



The Inside Track

A Newsletter for Members of Porcupine Ski Runners

Winter Issue

December, 2005

President's Column

Another ski/snowshoe season is upon us, and members have been skiing our trails since the early part of November. As you know from the last newsletter, I'm your new President, and I hope I can do justice to this position as others have done before me.

The fact that we can ski on our trails so early, is due to the excellent conditions of our trail system resulting from all the hard work and effort expended by the volunteers who have been out trail brushing, spreading saw dust and bark, realigning trails to make them safer, replacing culverts, etc. With the high winds we have been getting this fall, there has been a continuous call for volunteers to clear the trails of blown down trees. These people are working on our trails during their spare time or on days off. If you see them on the trail riding on either the yellow or orange snow machine or the grooming equipment, they are out enhancing your trails for better, safer skiing. Have patience and thank them for the effort.

Your Directors have had another busy year, and those who have taken on various duties, will be reporting on them in this issue.

As you are aware, PSR is planning to build a new chalet. When completed, it will increase our ability to host various provincial and regional skiing events, increase the size of the chalet, provide more room for lockers, and an overall better,

more cost efficient and modern building to go along with our high quality trails. A committee has been set up and they are spending an enormous amount of time on studying and planning related to site location, building plans, request for proposals for the hiring of engineering firms, fundraising as well as visiting the corporate world for support towards the completion of this project. You will be kept informed of the progress being made.

The snowshoe trails have been a great addition to our facilities. Many people, school groups and other organizations have been using them. Thanks to Larry Labelle for taking care of this project.

We have had to replace some of our trail lights as a result of vandalism by people using them for targets. It is costing our club a fair amount of money to replace these fixtures. If you see any vandalism taking place, call the Police or Crime Stoppers, and please inform the Club Directors of any damage done so that it can be repaired.

Our cross country ski trails are well maintained, which is a result of all the volunteers who give their time and effort to work on them. Without volunteers, your club would not exist as it is today. Thank you all who give your time and effort to the

Club. We are always in need of new people to help with trails, facilities, Jackrabbits etc. If you want to volunteer, give your name to any one of the Directors or to the webmaster on the PSR website.

I hope to see you on the trails in the near future. Remember, we're all in this together.

Denis Brûlé

Jackrabbit Sessions

Start January 8, 2006 at 1:15 PM

NO REGISTRATIONS
will be accepted on this first day.

To have your child enrolled in the
Jackrabbit program contact Ruth Roy
before January 5, 2006

at
268-8762

Membership

By: Gerry McNair

At the Open House that was held at the Club on November 27 we received applications from 129 members. Of these 43 are new members. This brought our total membership count to 684 members.

It was an active day complemented by good skiing. The Racing Team held its sale of equipment and laboured at waxing numerous pairs of skis. The Team uses this opportunity to raise some money to help pay some of their costs of traveling to racing competitions. While doing so, they provide a valuable service to the members (and potential members) of the Club.

All members who rent a locker should have renewed that rental by now if you wish to keep it. We have a waiting list of members who will be happy to rent your locker if you no longer need it.

Remember that a membership for skiing also gives you access to the snowshoe trails. Perhaps you might like to give it a try - if you haven't already.

Welcome to the members who have signed up to use the snowshoe trails. These memberships cost less because the maintenance of snowshoe trails is considerably less than it is for ski trails. Snowshoeing members have equal access to the chalet facilities so drop in, warm up and say hello. We will not be renting lockers to snowshoers however, because we don't have a large enough number of lockers and snowshoes are easier to carry in a vehicle.

Enjoy the season.

Trails

By: Gerry Perreault

What more can be done to improve the quality of our trails? Lorne Luhta has complained for years about the low area on the Olympic Trail. Well with no one wanting to tackle the issue, he took it upon himself to reroute the area that followed the gas line. This should extend the length of the season for the Olympic Trail.

Not only did he not like the water on that section, he also made a by-pass around the water hole on the Yellow Trail. This took considerable work which included installation of culverts along with backhoe work to smooth the terrain. This has allowed us to open the Yellow Trail before December first.

The dangerous crossing for the Ski Doo Trail on the Olympic was also repaired. Lorne also met with a representative of the Snowmobile Club to negotiate greater safety at the points where the snowmobile trail crosses our Yellow Trail. He had full cooperation from the Snowmobile Club and they plan to alter the location of their trail to improve safety by improving visibility.

Hats off to Lorne - this has addressed some real concerns about a few areas on the trails that needed improvement. From time to time we think about the future when someone else will have to take over these types of jobs. I did not see anyone trying to shadow Lorne as he went about rerouting trail. I'm sure that if anyone wants to learn trail design and relocation, Lorne would enjoy having you by his side.

Brush cutting took on a different twist this year. As most people are busy on weekends, work crews were organized during the week (mainly retiree's and some shift

workers) and as a result, all this work was done in record time. Most of this was organized by Diane Luhta doing the emailing or telephoning. The exceptional fall weather also made this very pleasant. Our aim, each year, is to have everything ready for November first and this year we accomplished the task two weeks ahead of schedule.

One weekend was spent upgrading the Stadium, Sprint and lighted section of trails with new wood waste. This helped reduce some of the standing water.

Here is a list of those who helped out:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Frank Belanger | Gerry Bertrand |
| Denis Brûlé | Robert Coderre |
| Dale Columbus | Matt Copps |
| George Dasovich | Fran Delaplante |
| Ghislain Delaplante | Rick Demers |
| Ray Denis | Steve Ferrari |
| Irvin Garlock | Trish Gibson |
| Alex Girard | Peter Greenaway |
| Kris Kullas | Tory Kullas |
| Natasha Kullas | Germain Lauzier |
| Darlene Leduc | Diane Luhta |
| Erik Luhta | Lorne Luhta |
| Larry Mahy | Yvan Mascicotte |
| Tim Molenaar | Flo O'Malley |
| Raimo Peltoniemi | Gerry Perreault |
| Don Sutton | Martha Sutton |
| Celine Tarleton | Kim Wagner |
| Brianna Yard | Bridget Yard |
| Jack Yard | Ron Zgud. |

I am sure I forgot some names as I was not around very often during the time of trail preparation.

We had two wind storms in early November during which some 100 to 120 trees fell. These had to be removed in order to keep the trails open. The average age of those who helped in this effort was 59 plus. This is a bit of an eye-opener and also a bit of a concern. Not that these people are incapable - quite the contrary - however, younger members will someday (soon) have to replace us

older ones on many club duties. Please remember, these are your trails as well as ours. We invite anyone interested in taking on the position of Trail Leader or Equipment Leader to please declare your interest. We are willing to train you.

Equipment

By: Gerry Perreault

Since the end of March, work has been done on all of our equipment as time permitted.

Fred Stiles performed the end of season servicing and also the pre-season checks. When the snow came, we were ready.

For the coming season, Fred Stiles, Rick Mahon, Germain Lauzier, Rick Mahon, Chris Cantwell, Ivan Mascicotte, Gerry McNair, Lorne Luhta, Denis Brûlé, Jack Yard, Dave Mairs (who wants to make a comeback) and myself will be part of the equipment group. I also hope to be able to add more names. In the meantime, I have enough people, at present, to set up a roster. Weather conditions dictate a lot of what happens as far as trail grooming goes. Remember to thank these people when conditions are good. You have to appreciate the fact that these chores are done outside of any skiing time and are all on an as-needed basis. There is no schedule, no specific start time and we can't always predict when the job will be completed. Groomers and track setters have to respond to the weather conditions. At the same time, they all have homes and driveways to clear as well. Let's hope for a good safe season. Happy skiing to all.

Facilities

By: Denis Brûlé

Not all the trail signs are up on the Olympic trail, but they will be installed before we ski on them. A PSR member has taken upon herself to set up three recycling blue boxes, between the sink and the snack bar. I encourage you to use them instead of placing recyclable material in the garbage cans.

Jackrabbit Skills Development

By: Ruth Roy

The first registration date was held November 27th at the chalet in conjunction with Open House and the ski and snowshoe sale.

The Skills Development Program "Jackrabbit" is comprised of three Levels or Stages - Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit, and Track Attack. These three programs allow youths to move through the stages according to their abilities, skills and desires. The overall objective is to assist children in the development of love of the outdoors, a healthy lifestyle, excellent technical skills and a good level of physical fitness within a sport environment.

Bunnyrabbit Program:

The Bunnyrabbit program is the first stage and it is aimed at children 5 years of age (under 6). The objective is to introduce them to cross country skiing and the healthy lifestyle associated with it. It is designed to:

- Help the child develop a positive self image
- Be Fun

- Provide the child an opportunity to make ski friends
- Develop their skills
- Help the child develop an awareness of our natural environment

Jackrabbit Program:

The Jackrabbit program is the second stage and is directed at the "FUNdamentals" for children 6 to 9 years of age (under 10) in the sport of cross country skiing. Three important aspects need to be developed: technique, fitness and speed. This step in the program has an award system to help children keep track of their progress. The awards are:

- Technique Awards - Levels 1-5
- Program Awards:
 - Beckie Scott "Sprint" Award: 5 Levels
 - Richard Weber "Snow Goal" Award: 5 goals
 - Pierre Harvey "Hat Trick" Award: 5 Levels

Track Attack Program:

The Track Attack Program is directed at youths 10 to 12 years of age (under 13). This is the third and final stage in the Skills Development Program. This program is being developed and still not finalized. An Attack Log (age appropriate sequel to the Jackrabbit booklet) is underway.

The start date for the program at PSR is January 8th, 2006 at 1:15 p.m. **No registration will be taken on that day.** Please register prior to January 5th, 2006. The program is open to all members of Porcupine Ski Runners and registration is \$30.00 per child. For further information and / or registration for the program please

contact Ruth Roy at 268-8762.

Parents may ski with the group and learn with them. Children should come to the ski session prepared, that is, warm clothing and skis waxed. Children should have something to eat but not be too full when they begin to ski. Encourage them to drink water prior to the ski session to keep hydrated. A snack will be provided during each session. Northern Sports will provide help for parents who are looking to purchase equipment or learning to wax skis.

Leaders are needed!!!!!!

See you on the trails.

Snowshoe Trails

By: Larry Labelle

The snowshoe trails received a lot of use last year, from members and the school program. This keep the trails very well packed - so much so that the hills became a bit of a challenge for those with traditional snowshoes. Walkers using the modern style with cleats on the harness had an easier time of it.

The trails this year are ready for snow. We have done a little rerouting in a couple of locations and maybe we'll place some more rope on a couple of hills.

Ski Sale & Waxing

By: Don Sutton

A big thanks to Mary Anne Martin and Yvan Massicotte for all their work organizing our 2005 Ski Sale and Waxing event. Once again it was very successful.

Thank you to all the helpers that contributed time and energy to this worthwhile cause. Along with providing a valuable service to the members of PSR we were also able

to raise approximately \$4,017 for our Race Team. The ski waxing service raised \$1,490 and ski sales raised \$2527.

Web site

By: Rick Cecconi

This ski season we are planning another exciting year on the PSR web site. Although the site looks the same as last year, it's what's on the inside that counts.

When I started maintaining the PSR web site in 2003, I was able

PSR Events 2005-2006

By: Diane Luhta

OPEN HOUSE: November 27

USED SKI SALE, SKI WAXING and STONING:

Mary Anne Martin, Denis Brûlé, Don Sutton November 26, 27

JACKRABBITS: Ruth Roy - registration Nov. 27

LESSONS: Rhys Lucas, Karin Trimble, Diane Luhta
CLASS IS FULL!

SPRINT SERIES: Erik Luhta – Tuesday nights starting January 31, February 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 14. All members welcome! It's a race against yourself.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM: David Vodusek, Erik Luhta – on snow practices are Wednesdays at 4:30 and Saturdays at 1:00

WINTERFEST: Lorne Luhta - January 27, 28, 29 races at Gillies Lake

PSR LOPPET: Don Sutton - Sunday, February 19, South Porcupine Legion

SPECIAL OLYMPICS: Regional Games are planned for Saturday February 25, 2006 at Porcupine Ski Runners for Snowshoeing and Nordic Skiing at 2:00 PM.

12 HOUR CHALLENGE: - Sunday, March 26

ROOKIES vs VETS RELAY: - April 1st

WAX CLINICS: - December 8, 7:15 pm with Lorne Luhta

to keep some of the older information and archive it into the site you see today. New information this year will have link buttons on the home page for easy access. Later it will be archived as new information arrives.

Some of the handy site tools are Timmins Weather, Live Real Time Conditions, PSR Ski maps, Ski Techniques, Online Membership and more.

Enjoy and have a great season.

New Chalet

By: Noëlla McNair

As of early December, the committee working the many aspects of planning a new chalet is busy applying for substantial grants from foundations as well as from government agencies. We have completed proposals to the six largest national banks - all of which (except one) are pending. Apparently applications for capital projects often require a lengthy processing period. In addition to the application to banks, there are other foundations, such as Schumacher Foundation and Frog's Breath, and businesses to whom we have applied for funding.

More recently we have been working on an application to FedNor. Government applications are far more detailed and demanding. We are hoping to have this one submitted by mid-December.

As stated in the October issue of *The Inside Track*, the project will move forward only when a substantial amount of money has been granted to us from foundations and government.

Community organizations and employers have been very forthcoming with letters of support for the project. FedNor must be

convinced that the community sees merit in the project. Particularly helpful has been Christy Marinig at the Timmins Economic Development Corporation. She has guided us through the application process.

While the waiting is necessary and a bit frustrating, we are proceeding with preliminary steps involved in the feasibility aspect of the project. This involves study and decisions regarding the site location, suitable services and such things. Some of this costs money and this is where our members are assisting. Over the past several years, money donated by members toward a new chalet has been set aside. Members are continuing to donate to the project. With the project (at least the study stage) underway, the City of Timmins has partnered with us and they are able to issue tax-deductible receipts for donations of \$50 or more. If you are considering making such a donation, then make a cheque payable to City of Timmins / Porcupine Ski Runners. We will forward the cheque to the city treasurer who will issue the receipt and deposit the donation in an account in our name.

Progress seems slow but it's a big project. We'll keep striving to make it work, so wish us luck.

Training Camp & Coaching Course

Sue Kaczmarek left me a brief message as she was preparing to rush off to help with this camp. Details are a little sketchy because I am rushing to get this to press. Ed

The training camp for cross country ski racers was held at Porcupine Ski Runners December 2 and 3. We have hosted these camps in previous years

and this year there were 35 teenagers registered. More than half of these were from out of town. They had to contend with some rather nasty wind along with fairly cold temperatures which resulted in a less than desirable wind chill factor.

In addition to the training for athletes, Patti Kitler ran a Level 2 Coaching Course for six trainee coaches.

Volunteer Appreciation Night

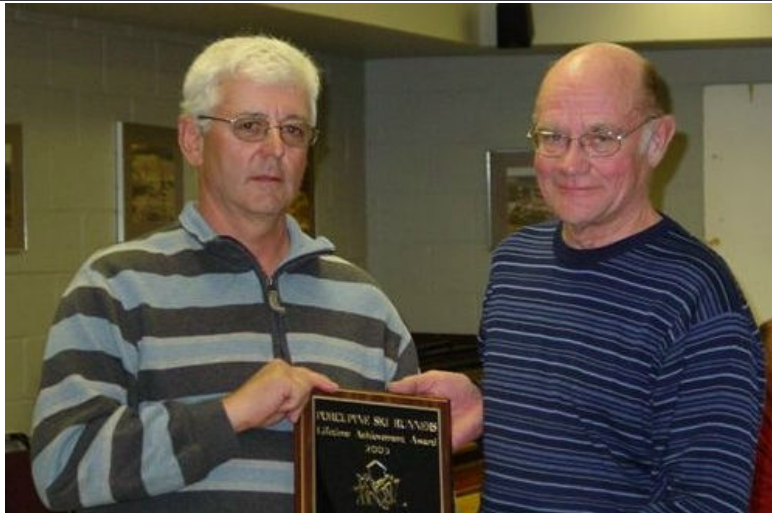
By: Gerry McNair

We have so often repeated the message that gives credit to our volunteers. It really can't be said too often because the club would not function without them. There are over 100 members (and a few non-members) that Diane Luhta was able to identify as volunteers that help make the club a success. It's difficult to estimate the number of hours that volunteers collectively spend on the many duties demanded by our club. But we do have some idea and the number of hours is probably about 6,000. You can imagine that our financial position would have a whole different look if those were paid hours.

We thank Diane Luhta for organizing the Volunteer Appreciation Night and thanks also to the individuals who assisted her. Not only did they have everything in order so that the evening ran smoothly but they also provided some funny and well planned entertainment. Well done, group.

It has become a custom to honour certain individual volunteers for their work with the club. This year there were two honourees:

1. Germain Lauzier was given the Lifetime Achievement Award. Germain has given many hours of time to the club since he joined as a member in 1985. He has been a director for many of these years but his most notable work has been with trail maintenance. He can make the trails skiable even when the rest of us think they are impassible. He has put up and taken down more trail signs than there are highway signs from Timmins to Toronto. To top it all off, he can ski 1000 km in fewer days than I care to think about - especially when he knows he is going out of town for an extended period during the prime skiing time.



Gerry Perreault presents Lifetime Achievement Award to Germain Lauzier

2. Larry Labelle was awarded the Volunteer of The Year plaque. Last year Larry designed the layout and cut the snowshoe trails. These have proven to be an excellent addition to our trail system. He has also given numerous hours of assistance in the running of the bingo. Stan Kaczmarek has certainly appreciated his help and Stan says that Larry is poised to take over the leadership of this fundraiser that has contributed greatly to the club. To round out his free time, Larry agreed to assist the small group that is trying to make a new chalet a reality.



Stan Kaczmarek presents Volunteer of the Year Award to Larry Labelle

that perhaps the club members are becoming overly dependent on these few. We often comment that we should be training others to assume responsibilities for some of these important jobs before we are simply unable to continue. At the present time we are specifically looking for help with:

1. The Jackrabbit Program - Ruth Roy would love to have you give her a call to inquire about how you might help.
2. Trail Grooming & Tracking - There is a fairly large number of individuals who share this task but Gerry Perreault would like an

assistant to learn to take the leadership role.

3. Many Other Tasks - Gerry McNair has a whole list of jobs that he would like to share. Everything from locking the chalet every night, producing a newsletter, maintaining the list of locker assignments (and tracking the waiting list), maintaining the membership data base, making bank deposits, organizing (sort of) many files of PSR information, registering with Cross Country Canada, and checking and responding to messages on the answering machine.

Volunteers - We Need Them

By: Gerry McNair

There is always a need for more volunteers. Even though we have a large number of members who volunteer for many tasks, it is still a fact that the great bulk of the work is done by a relatively small number of persons. Some of us are also beginning to think