North Woods, Laurel Hill) with more kms of trails and choices than time for event, plus option of night skiing near Lodge (snow permitting). Still the one with \$0 to \$10 budget-busting trail use fees and walk option to meals. Way cooler and almost heaven!

**Leader—Greg Westernik, [gmwester@gmail.com](mailto:gmwester@gmail.com) or phone 571-575-0695**

**Cost—**\$80 covers only lodging (double occupancy) plus free continental breakfast.

**Dates—Jan 16-20, 2020 (Thursday- Monday, 4 nights) MLK Weekend No Cancellation**

**Trip\*—White Mountains, New Hampshire**

**Lodging—**Home on Attitash Loop, Bartlett NH

**Description—** Ski one of the most scenic venues on the East Coast—the White Mountains of N.H. at cross-country ski touring centers such as Jackson (<http://www.jacksonxc.org/>), Bretton Woods (<http://mtwashington.com/xcountry/ski/>) and Bear Notch ([http://www.xcskinh.com/bear\\_notch.cfm](http://www.xcskinh.com/bear_notch.cfm)) in Bartlett, NH. Many backcountry ski and snowshoe trails are in the area, such as near the AMC lodge at Pinkham Notch and the various ski centers. Our lodging will be in a modern home that the Section has stayed at since 2009. Great kitchen and living area! House capacity is 9 - 10 skiers. Any wishing to join us but not able to get space in the house can arrange their own lodging in the area and join us for all meals and socializing for \$100.

**Leader—Rob Swennes, 703-405-8232, [robertswennes@hotmail.com](mailto:robertswennes@hotmail.com)**

**Cost—**\$395, which covers four nights of lodging and all in-house meals. Skiers pay for any flights, ground transportation in NH, outside meals, ski center fees, and miscellaneous costs.

**Dates—Jan 17-20, 2020 MLK Weekend (Friday–Monday, 3 nights) No Cancellation**

**Trip—Canaan Valley, WV, Ski/Snowshoe/Hike**

**Lodging—**Vacation cabin in Blackwater Falls, WV

**Description—** If you want to have an enjoyable holiday weekend in the snow, then this is the trip for you. We will be staying in a cozy vacation cabin in Blackwater Falls. We will be exploring area trails on snowshoes or XC-skis. This trip is suitable for beginners who want to try out these snow sports. Ski or snowshoe equipment available. Bring hiking boots in case there is no snow or if you want to go snowshoeing.

**Leader—Bert Finkelstein, [bertanamo@gmail.com](mailto:bertanamo@gmail.com) or (703) 282-0170**

**Cost—**\$265 based on 6 participants; less per person if we have 1-2 couples. Cost is for lodging only.

**Dates—Jan 24-26, 2020 (Friday–Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands, PA, Learn-to-Cross Country Ski Weekend**

**Lodging—**Econo Lodge, downtown Somerset, PA

**Description—** Join fellow nordic skiers and wannabes enjoying 2 days of beginner+, free instruction in cross-country skiing from seasoned volunteers, ranging from dry land to fixed stations to instructional tours, emphasizing safety and fun. We will glide at two favorite nordic ski areas in Laurel Highlands. Learn more in two days than years of nordic skiing on your own.

**Leader—Greg Westernik, [gmwester@gmail.com](mailto:gmwester@gmail.com) or phone 571-575-0695**

**Cost—**\$85 covers only lodging (double occupancy) plus free continental breakfast and free XC ski instruction.

**Dates—Jan 23-26, 2020 (Thursday–Sunday, 3 nights) No Cancellation**

**Trip—Canaan Valley State Park, WV**

**Lodging—**Canaan Valley State Park Cabin w/complete kitchen for breakfast, pot luck and/ or individual dinner. We need 2 couples for this trip. 2 rooms have 1 queen bed in each room. 2 rooms with 2 double beds in each room.

**Description—** One of the most convenient lodging locations in Canaan Valley for skiing at White Grass, the downhill resorts, and points in between. Good trip for eclectic skiers open to a mixture of on-trail cross-country and off-trail backcountry. Snowshoeing or winter hiking are possibilities if conditions dictate.

**Leader—Doug Lesar, 301-520-9516, [dlesar@comcast.net](mailto:dlesar@comcast.net)**

**Cost—**\$175 (double occupancy) per person lodging only, assuming minimum of 8 participants. Note three-night stay and carpooling to be arranged.

**Dates—Jan. 24-26, 2020 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands Ski, Laurel Highlands, PA**

**Lodging—**Comfort Inn, Somerset, PA ([http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g53711-d96836-Reviews-Comfort\\_Inn-Somerset\\_Pennsylvania.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g53711-d96836-Reviews-Comfort_Inn-Somerset_Pennsylvania.html))

**Description—** Lots of opportunities here for skiers and snowshoers. Groomed ski trails at Laurel Ridge State Park, Laurel Mountain State Park, and Kooser State Park. Rentals available at Laurel Ridge State Park and a shop outside Somerset. At least three backcountry areas with very well-marked trails in Forbes State Forest. And snowshoers looking for something a little more challenging can try the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail covered with a foot or two of snow.

**Leader—Valerie Matthews, [valerie-matthews@verizon.net](mailto:valerie-matthews@verizon.net), 301-580-8634**

**Cost—**\$125 per person, double occupancy. Covers only lodging and hot breakfasts.

(Continued on page 8)

## Trip Descriptions (cont.)

(Continued from page 7)

**Dates—Feb 7-9, 2020 (Friday–Sunday, 2 nights)**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands Ski, Laurel Highlands, PA**

**Lodging—**Comfort Inn, Somerset, PA 12 participants max ([http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g53711-d96836-Reviews-Comfort\\_Inn-Somerset\\_Pennsylvania.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g53711-d96836-Reviews-Comfort_Inn-Somerset_Pennsylvania.html))

**Description—**Lots of opportunities for skiers. Groomed ski trails at Laurel Ridge State Park, Laurel Mountain State Park, and Kooser State Park. Rentals available at Laurel Ridge State Park and a shop outside Somerset. At least three backcountry areas with very well-marked trails in Forbes State Forest.

<https://www.paccsa.org/lmwebcam> <https://www.paccsa.org/lrwebcam>

**Leader—**Steve Jarvis, [jarsnv7@msn.com](mailto:jarsnv7@msn.com) 703-282-6752

**Cost—**\$125 per person, covers only lodging, double occupancy and free hot breakfast.

**Dates—Feb 14-17, 2020 (Friday–Monday, 3 nights) Presidents Day; No Cancellation**

**Trip—Canaan Valley, WV, Ski/Snowshoe/Hike**

**Lodging—**Vacation cabin in Blackwater Falls, WV

**Description—**If you want to have an enjoyable holiday weekend in the snow, then this is the trip for you. We will be staying in a cozy vacation cabin in Blackwater Falls. We will be exploring area trails on snowshoes or XC-skis. This trip is suitable for beginners who want to try out these snow sports. Ski or snowshoe equipment available. Bring hiking boots in case there is no snow or if you want to go snowshoeing.

**Leader—**Bert Finkelstein, [bertanamo@gmail.com](mailto:bertanamo@gmail.com), 703-282-0170

**Cost—**\$265 based on 6 participants; less per person if we have 1-2 couples. Cost is for lodging only.

**Dates—February 14-17, 2020 (Friday-Monday, 3 nights) Presidents Day; No Cancellation**

**Trip—Blackwater Falls Skiing**

**Lodging—**Blackwater Falls Deluxe Cabin

**Description—**For all skier levels. Ski Blackwater Falls State Park with twenty + miles of trails, Canaan Valley trails, and White Grass Ski Touring Center. Sledding hill is available when snow is sufficient. Skis, poles, boots and sleds can be rented at Sled Run & Cross Country Ski Center.

**Leader—**Lee Greathouse

**Cost—**\$155 per person based on 8 people.

**Dates—Feb 14-17, 2020 (Friday-Monday, 3 nights) Presidents' Day; No Cancellation**

**Trip—34th Annual Ski-Dance Weekend sponsored by STS and Sierra Club**

**Lodging—**Camp Sequanota, PA

**Description—**Cross-country ski in the Laurel Highlands during the day and contra dance at night to live music. At a new location at the foot of Laurel Mt. State Park in PA at Camp Sequanota. They offer both motel style rooms and cabins. Prices range from \$90 to \$285 depending on your accommodations and age. Trip begins on Friday evening with an informal potluck supper and dance and ends on Monday with breakfast; 7 meals included. Camp Sequanota has over 300 acres available for cross-country skiing, slopes for sledding and several different types of habitat. Laurel Ridge, Laurel Mts. and Forbes State Forest areas are nearby. Check website, <http://www.skidance.com> for more information and registration form.

**Leader—**Bob Mathis, 301-589-7539, [talibob@starpower.net](mailto:talibob@starpower.net)

**Cost—**\$95 to \$300 depending on your accommodations and age. See [www.skidance.com](http://www.skidance.com) for more information.

**Dates—Feb 20-26, 2020 (Thursday-Wednesday, 7 nights) No Cancellation**

**Trip—Bend/Sisters, Oregon Ski/Snowshoe**

**Lodging—**Rental House, Couples preferred due to bedding arrangements

**Description—**Skiing with AMPLE snow at Mt Bachelor Nordic Center, and from numerous SnoPark trailheads on U.S. Forest Service trails.

**Leader—**Ralph Heimlich, 240-472-8825 (cell), [heimlichfamily@comcast.net](mailto:heimlichfamily@comcast.net)

**Cost—**\$300 lodging and food at "home", NOT including airfare, your share of rental cars and food eaten out.

**Dates—Feb 21-23, 2020 (Friday-Sunday, 2 nights) Cancels if no snow.**

**Trip—Laurel Highlands, PA**

**Lodging—**Econo Lodge, downtown Somerset, PA, 10 participants maximum.

**Description—**Join fellow Nordic skiers gliding at usual and less-traveled favorites in the Highlands of SW PA (e.g., Laurel Mtn, Laurel Ridge, Roaring Run, North Woods, Laurel Hill) with more kms of trails and choices than time available, plus option of night skiing near Lodge (snow permitting). Still the one with \$0 to \$10 budget-busting trail use fees and walk option to meals.

**Leader—**Greg Westernik, [gmwester@gmail.com](mailto:gmwester@gmail.com) or phone 571-575-0695

**Cost—**\$80 covers only lodging (double occupancy) plus free continental breakfast . Transportation by car pool to be arranged.

**Dates—Mar 5-9, 2020 (Thursday-Monday, 4 nights). No cancellation**

**Trip —Maine Ski and Snowshoe\***

**Lodging—** Rental home near Sugarloaf Mountain, Maine.

**Description—**The snow sill hangs around in March in the far north around Maine's high peaks. We'll be surrounded by over twenty 4,000 footers. Nordic ski areas at Sugarloaf (<http://www.sugarloaf.com/activities-and-nightlife/outdoor-center>) and Rangeley (<http://rangeleylakestrailscenter.com>), plus groomed backcountry trails as part of the Maine Huts and Trails system (<https://mainehuts.org>). Snowshoe or ski to the top of the mountain with a view of the Bigelow Range, and have a hot lunch served at the hut! Other trails access frozen waterfalls and lakes and the deep North Woods. Bring your passport, and check out the backcountry at Mont Megantic and Mont Gosford just across the border in Quebec. All of this, and it's only a 3-hour drive from the Portland, Maine airport.

**Leader—**Joe Bachman, [Joseph.bachman@verizon.net](mailto:Joseph.bachman@verizon.net), 410-446-8501.

**Cost—**\$385, which includes 4 nights of lodging and all in-house meals. Participants pay for flights to Portland, Maine and ground transportation (rental vans) in Maine, trail fees, outside meals, etc.. Leader will arrange rental van carpools from the Portland International Jetport. Participants can also travel to the site on their own.

**Dates—Tentative Date Mar 29 (Sunday)**

**Trip—Après Ski**

**Lodging—**Catherine Payne's House in Great Falls

**Description—**Join us for a recap of the season, pot luck dinner, and our Annual Meeting

**Leader—**Rob Swennes

**Cost—**Your pot-luck contribution and BYOB.

Updated 12/18/2019

### Notes from the ARMCHAIR XCO SKIER:

Tire dealers tighten the nuts so hard that a 200 lb person stepping on the wrench cannot get them loose. You can buy a short pipe at Lowes and fit it over your wrench handle for more leverage. I once drove to an all night filling station and waited for a 300 lb. man to show up to help me. Of course if you are like Peggy Albert you drive to the nearest Tug Hill bar and every one piles out to change the tire while the one male in the car eats ice cream at the nearby store. Hammering (tap) the nut while under pressure will help sometimes (with the tire, not the ice cream).

**White Grass Work Trip**

By Lynn Yates

The weekend of November 22 - 24, nine members of the Ski Touring Section fanned out on Saturday at White Grass Ski Touring Center, WV, to help **Chip Chase** and his crew get the trail system ready for the 2020 season. **Ken Brown** headed out early with a crew repairing and replacing bridges across wet ground, **Dave Jordahl, Doug Lesar, and Lynn Yates** headed up high below Bald Knob, to clear steep glade areas of obstructions to make skiing down through the glades possible for advanced skiers. **Stacey DiMaria, Bert Finkelstein, John Tichenor, and Alan Cohen** headed out with Chip Chase to the snowshoeing trails, and after a lunch break, most of the rest of the crew joined Chip for more trail work in that area, and to dig a new drainage ditch along the Crosscut trail. Chip showed the group the largest Spruce tree on the WG grounds and took pictures of the group. On Sunday, we helped with some chores in the lodge before heading home. The group is very grateful to **Jim Norton**, owner of the company ASTI, and **Bert Finkelstein**, for the use of their homes to make things comfortable for the workers.



Gathered around WG's oldest spruce: John Tichenor, Bert Finkelstein, Stacey DiMaria, Doug Lesar, Chip Chase, Lynn Yates, Alan Cohen, and Dave Jordahl.



Doug dug! As did Stacey



The whole WG crew. Includes 5 members of our STS work group, right of Chip - Stacey DiMaria, Robert Buzzard (new member, great guy), Doug Lesar. Behind Chip is Dave Jordahl (West Chapter of PATC), and me to the right of Dave Jordahl and above Robert Buzzard. Missing are Stacey's friend, Alan Cohen, and Ken Brown who was already off in a group working on bridges, Bert Finkelstein, and John Tichenor.

**PATC Photo Contest (cont.)**



PATC-STS Skier on the Catamount Trail



PATC-STS Skier Tele Skiing in Canada



PATC-STS Skiers at Yellowstone National Park



PATC-STS Skiers on the Maine Hut-to-Hut Trail



PATC-STS Skier at Laurel Mountain



White Grass Fairyland

## SKI Dance: Ski All DAY—Dance All Night!

By Bob Mathis

So what is this annual ski-dance weekend? When did it all begin? Who started it? What do you do there – dance with your skis; isn't skiing hard enough? These are all good questions which I'll attempt to address.

Ski dance is one of the oldest STS sponsored events. It started around 1987 (but due to my faulty memory) I'm not sure of the exact year. I do remember that a bunch of folk dancers from the DC area were skiing at Blackwater Falls in West Virginia one weekend and decided that it would be fun to cross country ski during the day and to do some folk dancing at night. Consequently, Peter Fricke, Richard Galloway and myself met and put together a weekend getaway at Camp Soles, in western Pennsylvania. We had a very supportive committee and over mulled wine, hot cider and Peter's freshly baked apple pie, we created a learn to ski weekend coupled with an evening dance that would appeal to many people in the Folklore Society of Greater Washington, the Ski Touring Section of PATC, and the local Sierra Club.



Skiers dancing, photo by Ralph Heimlich

The first weekends in the late 1980s initially had several ski instructors from STS. Instruction was in the morning and we often skied around Camp Soles. The dancing was English dancing (think Jane Austin) and was led by Peter Fricke over President's weekend. Before the dance we had a sing-along. By the early 1990s, a second ski dance event was added over the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend in January that included mostly contra dancing (think of square dancing in lines).

The skiing was led by members of the Ski Touring Section. Many STS members taught small groups the basics of Nordic skiing. Who could forget Dave Holton showing another person how to snow plow down the hill in front of the lodge at Camp Soles? At Camp Soles there was a wonderful lake to ski around and mountain climb! Others would venture off to ski at Laurel Mountain or at Laurel Ridge State Park. Most of us came back a bit tired and ready for a good meal. However, the evening was just beginning with music, song and dance!

The sing-alongs started out fairly simple. A person would volunteer to lead a song. Most of us would be terrific on the first phrase or verse and then simply mumble some words and sing "la di la, la di la." The solution was to purchase the wonderful song book, "Rise Up Singing" which was filled with hundreds of songs and their lyrics. Then in January of 1993, a young David Wiesler brought his guitar to the sing along and the rest we shall say is history. Dave could play just about any song that people could hum. In addition to being a wonderful song leader he is a brilliant pianist, guitarist and composer! Since 1994 Dave has been at every ski dance weekend leading the music (both singing and leading the dance bands for the evening dances.) How does the sing-along work? People grab a book and then scream out a page number of their favorite song. Dave starts strumming and we all join in. On a rare occasion Dave might say, "Help me out here; I don't know that song but could you just sing a few bars?" Before you know it – Dave is playing the chords perfectly and we've all joined in on the song.



Tuning up for the Sing-Along photo by Ralph Heimlich

After the sing-along we have always have a dance and a caller/teacher. We encourage people who have two "left feet" to get out on the dance floor and to follow

the prompts. Both the English and the Contra dancing are

social dancing, meaning you have a partner and dance up and down the sets. The figures/steps are repeated and there is a great deal of smiling and laughing. Initially ski dance was attended mostly by single dancers from the Folklore Society of Greater Washington. There were no children and no married folks. However, as life would have it – some folks actually met at ski-dance weekend and subsequently got married! In fact, the official dance used to go until 11:00 pm and then there would be a late night dance that went until mid-night or later. Sometimes it would be swing music and the occasional tango was even done. In short, it was a pretty wild scene.

However, time and events changed. First, the energy for organizing two events a year dissipated so the English weekend was dropped. Couples started bringing their children (myself included!) so a children's program was added. Who can ever forget Marta Vogel leading the children dancing with their decorated pillow cases? Or the time we were desperate for snow and farmer invited us to ski on his fields. We found a patch of snow and a song was written, "Dancing with Cows!" Or the blizzard of 2003 when we got snowed in and had



More dancers photo by Ralph Heimlich

(Continued on page 11)

**SKI Dance: Ski All DAY—Dance All Night!**

(Continued from page 10)

to stay another day at camp where we did what else – skied and danced!

Most years we ski but when there is no snow – we play and hike! Over the years we have found there is plenty to do in and around the Laurel Highlands (Johnston Flood Museums, the Flight 93 National Memorial and hiking in Laurel Mountain) We had to change venues and moved to Camp Harmony in 2003. In 2014, we moved to Camp Sequanota which offers us some private rooms as well as cabins. Food is plentiful and delicious (remember: this is camp food!) In addition to changing location, in 1999 Eliot Applestein assumed the major leadership role in running the camp and still does today.

The weekend is meant to be all about fun, meeting new friends and greeting old ones. You don't have to be dancer or a strong skier to enjoy this weekend. We still offer a beginner's lesson in the morning. So, this year, think about signing up for ski dance weekend, February 14 – 17. We can only accommodate about 55 participants so sign up early (in December). For more information go to [skidance.com](http://skidance.com) or call Bob Mathis at 301-589-7539. Hope to see you there!



The band photo by Ralph Heimlich

**Snow Already Falling in the Oregon Cascades**

These pictures are taken from the Central Oregon Nordic Facebook Group. This is the group that maintains many of the ski trails in the Bend-Sisters area of Oregon on December 13-15, 2019.



Terry Kneen: Got to Bend mid afternoon parked at Dutchman, up Flagline access, down Big Meadow and back to Dutchman snow park. Some spots getting a little icy from tree melt but not bad. And a gorgeous sunset!



Michelle Briggman

Keep up to snow conditions [here](#).

Brian Coop:Crazy cold fog/clouds rolled through a few times during the ski.



**PATC-Ski Touring Section**  
**c/o Doug Lesar**  
**2507 Campbell Place**  
**Kensington, MD 20895**



V for Victory

To:

## PATC Ski Touring Section Membership Form

*The PATC/STS provides quality services and benefits to its cross-country skiing members while promoting and supporting the PATC and cross country skiing in general. Whether a novice, recreational, citizen racer or telemark skier, STS has something for every XC skier. Imagine yourself floating on the snow, climbing across hill and dale in the quiet of winter, stopping for lunch in brilliant sunshine on a vista with a view of snow-covered ridges and valleys stretching to the horizon, and then making a descent back to home. Our membership enjoys ski touring in the hills with the comradeship and safety of a group. When you become a member, you receive all issues of the club's newsletter UPSLOPE and other useful information. UPSLOPE is published six times a year by PATC/Ski Touring Section, a non-profit, educational and recreational group of cross-country skiing enthusiasts based in the Maryland, DC, Virginia, PA and West Virginia areas. UPSLOPE provides information about STS trips and events (e.g., Learn-To-XC-Ski weekends, Telemark instructional clinics, and mini-week ski trips). One year membership runs from October 1st through September 30th of the next year. If you join in April or later, your one year membership will run through September of the next year. To insure uninterrupted membership for more than one year, you may provide advance dues for up to three years. To join, select your desired membership category and term from the table below, complete this Form legibly, and send it with a check appropriate to your membership choice (payable to PATC Ski Touring Section) to:*

PATC-Ski Touring Section, c/o Doug Lesar, 2507 Campbell Place, Kensington, MD 20895

### Membership Classes

<u>Membership Categories</u>	<u>1 Year Only</u>	<u>2 Years</u>	<u>3 Years</u>
Individual	\$ 9	\$17	\$25
Family	\$13	\$24	\$35

PLEASE PRINT or TYPE THE INFORMATION BELOW !!!

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Request is for:    - NEW Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ - New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Add me to Annual member directory but do not list my: Home Ph.: \_\_\_ ; Work Ph: \_\_\_ ; Email: \_\_\_;Postal Address: \_\_\_
- If checked, add me to Groups.io so I can get infrequent, adhoc announcements of local XC Ski activities: \_\_\_
- If checked, send my UPSLOPE only electronically (no paper copy) to save the club copying and postage: \_\_\_

STS is an all-volunteer organization. We cannot function without the assistance of our members. If you are interested in volunteering to help STS in any of the following areas, please check the box and you will be contacted:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STS Officer           | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity       | <input type="checkbox"/> XC Ski Instructor          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web Content Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Ski Trip Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events Coordinator |